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DESIGN FOR USE, DESIGN FOR THE MILLIONS:

PROPOSALS AND OPTIONS OF THE
NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL DESIGN COUNCIL

1948 - 1960

by

John Bruce Collins

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Institute of Canadian Studies

Carleton University

OTTAWA, Ontario

December 1986

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PROPOSALS AND OPTIONS OF THE NATIONAL

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN COUNCIL 1948 - 1960

submitted by John Bruce Collins, B.A.,

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

In 1948, for the purposes of enhancing the export potential of Canadian products through better design, the Department of Trade and Commerce took an unprecedented step and agreed to participate with the National Gallery in establishing a National Industrial Design Committee consisting of representatives of retail, business, industry, education and government. This thesis examines the cooperation between private and public interests in industrial design. Preliminary discussion outlines favourable support for industrial design encouraged in a post-war Canada by artists' initiatives, a technological gap between war and peace-time manufacturing and a government policy of intervention. The potential of such an alliance among otherwise diverse interests depended much on group dynamics, shared ideals and prevailing attitudes toward industrial design's role in society. Initially NIDC programs aimed to cultivate high quality design with scholarships to the progressive Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, competitions for furniture designs in new materials and a Design Index based on strictly applied functionalist criteria. By the early 1950s there is a distinct shift in education, award and exhibition policies toward an emphasis on consumer values and the consumer as judge. This shift was concomitant with a call to free the NIDC from National Gallery authority and, consequently, the associations with aesthetics that this relationship implied. Following by a discussion of the exhibition "Design In Industry" of 1946 which clarified a near crisis situation for Canadian design and underlined the need for public and private interests to cooperate, this thesis will discuss in detail NIDC policy decisions and end with the transfer of responsibility of the NIDC to the the Department of Trade and Commerce in December 1960 under the slogan "Design For Export".

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PREFACE

In the art, architecture and design of the 1970s there has emerged an eclectic historicism, emphasis on place, novel world views and evocative emotional symbolism. A tendency referred to as "Postmodernism", it circumvents the aesthetic discipline of the first half of the century. Currently distinctions between architect, artist and designer are blurred with the undertaking of energetic multidisciplinary endeavours where architects and artists design furniture, designers propose buildings and sculptural displays. This crossover between the fine and applied arts has prompted much interest in the historical relationships between them. Just 30 years ago boundaries between creative disciplines were proudly delineated, professional specialization was a growing trend, and new industrial materials and functional form expressed a lively "Modern" aesthetic in industrial design. We are reminded by such a contrast of historical cycles and recognize the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s as ripe with insight for the present.

Today institutional and private collectors are seeking out mass produced examples of post-war industrial art that reflect the modern style. Exhibitions such as Design Since 1945, held at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1983, or High Styles Twentieth Century American Design, held at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1985, inspire great enthusiasm for the post-war years as a distinct historical period. Certainly for me they have acted as a catalyst by raising the issue of industrial design as an important aspect of Canadian cultural heritage, a point recommended by the 1983 Report of the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee. Since the Federal Policy Review Committee made its Report, two significant historical studies of Canadian industrial design have been undertaken. In 1984 Gloria Lesser prepared a report on post-war industrial design for the

Montreal Museum of Decorative Art, the only Canadian institution to be active in its collection and display of industrial design. In 1985 the Art Gallery of Harbourfront mounted an exhibition titled "Seduced and Abandoned: Modern Furniture Designers In Canada" organized by Virginia Wright. This interest will continue when in 1988 the Art Gallery of Harbourfront will hold a major exhibition of Canadian design from 1967 to 1987 currently being organized by Peter Day.

To date there has been much attention to the stylistic attributes of industrial design, but yet little consideration of the technological, economical and social attributes of the period during the late 1940s and 1950s when the tradition of consciously organized industrial design really began in Canada. Emphasis on style and the collectibility of Canadian industrial design fails to complete the story of the how it evolved to answer fundamental issues of art's role in society and industry. Fortunately these historical questions are amply reflected in the activity of the National Industrial Design Council during the late 40s and 50s. This paper is intended to clarify a broader context for design history in Canada following the approach of recent literature found in the bibliography by authors Clive Dilnot, Adrian Forty, Nigel Whiteley and John Heskett, British scholars with backgrounds as lecturers in design history and theory.

This paper would not have been possible without the support, acumen and generous spirit of my supervisor Dr. Norman B. Ball. For their assistance and advice I would also like to acknowledge Mr. Jim Burant, Picture Division, Public Archives of Canada, Dr. Richard T. Clippingdale, Director of the Institute of Canadian Studies, Ms. Natalie Lukky, Graduate Coordinator for the Department of Art History, Carleton University, Elaine Phillips, Archivist of the National Gallery of Canada, Dr. A. Tickner, formerly Senior Archival Officer of the National Research Council, and the staff of the Library of the National Gallery of Canada. This paper is dedicated to my parents Carole Joanne and John Alfred.

ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations used in text, notes and credit lines for the following institutions, collections and organizations.

ACID.....Association of Canadian Industrial Designers, Affiliation before 1947
CMA.....Canadian Manufacturers' Association
CMHC.....Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation
COID.....Council of Industrial Design, London, England
DRS.....Department of Reconstruction and Supply
DTC.....Department of Trade and Commerce
IDD.....Industrial Design Division, National Gallery
MOMA.....Museum of Modern Art, New York City
NFB.....National Film Board of Canada
NGCA.....National Gallery of Canada Archives
NGCL.....National Gallery of Canada Library
NIDC.....National Industrial Design Council, Ottawa, Canada
NRC.....National Research Council, Ottawa
NRCA.....National Research Council Archives, Ottawa
OCA.....Ontario College of Art, Toronto
PAC.....Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa

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INTRODUCTION

The title for this paper is drawn from a description by Donald W. Buchanan of the products he included in the 1946 exhibition "Design In Industry" which opened at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa. "Stress is laid throughout on goods which everyone wants and should be able to buy at average prices. The aim is design for use, design for the millions." ¹ This quotation aptly reflects the optimistic ideals in post-war Canada generated by the promise of new technologies and hope for a recognition of design's contribution to cultural experience. It also summarizes the mandate of the members of the National Industrial Design Council (NIDC), initially known as the National Industrial Design Committee from 1948 to 1953. These volunteer members, continuing a public service after the war, were drawn from a variety of backgrounds. They would propose programs and policies to further the goal of enriching the lives of Canadians by increasing awareness of industrial design and what constituted a well-designed product.

The late 1940s and 1950s are particularly alluring years for an examination of industrial design in Canada. It was during this period, for instance, that there developed an international trend toward the institutional support of design. The Museum of Modern Art in New York established a Department of Architecture and Industrial Design in 1933, founding a separate Department of Industrial Design in 1940, the Council of Industrial Design in Britain was founded in 1944, the Industrial Design Institute of the Netherlands in 1950, the Institut Francais D'Esthétique Industrielle in 1951, and the Rat Für Formgebung, in Darmstadt in 1952.

The catalyst in Canada was the doubling of the country's industrial capacity in the five years during the Second World War, prompting an acute awareness of the fact that without planning and conscious attempts to utilize the new processes and materials developed during wartime, Canada would have great trouble adapting to peacetime conditions. Important economic, technological, social and cultural changes were to foster larger questions about the role of art and design in society.

In Canada after the war, however, there existed no precedent for a benevolent institution devoted to the wide dissemination of cultural ideals. While the National Gallery was funded through Parliament, it had never attempted to be an emphatic voice in the community. Certainly the war had set a precedent for government sponsored propaganda, but the notion of distributing public resources for purposes other than governmental needs would be many years in gaining acceptance. NIDC members had only a personal understanding of industrial design and foreign models to support the decisions made. This paper will discuss how the organization of the National Industrial Design Council, under authority of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery in Ottawa from 1947 to 1960, ingeniously acknowledged both U.S. and British models, while proposing its own strategy as a cooperative venture funded by both government and the private sector. In his opening remarks at the presentation ceremony of the newly launched Design Awards of Merit to Industry in 1953, Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent was to say of the NIDC's goal of encouraging good design: "This desirable end can only be attained by a continuing effort, with industry, retailers, educational institutions and professional designers all taking part." 2

As Canadians, the members of the NIDC shared both a European and a North American heritage. This history posed a twofold option for industrial design support, whether to

follow the European tradition of government intervention or depend upon a North American faith in private enterprise. The wide-spread interest in industrial design in countries like Sweden, England and Germany developed out of a 19th century intellectual tradition that was deeply concerned with the effect of machine production on the quality of life. The Council of Industrial Design of Great Britain, was headed by Sir Gordon Russell, a designer who had been trained to respect the ideals of honesty in workmanship and materials advocated by adherents to the British Arts and Crafts Movement.³ During World War II Russell directed the Utility Furniture Committee of the English Board of Trade. This program would provide those who had lost furniture in bombings with "something better than they expected to demand."⁴ This socialist outlook would be carried forth into the programs of the Council of Industrial Design. In the United States, on the other hand, it was private enterprise that was responsible for launching industrial design as a profession. During the 1930s many American industrial designers established reputations by making products more saleable at a time when sales were meager and competition high. The popularity of this new profession was witnessed by such publications as Norman Bel Geddes' Horizons (1932), Walter D. Teague's Design This Day (1940) or Harold Van Doren's Industrial Design also of 1940.⁵

In the United States the Museum of Modern Art (MOHA) in New York City stood out as the major proponent of industrial design. Founded in 1929 with private sponsorship, the MOHA included in its charter a call for the "study of modern art and the application of such arts to manufacture and practical life."⁶ In 1934 the MOHA held an exhibition titled "Machine Art" curated by Philip Johnson, an architect who headed the MOHA Department of Architecture from 1932 to 1935 and was instrumental in promoting modern architecture and design in the U.S.. This early attention to the issues of industrial design, as well as MOHA's prodigious publication and travelling exhibition program, made it an institution of

great importance and influence on the NIDC. The Department of Industrial Design of the MOHA promoted the theoretical ideals of the Bauhaus, the German design school that was to have a profound impact of 20th Century design. The Bauhaus gained a reputation for original experiments with new materials and an innovative approach to the design process which emphasized the abstract qualities of shape, form and colour in mass production.

Until 1928 the Bauhaus was headed by Walter Gropius, who maintained that a clearly defined functional aesthetic should be adhered to when designing for industry.

Functionalism in industrial design dictated that the form of any mass produced object should reflect its use and that the design should exploit the inherent beauty in materials rather than imitating others. In its advocacy of functionalism MOHA firmly believed it was fulfilling a public service by encouraging design integrity. Publications were critical of contemporary American designers who falsely streamlined stationary objects, such as staplers and pencil sharpeners, to imitate the aerodynamic fashion of trains and automobiles.

By the end of World War II the U.S. and British approaches to industrial design support provided two distinct but successful models for the members of NIDC. Whereas the former relied on government intervention and the later on private enterprise and philanthropy they shared the common goal of promoting a well-designed product that would appeal to millions. The NIDC provides a revealing case study of a typical Canadian solution to grey areas of policy. It was set up and run on a committee structure throughout the 1950s with sub-committees appointed to deal with individual programs. This paper will examine four major policy areas where the problems of definition reveal themselves: institutional responsibility; education; recognition of design merit; exhibitions and publications handled by the Industrial Design Division of the National Gallery. Conclusions will be drawn about

the impact of sub-committee policy decisions on the cooperative ideals upon which the NIDC was founded.

Canada's choice of models would be determined by a fifteen year history of growing government intervention through the Depression and World War II, through welfare programs and war production. By 1944 a pattern of partnership between government and industry had been established, but from post-war optimism sprang the vision of Canada's future where these two spheres of influence would be separate. Business and industry would ensure economic strength and higher standards of living for all Canadians while government policies of increased intervention through housing, health and social security programs would assist those who did not share in the prosperity of private enterprise. This simplistic division of responsibilities was not always easy to apply and especially in the case of industrial design, it was difficult to determine who should direct the increased potential of mass production to best improve the quality of life. Would this be designated within the public or private spheres? The benefits of industrial design were economically tangible and hence justifiably a private sector concern. For the manufacturer it promised better sales, an expertise in the limits of new materials and economical production. This implied that promotion of industrial should be supported by the resources of members of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, the umbrella organization of industry since the 1890's. Support of industrial design as a branch of industrial research under the National Research Council might also be a possibility as the improved potential for mass production was linked closely to the development of new materials during the war. Might not the Department of Trade and Commerce (DTC) interests be served by industrial design in the promise of independence from foreign designs and imports, while at the same time making exports more attractive and maintaining Canada's favourable balance of trade? The fact

that industrial design came to be a responsibility of the National Gallery bears important implications about the role of cultural institutions in post-war Canada.

Linked to the problem of responsibility and definition was the question of whether the industrial designer should remain an "inhouse" employee which was the prevalent practice before the war, or be hired as an independent consultant like an architect or a growing number of consulting engineers. What education suited the designer as a creative individual who must also be a professional businessman, familiar with machine production and able to deal with executives, salespeople and engineers? This further complicated the recognition of excellent design. Who among the many individuals involved in the success of a product should be recognized?

The goal of establishing a position for the industrial designer within the production process was hampered by many factors, not least of which was the country's reliance on the export of primary resources. The lack of educational facilities in Canada to train industrial designers for large scale industry was perhaps the most nagging problem, yet education suffered most from procrastination, not receiving adequate attention until the late 1960s. In addition the long term gains of hiring an industrial designer were imbalanced by the relatively small Canadian domestic market and limited potential for exports. This meant that new designs were difficult to introduce on a regular basis and must compete with proven foreign designs, advertised in widely read U.S. magazines and periodicals and pirated or provided by American firms to their branch plants in Canada.

The problems of bridging the gap between art and industry were constant, the challenges many, but it was Donald W. Buchanan (1908-1966), more than any other contributor, who saw to it that they were not insurmountable. Buchanan is perhaps best known as an historian of Canadian art, having written a major monograph on James Wilson

Horrice in 1936, followed by an impressive and prolific career as journalist, historian and editor of Canadian Art from 1944-1959. Buchanan was first moved by the promise of design when he saw the Swedish pavilion at the Brussels International Exhibition in 1935.

As a devoted advocate of the arts and son of Lethbridge Herald publisher and Liberal Senator William Buchanan, he had ambition, understood the importance of media, and had the right political connections to tackle the task of organizing a National Industrial Design Council.

ENDNOTES

1. Canada, National Gallery of Canada, Department of Reconstruction, National Film Board, Design For Use: a survey of design in Canada of manufactured goods for the home and office, for sports and outdoors, Ottawa, 1947, p. 6.
2. Public Archives of Canada (hereafter PAC), Records of the Department of Trade and Commerce, Record Group 20 (hereafter RG 20) Volume 997, File 13-2, Part 3. "Notes for the Prime Minister's opening of the exhibition of Canadian Products winning 'Design Merit Awards to Industry', April 14, 1953", p. 3.
3. The British Arts and Crafts Movement blossomed in the 1880s with the widespread popularity of John Ruskin and William Morris whose writings were highly critical of machine-made ornament and mechanical production. Gordon Russell (1892-1980) began to make hand-made furniture after the First World War and eventually formed his own company before his government work.
4. Gordon Russell, "National Furniture Production", Architectural Review 100 (December 1946) p. 184. As cited in Nigel Whiteley "Pop, Consumerism and the Design Shift", Design Issues, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Fall 1985) p. 32.
5. Norman Bel Geddes, Horizons, Boston: Little, Brown, and company, 1932; Walter D. Teague, Design This Day: the technique of order in the machine age, New York: Harcourt, Brace and company, 1940; Harold Van Doren, Industrial Design: A Practical Guide, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1940.
6. Cited in Edgar Kaufmann Jr., "The Department of Industrial Design/What Is Modern Industrial Design?" The Bulletin of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Fall 1946) p. 2. As cited in Sidney Lawrence, "Declaration of Function Documents from the Museum of Modern Art's Design Crusade, 1933-1950", Design Issues, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Spring 1985) p. 67.

CHAPTER 1

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ECONOMICS IN POST WAR CANADA RIPE OPPORTUNITY FOR INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

The economic limitations of the depression and the Second World War in Britain and North America during the 1930s and 1940s caused a growing concern about art's practical benefit to society. In 1934 Hebert Read, English author and critic, wrote about the artist's vital role in his influential work Art and Industry: The Principles of Industrial Design.¹ The text discussed at length the need for consideration of shape, form, colour and function in mass production, explaining that these abstract qualities of design would ultimately be of great social and economic value to society. Read's ideas owed a great deal to Walter Gropius, former director of the Bauhaus. His book, together with Gropius' emigration to England in 1934 and the U.S. in 1937, marked the beginning of the Bauhaus' popularity throughout the English speaking world.

Significantly Read was one of the first authorities approached by the National Gallery for advice on what course should be followed to support industrial design. Read's reply followed the main theme of his book Art and Industry, reiterating respect for Walter Gropius and isolating educational policy as an area requiring reform. He

recommended that Canada establish a school like the Bauhaus that would train design on "constructivist principles".

We may object to a mechanistic civilization on sentimental or philosophical grounds, but so long as we are committed to a system of machine production it is complete nonsense to restrict the training of designers for that system to a curriculum based on the study of material forms and organic processes. 2

In 1939 artist Frederick S. Haines, principal of the Ontario College of Art since 1932, revealed in an address to the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, the extent of artists' recognition of the cultural potential of progressive industry.

A really beautiful factory building is worth more, has more influence than a museum full of choicest art of antiquity....The former is at least vital, living, and the mere fact of its existence is precursor of others. The latter is dead, inert, exotic, preserved for the curious eyes of those of us who have the interest to examine it, but which we have no hope, no need, and no desire of equalling. Each age must work out its own beauty from its own environment. Hence the advent of modernism into modern industrial production is an omen of great portent. 3

In Canada, as in Europe during the 1930s, issues of art and industry were closely related to issues of art and society; that is, how industry could be managed in the best way to benefit society at all levels. Artists' concern about social issues was reflected in a painting style popular in the U.S., Canada, Britain and Mexico during the 1930s called Social Realism. Social Realism depicted the common man in his struggle for existence in an often blunt and factual manner that was emotionally accountable to a broad cross-section of society. Mexican Social Realist painters such as Diego Rivera were highly regarded for their public murals of the 1920s depicting the Mexican revolution. As Christine Boyanoski discusses in her catalogue The 1940s: A Decade of Painting in Ontario, socially moving Mexican art influenced a whole generation of Canadian artists. 4. In 1943 Donald Buchanan,

the young Canadian art critic and historian who was soon to be instrumental in the establishment of the National Industrial Design Committee, wrote that the art of the 1940s in Canada marked a "new social tradition". 5

Social Realism was carried over into the 1940s by Canadian artists assigned to record the war effort. It was a style ideally suited to depict the home war industries. The crusade for artists' involvement in the war was led by the Federation of Canadian Artists formed in 1941. During a conference held at Queen's University in Kingston, the Federation stated its aim:

...to unite all Canadian artists, critics and related professional workers for fellowship, for mutual effort in promoting common aims, and for the expression of the artists point of view as a creative factor in the national life of Canada... 6

In 1944, a member of the Federation of Canadian Artists, sculptor Elizabeth Wyn Wood, underlined what she believed to be the crucial alliance between "art and industry" in a proposal for "A National Program for the Arts in Canada" published in the February issue of Canadian Art. Wyn Wood was responding to what she feared was growing indifference towards the arts. Written in an urgent, passionate tone she emphasized that the arts had "social applications" in the spiritual life of the nation, its prestige and its economic well-being. Every manufacturer and retailer understood, she wrote, the arts application to the economic well-being of the nation. "All industry is as dependent upon design as upon new raw materials, capital and labour." 7

Although the years 1940 to 1945 had been a bright catalyst for Canadian industry, as the war drew to a close the recollection of record levels of unemployment as recently as 1939 caused concern that the economy not be allowed to slow down, that jobs be available for returning veterans and that adequate housing be found for new families. That year a

House of Commons Special Committee on Reconstruction and Reestablishment was struck to determine areas of employment in post-war Canada. On June 21 they heard from 16 arts organizations testifying to the key position of the arts in the economic structure of Canada, as well as in the cultural prestige of the country. Of the sixteen groups that submitted briefs before the House of Commons Special Committee on Reconstruction and Re-establishment in June 1944, eight were declared how important industrial design would become and argued for government support. The Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colours, for example, underlined the visionary potential of industrial design:

...we wish to emphasize that from the outset, special attention should be directed to see that really good designs are available for all constructions that come under the Government's supervision, from schools to post-boxes, from boulevards, and bridges to fire hydrants. 8

Florence Wyle, representing the Sculptors' Society of Canada, submitted that standards of design should be raised by propaganda and educational methods and that plagiarism of designs by Canadian manufacturers should be curbed because of its harmful affect on employment chances of Canadians. 9 The Royal Architectural Institute of Canada stressed the need for training in industrial design. 10

In summary the Committee recommended government support underlining the key position of design in the economic structure:

Within the past quarter century Sweden projected an idea through a national slogan: "Art in everyday things".... In Denmark the government activated her industries by subsidies to manufacturers for the specific purpose of promoting original design as a national asset.... Through similar government encouragement Canada, with her vast natural resources, could achieve a proud culture as well as a unique world position in industrial development and export. 11

The tone of the recommendations may have been confident and promising but it fell to the art institutions in Canada to take the first initiatives toward industrial design support. As will be discussed, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Royal Ontario Museum mounted exhibitions of industrial design in 1945 and 1946. As early as 1944 the National Gallery began to devote a few paragraphs in its Annual Report to Canada's post-war economy under the heading of "Industrial Design".

Canada will need to pay special attention to raising artistic standards throughout the country if she is to maintain and improve her position in the markets of the world. 12

After a long period during the war with a low profile, lack of attention, and no acquisitions budget 13, the National Gallery's Director, H. O. McCurry, was proposing in these references that the National Gallery might contribute to post war rebuilding in Canada while gaining favourable public opinion. The British Council of Industrial Design organized under Gordon Russell in 1944 no doubt lent credibility to the idea as it was cited as an example to follow in the 1944-1945 Annual Report. 14

McCurry found an ally in Donald W. Buchanan, Supervisor of Rural Circuits at the National Film Board in 1944. In addition to his responsibilities with the NFB Buchanan was also co-editor of Canadian Art, the periodical begun in 1940 as Maritime Art and the outlet of the arts community in Canada. As early as 1942 Buchanan was to draw attention to the the National Gallery's wartime activities with an article published in Food for Thought, "Bringing Art to Everyone: What the National Gallery is Doing". 15 Having a personal interest in design, his position as editor may have given him confidence to act officially to organize formal institutional support for industrial design, clearly an issue among artists' groups during the Reconstruction and Re-establishment hearings held in 1944.

Among aspiring civil servants in Ottawa after the war, Buchanan held a certain privileged position, according him a good deal of influence among political and cultural circles alike. In their biography of C.D. Howe, Bothwell and Kilbourn suggest that as son of liberal senator and Lethbridge Herald president William Buchanan, Donald was allowed personal access to C.D. Howe. 16 Howe, as Minister of Reconstruction and Supply from 1944 to January 1948 and Minister of Trade and Commerce from that time until 1957, was the guiding hand in the transition of Canadian industry from a war time to a peace time economy and a key politician to win over. A degree of familiarity between Howe and Buchanan is suggested by Howe's willingness to meet Alan Jarvis, Public Relations Officer of the COID, at Buchanan's request in 1946 to discuss the British organization as a preliminary step in gaining Howe's support for a COID in Canada. 17 Howe's request to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration in 1953 for more support staff for the NIDC referred directly to Buchanan's unreasonable work load. 18

Founding the NIDC was not the first time Buchanan and McCurry had been involved in "raising public taste". The National Film Society (NFS), renamed the Canadian Film Institute in 1950, was founded in 1935 for the purposes of dissemination and appreciation -- of films in Canada. Like the NIDC later, the NFS was concerned with "raising public taste" and recommended a National Clearing House for Information on Educational Films based on the precedents of the British Film Institute and U.S. Film Institute. 19 Buchanan was instrumental in its organization and became its first Secretary Treasurer. Both McCurry and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery, Hamilton Southam, sat as Directors of the National Film Society. Reflecting the future structure of the NIDC, Board Members of the National Film Society were drawn from diverse fields, with some political clout such as O.D. Skelton, "mandarin under the MacKenzie King liberals, 20 as well as artist Charles Comfort. Hence long before he undertook to organize a national

design council, Buchanan was working to establish national cultural awareness among the public. Furthermore, the National Film Society was to involve itself in aesthetics, recommending that motion picture appreciation be taught from the point of view of "what to see", ²¹ just as later the NIDC was to align its programs with standards of good design.

Buchanan recognized that the values of design in mass production were not simply limited to industry, but that its application to both housing and products would make available to all a higher standard of living after the war. This belief is reflected in his explanation of why poorly designed products proliferated in the mid-40s in department stores;

...it is because thousands of urban Canadians in the lower income brackets, living in dreary city tenements or in dilapidated and crowded homes, seek to obtain colour and what is a false impression of luxury by buying the more elaborate examples of cheap heavily stuffed furniture...Such arguments can only add to the proof that industrial design is indubitably linked to the deeper fundamentals of architecture, of town planning and of housing. ²²

The National Gallery's mandate did not include responsibility for social welfare, however, the economic circumstances of the war and depression were to pressure it to expand upon the traditional role of supporting the fine arts. As defined by Donald Buchanan, the NIDC's program was to be a cooperative effort between art and industrial interests "directed to all classes of the public." ²³ In retrospect, the NIDC endorsement of "modern design", narrowly defined by functionalist principles first developed by the avant garde Bauhaus design program in Germany, allowed the National Gallery to integrate a cultural and economic mandate. Housing and consumer goods that qualified as modern design set an example of provision at low cost through mass production, efficiency, and life-style convenience for the new family. The promotion of modern design by Hebert Read and MOHA, as an ideal to unite art and industry, was in timely sympathy with an economic

policy in Canada and the rest of the world that advocated increased spending, efficiency in production, and the importance of exports.

Canada's status as a world power after World War II hinged upon the ability of Canadian industry to continue war-time production levels. However, this would require government intervention in the economy on a scale without precedent in Canada. As the guiding hand in the transition to a peace time economy, C.D. Howe, Minister of Reconstruction and Supply in 1945, was confident at first that the export trade, public and private capital investment, as well as the surge in demand for consumer goods after the war from domestic as well as foreign markets, would ensure continued growth. This policy was outlined in a 1945 White Paper entitled "Employment and Income with Special Reference to the Initial Period of Reconstruction".

The central task of reconstruction must be to accomplish a smooth, orderly transition from the economic conditions of war to those of peace and to maintain a high and stable level of employment and income. The government adopts this as a primary object of policy. 24

In recent political science literature the White Paper has been referred to as a model of Keynesian economic theory because it outlines the role of government intervention to counter inflationary and deflationary cycles, while placing great emphasis on the contribution of exports to maintain high levels of employment and income. 25 It also reflects the enormous confidence of Howe in Canadian industry to continue to generate a high standard of living for Canadians so soon after the depression.

The Government will make every effort to create by all its policies, favourable conditions within which the initiative, experience, and resourcefulness of private business can contribute to the expansion of business and employment. 26

Private business would not contribute, however, without interventionist government economic policies that facilitated reconversion, in the form of fast tax write offs through

depreciation, research and development, as well as making Canada attractive for foreign investors.²⁷ In addition to redirecting manpower and resources to provide increases in consumer goods to meet a deferred civilian and export demand, there was also to be the provision of an expanded housing program managed primarily by the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation created in 1946 to administer Canada's Housing Act after the war. In 1946 it was projected that by the spring of 1947 180,000 units would be needed and that 80% of these would be single family dwellings.²⁸ The design quality of consumer goods and housing directly influenced the standard of living that the White Paper stated was a post-war priority. As much was recognized by the establishment of the National Industrial Design Committee in 1947 and on a larger scale by the Research Committee of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation in 1948 which, as shall be discussed, sponsored good design in housing and urban planning.

While the NIDC's goal of better design in industrial products may have been in sympathy with the government's emphasis on exports after the war and its intention to "create by all its policies favourable conditions" for business to act on its own initiative and prosper, the strong tone of independence evident in the White Paper may have discredited any government funded body set up on the assumption that industry required tutelage. As late as 1947 C.D. Howe replied negatively to Donald Buchanan's requested support for an Information Service to follow up inquiries to the National Gallery's ambitious overture to establish the importance of design support, the "Design in Industry" exhibition of 1946. Howe did not favour the creation within the government service of any body to carry on that work, but was of the opinion it should be the responsibility of industry itself.²⁹ This response came in spite of the fact that the Department of Reconstruction had co-financed the "Design in Industry" exhibition of 1946, which Howe had opened with a call for closer ties between "art and industry".³⁰

It wasn't until Howe had moved to the Department of Trade and Commerce in January 1948 that he recognized the design factor in the export appeal of Canada's products of secondary industry. In addition to being a domestic problem of rebuilding and reconversion, over the four years since the Reconstruction and Reestablishment Hearings in 1944, industrial design became an issue of international scope, implemented in many countries' export trade strategy. Howe's "Foreword" to a 1949 National Industrial Design Committee publication How the Industrial Designer Can Help You in Your Business, suggests the shift in approach that his new position inspired.

Now that the first great spurt of post-war buying has lessened, consumers, having satisfied immediate wants, are becoming more and more discriminating in the choice of commodities they buy. To meet such rising standards of taste, mass-produced articles, besides being durably constructed, need to be both good to look at and convenient to use. In our export trade, in particular, good design is related directly to the economics of marketing. We must be realistic and face the fact that it is superior design which is helping, in many instances, to sell these new European products in competition with our own goods. 31

This quotation provides one of the very rare instances of C.D. Howe's acknowledgement of aesthetics in design. Industrial design remained for him solely an economic issue. Howe was notorious for his indifference towards art and cultural policy such as the formation of the Canada Council and he supported initiatives to replace the 19th Century Gothic Revival West Block and Library on Parliament Hill with mundane, but more efficient office buildings. 32

The economic importance of improving Canadian exports was brought sharply into focus with the implementation in 1947 by the United States of the "Marshall Plan" that made available economic aid to Europe in order to restore industrial and agricultural production, establish financial stability and expand trade in Europe. The Plan stirred a certain urgency about Canadian exports, not so much due to the potential increase of growth

through trade, but, as reflected in the Howe quotation, because the "Marshall Plan" meant accelerated recovery and stronger competition in the export market. 33

Weaknesses in the structure of Canada's secondary industries, for example the appliance industry, were made all too clear in emergency legislation introduced in November 1947 that prohibited a broad range of U.S. commodities from entering Canada. Such legislation was intended to relax strains on Canada's American dollar reserves. Despite the fact that Canadian manufacturers were at peak capacity after the war, reserves had been drained by massive post-war imports from the United States the bulk of which were consumer goods. 34 This sudden dependence on Canadian manufactured goods has been credited by a contemporary newspaper report as the most significant economic factor in the government's support of the NIDC as Canada had to drastically cut purchases of American goods. 35 In addition something had to be done to lessen the amount of money being paid by Canadian manufacturers not only for American tools and parts, but also for the right to use American designs and blueprints. Sustained demand for indigenous design talent was limited, however, as the prohibited items did not include industrial designs, 36 and by 1950 most of the controls had been lifted. 37 Certainly over the next five years Howe's recorded comments on industrial design reflect a growing commitment. With the start of the Korean War in 1950, Canada's war industries again prospered. Speaking before the NIDC in 1951 Howe was quoted as saying:

Now more than ever industrial designers have an unexampled opportunity to help in the defense effort by making the best use of industrial materials and industrial skills that still remain available for civilian production. 38

By 1953 Howe's enthusiasm has grown such that he made a personal appeal to Walter Harris, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, responsible for the National Gallery, for funds to expand the support staff of the Industrial Design Section.

There is an excellent relationship between industry and this council and I know that you will agree that it is important that this fruitful cooperation should continue. 39

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CHAPTER 2

"DESIGN IN INDUSTRY" EXHIBITION, 1946:

SWORDS INTO PLOUGHSHARES

The "Design in Industry" exhibit, organized by Donald W. Buchanan with the help of architect and town planner Humphrey Carver, and opened at the National Gallery by C.D. Howe, Minister of Reconstruction and Supply, on October 1, 1946. It was to demonstrate clearly that manufacturers, design advocates and government officials required each other's cooperation if they were to achieve the common goal of attractive, well-designed products that could fulfill the needs of Canadian reconstruction and international export markets. The exhibition was financed jointly by the Department of Reconstruction and Supply (DRS), the National Film Board (NFB), the National Research Council (NRC) and the National Gallery. The budget of \$10,000 was a grandiose sum compared to the war-time budget of the National Gallery of \$44,000,¹ but modest relative to the millions Howe was juggling at the time.

An exhibit was originally suggested by the DRS to display the industrial discoveries of the NRC.² As it was the DRS's function to ease the transition from war time to peace time manufacturing, it would have been of great importance for the DRS to inform industry as to how Canadian manufacturing materials used in war time and researched by the NRC such as moulded plywood, magnesium, and plastics could be put to peace time use.

Industrial research had been given high priority by Howe after the war and C.J. Mackenzie, Director of the NRC, also served as Director General of the Research and Development Branch of the DRS. As Howe's biographers, Bothwell and Kilbourn, describe, the Minister of Reconstruction and Supply took a special interest in industrial research:

Mackenzie had suggested the inclusion of a division of industrial research in the new department [DRS] and it was with this in mind that Howe had insisted King add the NRC to his responsibilities. Along with war surplus disposal and industrial conversion, Howe classified scientific research as requiring "intensive action", that is, solely within the purview of Howe's departments. 3

After the war, reconversion of industry to peace time was the concern of allied countries involved in war production, namely Great Britain, United States and Canada. With the implementation of the Marshall Plan in 1947 virtually every industry affected by the war had undertaken some initiative to attend to the speed and efficiency required to meet domestic and export demand.

At some point in the planning between 1944 and 1945 Donald Buchanan and the National Gallery became involved, persuading the DRS to supplement featured new materials with the labour skills required to make them attractive exports. As Buchanan was to report to Howe and other government officials in 1946:

Countries in the competitive export field will make every effort to work out the designs which give the most use and best looks for the least money -- a question of good design. Rapid steps are being taken in other countries... 4

In this respect the "Design in Industry" exhibition was a Canadian version of the "Britain Can Make It" exhibition organized by the Council of Industrial Design of Great Britain in 1945, although in a much more modest scale. The "Britain Can Make it" exhibition also featured functionally designed domestic articles evolved from new

processes, new materials and new technologies developed during the war, providing the opportunity to show manufacturers the need for better design standards before they began full scale production. 5

As Supervisor of Rural Circuits at the NFB from 1941 to 1944, Buchanan would have been likely to hear of a request by the DRS to mount an exhibition on the reconversion of war materials to peace time use. The preparation of such an exhibition would be an extension of the display facilities and propaganda responsibilities of the NFB's Wartime Information Board. In 1945 the NFB created the position of Supervisor of Special Projects to enable him to devote his time to the "Design in Industry" exhibition. 6

Since his encounter with Swedish Design at the Brussels International exhibition of 1935 Buchanan had harboured an ambition to show the achievements of Canadians in this field. 7 Correspondence between Buchanan and the Department of Trade and Commerce suggests he had strong input into the theme of the "Design in Industry" exhibition.

In the exhibition we are preparing on this subject, which had its original inspiration in the desire to show how many of the new discoveries in materials and processes made by the National Research Council of Canada could be adapted to the design of consumer's goods, we now plan to enlarge the scope of the display to material about general problems of the relation of the Canadian designer to Canadian industry. 8

The "Design in Industry" exhibition was not the first to bring to the public's attention the aesthetic values of design or the first to respond to the issue of art and industry. It succeeded where no other had, however, in emphasizing the importance of new materials suited to mass production by showing experimental examples where none existed in the market, in the clear illustration of the rigorous selection criteria it had applied, and by demonstrating the commitment of such key institutions as the National Gallery and the NRC. In 1938 after many years of postponement the Royal Canadian Academy mounted a

"Canadian Industrial Art Exhibition" at the Art Gallery of Toronto inspired by a similar initiative by the Royal Academy in England. 9 For the event competitions were co-sponsored by industry for wallpaper and electric light fixtures. 10 There was no criteria imposed on the selections, other than that they have some design element. The large proportion of commercial graphic art reflected the stated aim of encouraging the public to support the fabrication of Canadian motifs by Canadian designers and also the fact that many artists made their living from commercial work. Other exhibits ranged from appliances by Moffat to craft based design such as silverware by Harold Stacey and "mission oak" by J.J. Ridpath. 11

In post-war Canada promotion of industrial design among cultural institutions was prevalent. In 1945 two industrial exhibitions were held, again in Toronto. The first titled "Design in Industry" was opened at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) in May and co-sponsored by the Canadian Handicrafts Guild. 12 The second titled "Design in the Household" was opened in January 1946 at the Art Gallery of Toronto and co-sponsored by the Canadian Manufacturers' Association. 13 While "Design In The Household" imposed the criteria of clarity and function in design, it had to resort to Finnish examples to best illustrate this aesthetic. 14

The ROM "Design In Industry" show included crafts as an example of the quality of design necessary to produce a work of art and utility. 15 In a review of the ROM "Design In Industry" exhibition Buchanan criticized the title as misleading, claiming the "broader questions of art in industry were neglected" in favour of "the encouragement of very minor crafts":

From airplane construction in Canada, there could have been shown magnesium rods, light as paper and strong as steel, then also the moulded sculptures of plywood and the beauties of plastic and aluminum. 16

Accompanying the review in Canadian Art magazine were two photographs illustrating the use of moulded plywood and aluminum in airplane manufacture during wartime (Figure 1). Buchanan ends the review by encouraging readers, the arts community of Canada, to visit the laboratories of the NRC to see new materials of "functional utility and grace". Would Canadian design one day rival that of Sweden? It was to realize this ambition, perhaps, that Buchanan emphasized in all his public statements a distinctly Canadian industrial design based on materials, skills and the mass production processes available to designers in Canada. In an address to the Canadian Manufacturers' Association in June 1946, for example, he states:

If we get down to the basic technological problems of design
and do not worry about trends and fashions we shall then
probably see
exactly where there is clear thinking in this field. 17

In the organization of the Ottawa "Design in Industry" exhibition Buchanan was able to demonstrate his ideas to the arts community, public and manufacturers, ideas that he was also able to promote as co-editor of Canadian Art. For Buchanan, good design was synonymous with functionalism, combining aesthetic qualities of appearance with the effective use of new materials developed by Canadian industry during the war. It was his intention to show that if functionalism was properly applied to mass production it could improve the quality of life of all Canadians. The idealistic premise behind the exhibition was ably portrayed in the photographic documentation by the NFB (Figure 2). To all exhibits Buchanan applied the notion of "organic design" to connote "due proportion in form and structure" of a "functionally efficient" product. 18

In his endeavour to reflect the relationship between art and industry through design, Buchanan spent many months surveying all aspects of industry. Canadian industry, however, had been so absorbed by war production that not surprisingly little which

reflected good design could be found in stores so soon after its end. The creative approach to solving the technical problems of mass production in moulded plywood had to be illustrated with recent work by foreign designers Charles Eames and Alvar Aalto, on photographic panels organized by the Museum of Modern Art.¹⁹ Humphrey Carver recorded a humorous anecdote that reflects the exhibition's breadth of vision:

...Donald and I went around together, to make a collection of well designed Canadian furniture and artifacts; we hoped to find things that had a purity of integrity and form, unsullied with ornament and artificialities of style... The most immaculate things we found were in a store that supplied hospital and surgical equipment made of glass, ceramics, or steel, and there was some astonishment when Donald and I placed an order for a most unlikely assortment of bulbous glass vessels, white pans, and various instruments of surgical torture that must have suggested a very gruesome medical treatment²⁰

One can only guess at the many comments prompted by this startling display of otherwise prosaic products. Most were manufactured from materials used or developed during the war, exhibited under headings of glass, metals, woods, plastics (Figure 3). Grouping the exhibits this way would emphasize the technological problems referred to above in the Buchanan quotation. The articles were chosen, not because they had been conceived of by an industrial designer, but because they best reflected organic design or how the problem of form had been addressed with reference to the object's function and material. In the glass section large globes made during the war for cathode ray tubes were included to "illustrate the aesthetic possibilities of machine blown glass"²¹ (Figure 4). They were made by Research Enterprises, the glass company that was soon to be sold by C.D. Howe to Corning Glass of the U.S.A.. In the plastics section was a utility mug, made originally to meet the rigorous purchasing standards set by the Royal Canadian Navy. Other plastic products exhibited included an artificial eye, toys, door handles, measuring instruments, tumblers, whistles and radio cases and a clear vinyl raincoat (Figure 5).

Buchanan's approach worked. At least one reporter recognized the need to address technological problems in the design of consumer products. Struck by the potential of plastic, he described it as a "strange new compound ...poured from chemist's tubes throughout the war." 22

Featured in the metals section was a garden chair manufactured by a company previously involved in turning out precision built metal parts for war contracts. A "practical steel floor lamp" had been designed for the operating room, but slightly adjusted for the home and office. A moulded plywood arm chair, with a striking resemblance to a chair design by Alvar Aalto for the Paimo Sanatorium in 1928, was conceived by W. Czerwinski of Stratford, Ontario and made by former Mosquito bomber manufacturers Canada Wooden Aircraft Company.

The lack of technological expertise in Canadian industry in regard to the application of new materials to domestic commodities is reflected in the number of furniture prototypes exhibited. In addition to the plywood chair made by Canada Wooden Aircraft Company and a radio with a moulded plywood cabinet "ready for full scale production in Canada" designed by A.G. Hedwin of Montreal, a number of prototypes and Canadian "firsts" in industrial design were accomplished by the NRC's Structures Laboratory. A nesting table with a distinct resemblance to a Charles Eames' design was moulded by the NRC by applying synthetic plastic adhesives to plywood veneers. 23 The NRC's recent experimentation with plastic and fibreglass was exploited by the fabrication of a stacking chair with a coloured coating of airplane paint designed by A.J. Lonahue and shown in the exhibition under the plastics section. It was produced by placing layers of cotton, impregnated with plastic resins, over a wooden moulding form to which had been added a top veneer of fibreglass. It was then baked by means of low pressure suction in an autoclave, 24 an early example of a moulded fibreglass chair (Figure 6). In the metals section was shown an

experimental chair made from magnesium metal extracted from dolomite, a process developed by Dr. Lloyd Pigeon of the NRC. 25

Buchanan made every effort to mount an exhibition that would reflect realistically the potential of design in Canadian industry. Prototypes were necessary to bring new technologies to the attention of manufacturers. Some impediments to good design in Canada, however, were economic and not simply technical. The CMA publication Industrial Canada was to report that the exhibition demonstrated Canada's dependence on American designed products by the number of familiar articles not included because they were manufactured and designed outside Canada, 26 a forecast of Canada's booming branch plant economy in the 1950s. Over 300 items were finally assembled, ranging from shopping bags, plastic sun glass frames, buttons and ceramics by Medalta Potteries in Medicine Hat, Alberta. The Ottawa Evening Citizen noted with some enthusiasm the "Sample Room" which was furnished with sectional furniture by Snyders Limited, and a sectional cupboard by Gibbard's Ltd. of Napanee. "In this room is a cupboard with sliding glass panels. It was assembled from units of wooden furniture which can be butted together to make various arrangements..." 27 Such were the needs of post-war living - adaptability and flexibility in increasing limited living spaces.

Following the function of the films Buchanan sent out as Supervisor of Rural Circuits for the NFB, the "Design in Industry" exhibit was to travel across Canada for at least the next four years stopping in Vernon, British Columbia in 1948 and Pictou, Nova Scotia in 1950. Reviews of the exhibition reveal that the popular press was not entirely comfortable with the aesthetic implications of design and were wary that the exhibition revealed the limitations as well as the potentials of Canadian industry. They welcomed a display of Canadian products just as during the war they had welcomed news of Canadian-made munitions and artillery. Financial Post noted the "merchandise of tomorrow" and called it "significant and promising" 28 and Canadian Business proposed

that the exhibition was convincing evidence Canada could "produce manufactured articles of an "original type".²⁹ "It undoubtedly was one of the most unique and educational displays ever brought to the city [Winnipeg]", claimed Manitoba Industrial Topics. It went on to report that in Winnipeg response was such that 22,000 people attended a 3-week installation of the exhibition in the T. Eaton Company's store.³⁰

"Design In Industry" intended to instruct the public about good design and instruct manufacturers about the importance of using designers and new materials. The many prototypes exhibited intended to demonstrate what could be achieved by Canadian industry if research into the particular technical problems of manufacturing were attended to by government. Unfortunately industrial research was never followed up adequately despite the fact that it was clearly made policy in the 1945 White Paper. By 1950 Canadian industry again became involved in war production for the conflict in Korea and research into consumer products was left to manufacturers while the NRC followed aeronautical interests. The NIDC was to grow out of the "Design in Industry" exhibition as an Information Service to answer the flood of questions about design from the public, press and manufacturers eager to find capable designers. The government, however, clearly drew the line on the degree of intervention with regard to research into the application of new materials to consumer products after World War II.

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CHAPTER 3

INSTITUTIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL DESIGN COUNCIL PRIVATE VS PUBLIC ENTERPRISE

In order to understand how the NIDC shifted its program focus from a concern with progressive tendencies in industrial design just after World War II to a concern with consumer-orientated values in the 1950s, it is necessary to focus on the most influential individuals, the ideas they advocated and the dynamics between public and private models followed in the organization of the NIDC. After visiting the NRC's laboratories during the organization of the "Design In Industry" exhibition, Donald Buchanan became enthusiastic about promoting advanced design research, an outlook reflected in his initial proposal for a council, undated but probably written in 1946. 1 The "Design In Industry" exhibition had highlighted the contribution of NRC scientists to the development and application of new industrial materials. Buchanan's proposal, circulated to the Departments of Reconstruction and Supply and National Health and Welfare, headed by Brooke Claxton, and the NRC, headed by C.J. MacKenzie, called for the formation of a permanent national body to support industrial design along the lines of the NRC:

Research in industrial design should be encouraged by government in the same way as research in technical problems of industry is financed through the NRC... 2

This position reveals Buchanan's astute understanding of post-war political currents in the Liberal government. When C.D. Howe was appointed as Minister of the Department of Reconstruction in 1944 industrial research straight away became a priority and he in turn appointed C.J. Mackenzie as Director General of the Research and Development Branch.³ In return correspondence both Mackenzie and Claxton responded favourably to Buchanan's request. This suggests that Howe was pressured to act on the matter by his cabinet and civil service colleagues.⁴ In the government's White Paper on Employment and Income, discussed in Chapter 1, scientific research in industry is clearly identified as an issue.⁵ No doubt Buchanan felt he would gain needed support among politicians for a permanent publicly funded body if it was devoted to solving the industrial problems prevalent after the war. The NIDC, Buchanan pointed out, could function like an adjunct to the NRC, responsible for experimental work in the "proper application to design of certain new products such as moulded plywood and magnesium."⁶

Five years after this proposal the NIDC had developed in a very different direction, but Buchanan remained enthusiastic about a design council that would sponsor original scientific and design research. In 1953 Buchanan attended the 3rd International Aspen Design Conference where he was introduced to efforts by the Stanford Research Institute in California to organize a design research division to relate scientific developments to possibilities for improved design in architecture, engineering and manufactured products. "For the first time in history," reported Buchanan to the NIDC, "design research had been accepted as an integral part in scientific research."⁷ The association of industrial design with scientific research continued into the mid 1950s emerging as the theme of a 1955 Canadian Manufacturers' Association (CMA) Conference "Scientific Research and

Industrial Design - Pillars of Progress." In his address, "Is Good Design good business?", National Gallery Director Alan Jarvis, formerly Director of Public Relations for the COID, was to define industrial design as an applied art and compare it to applied science. 8

As a body to promote design research, the NIDC would have differed from recent precedents in New York at the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) and the Council of Industrial Design (COID) in London which did not concern themselves directly with sponsoring industrially designed products. However, ongoing fabrication by the NRC or the NIDC of designs was not widely supported⁹, although the NRC remained involved in the NIDC throughout the 1950s and administered the scholarship program, discussed in Chapter 5. 10 While the importance of research into mass produced consumer goods was not felt to be wholly a responsibility of government in Canada, research into the design of mass produced post-war housing was recognized by the establishment of the Research Committee of the Central Mortgage and Housing Company (CMHC) headed by Humphrey Carver. Unlike Carver's Research Committee, which was wholly tax supported, the NIDC was understood to be in a position to gain funding from private enterprise. In the National Housing Act of 1944, five million dollars were set aside for housing research in areas such as prefabrication and planning. Carver was trained as an architect at the Architectural Association in London, England and in Canada was involved in many important planning projects, such as the Queen Elizabeth Way in the early 1930s. Like his close friend Donald Buchanan, whom he had helped organize the "Design In Industry" exhibition, he was concerned not only with the "what" of technical research and Canada's new industrial strength, but also with its cultural and aesthetic impact. Recalling his strategy as Chairman of the CMHC Research Committee, Carver has stated he was concerned with promoting "design for living" or the "principles of organic design that might help to make places more hospitable to a good life" 11, principles that echo MOMA

publications and reflect very much the terms applied to mass produced commodities in the Design For Use catalogue that followed the "Design in Industry" exhibition.

The NIDC and the CMHC shared the institutional objective of encouraging excellence in design and, as shall be discussed in Chapter 4, they were to collaborate on an exhibition in 1953, "Small Houses and Their Furnishings". The encouragement of good design in mass produced housing by the CMHC was to be more fully addressed in 1956 with the establishment of the Canadian Housing Design Council (CHDC), a step which contrasts with the NIDC's de-emphasis on aesthetics during the same period. Considered the architectural equivalent of the NIDC, the CHDC recognized well-designed domestic architecture and was founded by many of those involved in the early activity of the NIDC including R.C. Berkenshaw, President of Goodyear Canada, former judge in the Design Merit Awards of the NIDC, Alan Jarvis, then Director of the National Gallery, and John Bland, head of McGill School of Architecture, appointed as one of the first judges in the Design Index in 1947.¹²

The NIDC was hampered from the beginning by vacillating purposes, policies and support problems attributable to its democratic committee structure. Consequently, there was indecision over public or private funding and whether industrial design served aesthetic or economic ends. Despite the call for some public institutional support of design as early as 1944 at the Reconstruction and Reestablishment Hearings, it wasn't until 1947 that an interdepartmental committee consisting of representatives from the DTC, the NRC and ACID, as well as Buchanan and H.O. McCurry, Director of the National Gallery, met to approve the National Gallery's initiative of setting up an industrial design Information Service.¹³ Of these members McCurry and Buchanan would have best understood the argument of how institutional support for industrial design would have been in the national interest and had no doubt given extensive thought to the matter. The

next year in 1948 the National Industrial Design Committee was established consisting of a total of 30 manufacturers, retailers, designers, research and education officials and supported by a grant from the Dominion government on the understanding that supplementary funds would be obtained later from industry. As it was thought important for the Information Service to include a qualitative Design Index, it was decided that the National Gallery was most appropriate because the National Gallery Act of 1913 gave it the mandate of supporting applied art ¹⁴ and, most significantly, because of their association with standards of taste. While never published it was understood that the DTC, and presumably the industrial sector they represented, had no mandate to "rate products", a function more suited to the National Gallery. ¹⁵

Without the hoped-for financial support from industry the NIDC became essentially a sub-committee of the National Gallery Board of Trustees who appointed the members and approved the budget. The extent of the National Gallery's overshadowing authority was such that the NIDC never produced an annual report. Its activities were reported under the Industrial Design Division of the National Gallery (IDD). The name change to National Industrial Design Council in 1953 while seeming to sound more independent, signalled formalization of responsibility to the National Gallery by a revision of the National Gallery Act. This Act required much cooperation between the National Gallery and the private sector, a relationship that continued to be envisioned, but was never fully realized. ¹⁶ The National Gallery was a prestigious addition to the National Gallery responsibilities. In 1953, Parliament was to fund the IDD and NIDC with \$43,867, \$10,000 more than was expended on regular exhibition and education programs and nearly a quarter of the total for the National Gallery itself. ¹⁷

The cooperative undertaking between art and industry that idealized the NIDC was reflected in its committee structure. Initially launched as an "experimental" program

under the wing of the National Gallery, it was headed by high profile members of the business community. 18 These included Floyd Chalmers, Chairman of Maclean Hunter publications, who served as Vice Chairman 1951 to 1954, G. Allan Burton, General Manager of Robert Simpson Company who oversaw the organization and implementation of the Design Merit Awards to Industry from 1952 to at least 1955 and Donald B. Cruikshank, President of the Steel Equipment Co. Ltd. of Toronto who became the first Chairman of the National Industrial Design Committee in 1949, remaining active as CMA representative until about 1954. Members representing consumer groups, architects, retail, government and designers participated in policy decisions through an impressive sub-committee structure, organized by Buchanan, that met twice a year in spring and fall to report on the Design Merit Awards, Publicity, the Design Index, Training and Scholarship, and the CMA relations. Women played an active role on the NIDC through the Canadian Association of Consumers and as representatives of the media.

While it appeared the organization was in place for successful cooperation between private and public sectors, the 1947 decision to establish an NIDC had placed it firmly in control of the National Gallery. Business members boosted by post-war economic performance did not all share the opinion that art and industry were an ideal linkage, or that this linkage was required at all. By the early 1950s many members felt the NIDC had outgrown the National Gallery and were actively supporting initiatives that would free it from the National Gallery, or at least make it seem less like a branch or division of the National Gallery. In 1951 a "Report on Possible Development of Regional Activities and Consolidation of the National Industrial Design Committee" emphasized the need for a more balanced promotion of private and public interests accounting for the engineering, merchandizing and advertising services of industrial design. 19 It went on to warn that the link between the National Gallery and the NIDC served only to strengthen the belief

that the industrial designer was an industrial artist, rather than a complex professional individual. These concerns paralleled those of the education sub-committee which reported that the current education level available at colleges where artists were trained, would not prepare designers adequately for the professional world. 20

The question of institutional responsibility and independence was confronted as an NIDC policy issue in 1951 when Walter Bowker, Director of Information, Information Division of the DTC, was asked by Donald Buchanan to make some recommendations on the future course of the NIDC. 21 Bowker made his report to Floyd Chalmers, then head of the Publicity Sub-Committee and Vice-Chairman of the NIDC. While supportive of the NIDC's work, Bowker felt the NIDC should receive an "outright non-accountable grant" rather than financial support through the National Gallery and use of the Gallery staff and facilities. Bowker was also critical of the close association of the NIDC to the National Gallery suggesting it placed undue emphasis on the "aesthetics" of good design. What he didn't include in the report was the view that the DTC should take over the NIDC entirely as a necessary measure for securing business support, an early omen that the DTC would do just that in another 9 years. 22 Chalmers incorporated Bowker's recommendations immediately into the Publicity Sub-Committee policy. At the September 1951 NIDC meeting he recommended an official liaison with the CMA be established and that some thought be given to the CMA eventually taking over some of the financial responsibility for the operation of the NIDC. 23 Subsequently the NIDC engaged liaison officers whose special task was to establish relations with the CMA and its members. These were successively Walter Bowker, on loan from the Information Division of the DTC from Sept. 1951 to Oct. 1952, Charles Tisdall who had been employed with the Industrial Division of the Wartime Information Board from 1952 until about 1954 and finally George Mallory, also a loan from the DTC. Mallory was to mount a massive letter campaign to manufacturers encouraging

them to enter their products in the Design Awards and to take advantage of the services of industrial designers, especially those who were NIDC scholarship winners. 24

It was also in 1951 that the NIDC Sub-Committee, headed by G. Allan Burton, was struck to develop a Design Awards to Industry program. As discussed in Chapter 6, they were a significant gamble to gain stronger support from industry, absorbing much of NIDC members' time, budget and energy during that period. By 1953 the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery had struck a Sub-Committee on Industrial Design Policy headed by long serving Chairman and Toronto businessman Charles P. Fell. As a long term policy this sub-committee considered the option that the NIDC become a non-profit group relying on sliding fees. 25 This idea, however, hinged on a CMA campaign to raise founder membership subscriptions from industrial firms. In other words, the CMA was expected to support an organization that would compete directly for subscriptions among their own membership. Not surprisingly the CMA retained a low-profile on the issue.

While regular financial support for industrial design was never forthcoming from the CMA, it did provide support within the scope of its ongoing programs or for specific projects. The CMA's cooperation with an initial survey of functional design, undertaken by Buchanan for the "Design in Industry" exhibition of 1946 was not unusual as they had co-sponsored the "Design in the Household" exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario in 1946. They had also heard Buchanan and Alan Jarvis speak at their "Reconstruction and Economic Development Conference" in June 1946 and at that time passed a resolution to study the place of design in industry. 26 Industrial Design Sessions were held in conjunction with the CMA annual meetings in 1949, 1952, 1953 and 1955. These sessions, however, were apparently poorly attended by industrialists at the management level, a crucial target group of the NIDC policy. 27 In a bold and supportive move the January issue of the 1955 CMA publication Industrial Canada was almost entirely devoted to the

activities of the NIDC. In September 1951 the CMA established a sub-committee on Industrial Design charged with the problem of framing its policy and activities with respect to industrial design, and, presumably the CMA's part in a future national industrial design organization, independent of government support. 28 However, terms of reference were not given and the sub-committee never effected any policy recommendations.

Perhaps many of the CMA members' attitudes toward industrial design and designers can be summed up in the Ottawa representative's description of the first Design Award ceremonies in 1953:

I attended the function last year and decided to give a miss this year. What happens is that the crowd assembles, stands around for a little while, listens to a couple of five minute speeches by Messrs. Harris and Howe and then takes a look at the exhibits and disperses. There are more people in the group who require haircuts than are freshly shorn. 29

With the appointment of Alan Jarvis as National Gallery Director in 1955, any dissatisfaction within the NIDC over its close relationship to the National Gallery would have to contend with a personality who viewed the NIDC Design Centre activities as a way in which the National Gallery could play an important role in the community. Jarvis, who had been Director of the Public Relations for the COID from 1945 to 1947, was dedicated to raising public awareness of art and public taste in general, in the hope that this would result in demand for better design. Before the CMA in 1955 he declared:

We need artists in our community very badly and I would justify, on that ground alone, the fact that the National Industrial Design Council is allied with the National Gallery of Canada. 30

Jarvis' background with the COID must have contributed significantly to his qualifications as Director of the National Gallery of Canada. Jarvis was concerned with

reaching the largest possible audience with the design gospel. One of his first initiatives as Director was to hire graphic designer Paul Arthur to give the National Gallery Annual Report an attractive new layout. His approach emphasized the accessibility of design as a visual exercise, broadening its application from a set of principles applied to mass produced objects to organic patterns of growing mushrooms, the colour symbolism of streetlights and the texture of egg cartons. Buchanan, a quiet individual because of a severe hearing impairment, tended to keep a low profile and avoided flamboyance in his writings. In contrast Jarvis appeared on TV and film and encouraged novel exhibitions. In 1957 he appeared in The Things We See, a TV series produced in Ottawa and presented on the theme of art and the visual environment. In one sequence a stop light is used to demonstrate the everyday significance of colour. Jarvis moves into the picture and exclaims "Colour - our very lives depends on it." 31

Jarvis' style was undoubtedly formulated by his experience with the COID, organized in London in 1944 by the Board of Trade on the recommendation of the Sub-Committee on Industrial Design and Art in Industry, which reported to the Post-War Export Trade Committee of the Department of Overseas Trade. 32 The COID was preceded during the war by the Board of Trade's "Utility Scheme" to replace furniture lost in bombing raids. Set up in 1942 this program imposed specifications of good design which manufacturers of furniture were required to follow. 33 This direct role in design of products was dropped after 1944, but the legacy of government intervention remained. The COID concentrated less on presenting criteria of quality and more on raising design awareness among the general public and industry through easily read publications and exhibitions such as "Britain Can Make It" in 1946.

The U.S. precedent of industrial design support at MOMA, based on the visionary premise of modernism and funded by philanthropy, provided no example of centralized,

coordinated action at a national level by the many interests served by industrial design promotion. The structure of the Canadian council would reflect the COID as it was reorganized in 1948 by Gordon Russell into an Information Division and an Industrial Division.³⁴ The functions of these two divisions were reflected in the IDD and NIDC respectively. The Information Division of the COID was responsible for exhibitions, retail trade inquiries, propaganda and publications, while the Industrial Division looked after establishing closer ties with industry and ensuring a supply of well designed products from industry and a flow of trained design talent to industry. As well both the British and Canadian Councils were to support regional branches in Glasgow and British Columbia respectively.

In contrast to the emphasis on high ideals and abstract concepts of reflected in the publications of the MOHA Department of Industrial Design, the Information Division of the COID promoted good design principles only by circumlocution. The approach of the COID focussed on public participation by presenting examples of good design and then asking them to recognize design value with hints about efficiency, appearance and materials. This strategy was reflected in the booklet Alan Jarvis wrote while with the COID in 1946, The Things We See³⁵, that encouraged the layman to be more visually aware of shapes, textures and colour. Jarvis' booklet did not promote one product over another. This tactic of passive persuasion was followed in the "Design Quiz" project of the "Britain Can Make It" exhibition held in 1946.³⁶ Plastic coins were used to register preferences between current design, pre-war furniture and antiques. The public were instructed to look carefully at the exhibits, then compare and discuss them. "The future of British design rests in the long run with you" was the slogan.³⁷

Public participation was also encouraged by the NIDC in a "Design Quiz" section at the Design Centre shown at the Canadian National Exhibition in 1948. It compared new mass

produced products to antiques and pre-war examples, asking the public to vote on their preference.³⁸ However, a booklet published by the NIDC and the Canadian Association of Consumers (CAC), It Pays to Buy Articles of Good Design in 1951, departs from the British practice of presenting the choice and letting the public make the decision. It Pays to Buy Articles of Good Design is highly didactic and outlines detailed distinctions between "good" and "bad" design based upon modernist criteria of "efficiency", "honest texture" and "simplicity" necessary for inclusion in the Canadian Design Index. On another occasion the NIDC sent out a leaflet Story Behind the Design Centre, in 1953, to CAC members urging them to be "discriminating shoppers" by considering the "principles of good design", whether the material was suitable for the use and if the product was economical to operate.³⁹

Under Alan Jarvis' directorship prescriptions for consumer behaviour, reflective of the MOHA approach, were replaced by exhibitions with wider educational appeal such as "Design-- Look This Way" and "The Streets We Live In", "Textile and Colour". "Design Look This Way", organized for the 1958 British Columbia Trade Fair, emphasized how the designer draws his basic principles from nature with such comparisons as Leonardo da Vinci's drawing of a flying machine to an enlarged photograph of an insect wing.⁴⁰ Other initiatives to increase National Gallery input and control of the NIDC included increasing the Design Centre staff and implementing a "Speakers Bureau" of NIDC members who were to offer talks on design. While Director of the National Gallery, Alan Jarvis attempted to take a more visible role in the NIDC programs. In 1959, for instance, he is photographed in the usual place of the politicians presenting Design Award Certificates to the winners.⁴¹ In 1958 an executive meeting of the NIDC was held to have Jarvis clarify matters of responsibility and authority with the Board of Trustees, the National Gallery, the IDD and the NIDC. Jarvis made it clear that the Design Centre was under his control through its

director, Norman Hay, who succeeded Donald Buchanan in 1956 and whose position was re-defined at the meeting from secretary to executive director of the NIDC. 42

Jarvis' tightening control of the Design Centre and his insistence that industrial design promotion continue to follow a broader pattern of passive persuasion reflects the public responsibility of the COID approach. This approach was in direct contrast to the prevalent nationalist mood of industrialists and professional industrial designers on the NIDC. These members, in the years following the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects, were concerned that industrial design should hold a higher profile in private enterprise and play a more direct part in increasing Canada's share of the export market.

ENDNOTES

1. NGCA. Outside Activities/Organizations. 7.4-D File 1. [Donald W. Buchanan], "Design in Industry", typed memorandum [1946], [3 pages].
2. Ibid., p. 2.
3. Bothwell and Kilbourn, op. cit., p. 186.
4. NGCA. 7.4-D File 1. Correspondence from Brooke Claxton to H. O. McCurry 10 April 1946 and correspondence from C.J. Mackenzie to Brooke Claxton 17 April 1946.
5. Canada. Department of Reconstruction, op. cit., p. 17.
6. NGCA. 7.4-D File 1. [Donald W. Buchanan] "Design In Industry" memorandum, [1946], p. 2.
7. NGCA. 7.4-D File 6. Donald Buchanan, "Report on Third Annual International Design Conference Aspen, Colorado", [October 1953] page 1.
8. Alan Jarvis, "Is Good Design good business?", Industrial Canada, Vol. 1, No. 3 (July 1955) p. 223.
9. PAC. RG 20 Vol. 997 File 13-2 Part 1 Vol. 1. Correspondence from Brooke Claxton to H.W. Mackenzie, Deputy Minister Department of Trade and Commerce April 16, 1946.
10. NRCA. File No. 3-12-N.4-2 Vol. 1. Memorandum from W.J. Cox, Structures Laboratory, to J.H. Parkin, Mechanical Division, NRC, 21 July 1948. The NRC Structures Laboratory was more involved in advanced aviation engineering design and gradually replaced research into moulded plywood by structural investigations of metal for aircraft. The cooperation of the NRC in the 1946 "Design in Industry" exhibition was followed up only once in 1948 by a moulded plywood chair as a special favour for the MIDC's ambitious "Design Centre" exhibition at the Canadian National Exhibition. The NRC agreed to provide their autoclave and technical advice to mould a wooden chair of laminated supporting members with a one piece seat and back of moulded plywood designed by Harold Hicks of the University of Toronto architecture school. NRC personnel, however, felt material costs were such that a price tag of \$100 was far too low for such a chair and industry would never be interested.
11. Humphrey Carver, Compassionate Landscape, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976, page 145.
12. Ibid., p. 156.
13. NGCA 7.4-D File 1. National Gallery of Canada. "Minutes Of Meeting On Industrial Design Information Services at the National Gallery of Canada", June 17, 1947, 4 p.m..

14. [Canada. National Industrial Design Council]. Industrial Design - A Report On Cooperation Between Government And Industry In Canada, 1947-1953. [Ottawa, 1953].
15. This point was again emphasized by Buchanan when he drew up a draft for the National Gallery Act amendment that would recognize the National Industrial Design Council in 1953, but O.J. Firestone, the DTC representative of the NIDC requested rewording to the effect "it was felt that the National Gallery was the most appropriate agency to take on the work of encouraging good design in industry." PAC. RG 20 Vol. 997 File 13-2 Part 3. Interoffice Memo, Department of Trade and Commerce from O.J. Firestone to Mitchell Sharp, Assistant Deputy Minister April 15, 1953. NGA 7.4-D File 5 "Industrial Design Division, National Gallery of Canada, and National Industrial Design Committee", typed memorandum [c1950].
16. Firstly, it was to advise government departments interested in industrial design, secondly to develop new projects directly in cooperation with industry and education, and thirdly to help coordinate existing governmental, industrial and educational projects in industrial design and advise on request to industry. NGCA. 7.4-D file 5. National Gallery of Canada. Draft copy of the National Gallery of Canada Act: By-Law establishing the National Industrial Design Council, June 8, 1953, page 1.
17. Canada. National Gallery of Canada. Annual Report 1953-1954, Ottawa, 1955.
18. National Gallery of Canada By-Law, op. cit., page 1.
19. NRCA. File No. 3-12-n.4-2 Vol. 1. NIDC. "Report on Possible Development of Regional Activities and Consolidation of the National Industrial Design Committee", April 1951, page 2.
20. See discussion in chapter "National Industrial Design Educational Policies"
21. PAC. RG 20 Vol. 997 File 13-2 Part 2. Correspondence from Walter Bowker to Floyd Chalmers, 4 August 1951, page 1.
22. PAC. RG 20 Vol. 997 File 13-2, Part 2. Interoffice correspondence from B.C. Butler, Director of the Information Division, Department of Trade and Commerce to B.R. Haydon, Acting Director, Industrial Development Division, Department of Trade and Commerce, 28 August 1951.
23. PAC. RG 20 Vol. 997 File No. 13-2 Part 2. NIDC. "Report of the Publicity Sub-Committee to the National Industrial Design Committee", [Chairman Floyd Chalmers] September 1951.
24. PAC. RG 20 Vol. 997 File No. 13-2 Part 4. Mallory was expected to make personal contact with over 200 companies as well as interview all ACID members. Interoffice Correspondence, Department of Trade and Commerce from O.J. Firestone to Mitchell Sharp, 30 October 1953.

25. PAC. RG 20 A4 Vol. 1432. National Gallery of Canada. Board of Trustees. "Minutes of the Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Industrial Design Policy", Toronto, May 11, 1953. Charles P. Fell, Chairman.
26. Betsy Mosbaugh, "Design in Industry' Exhibition Opens", Industrial Canada, Vol. 47, No. 7 (November 1946) p. 102.
27. PAC. HG 28 1230 Vol. 116 (Industrial Design 1950-1954), CMA Papers. CMA. "Memorandum of a Meeting held on Wednesday February 3, 1954 between Messrs. Whitelaw, General Manager of the CMA and Frechette with Floyd Chalmers, Executive Vice-President, Maclean Hunter", 3 February 1954.
28. Ibid..
29. PAC. HG 28 1230 Vol. 116. Correspondence from Willis George, CMA Ottawa Representative to J.C. Whitelaw March 4, 1954.
30. Jarvis, op.cit..
31. Peter Newman, "Is Jarvis Mis-spending Our Art Millions?", Maclean's Magazine, Volume 71, No. 24, (November 22, 1958), page 42.
32. Michael Farr, Design in British Industry: A Mid-Century Survey, Cambridge, 1955 p. 208.
33. Jonathan Woodham, The Industrial Designer and the Public, London: Pেমbridge, 1983, p. 61.
34. Fiona MacCarthy, A History of British Design 1830-1970, London, Boston, Sydney: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1979, p. 81.
35. Alan Jarvis, The Things We See Indoors And Out, Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1946, 63 pages.
36. Woodham, op.cit., p. 67.
37. Ibid., p. 68, note 7.
38. "These are the ones the experts picked", Canadian Art, Vol. 6, No. 2 (Christmas 1948) p. 59.
39. NGCA. 12-4-27 Exhibitions In Canada: Design Look This Way, 1958. "Look This Way For Fine Art", Queen's Journal, October 21, 1958, clipping.
40. NIDC. The Story of the Canadian Design Centre. Encouraging Better Design in Canadian Products, Ottawa: National Gallery, [1955].
41. Illustration for L.G. McIntosh, "NIDC Launches a new program", Product Design and Engineering, (December 1959) p. 17.
42. NGCA 7.4-D File 6. NIDC. "Minutes Of The Executive Meeting Of The National Industrial Design Council", Design Centre, Ottawa, April 3rd, 1958.

CHAPTER 4

THE INDUSTRIAL DESIGN DIVISION OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY:

MACHINE VS APPLIED ART

While the Industrial Design Division (IDD) was set up to be the administrative arm of the NIDC, it also organized exhibitions, managed publications, competitions, awards and a qualitative Design Index, applying curatorial skills to the propaganda of good design. This responsibility was an unusual one for an art gallery in Canada, but the post-war period was a time when museums were under pressure to prove they weren't simply the "dead, inert, exotic" institutions that Frederick Haines implied in his 1939 address to the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada discussed in Chapter 1. This chapter will discuss how the success and strength of the programs organized under the IDD must be credited to the influence of the Department of Industrial Design of the Museum of Modern Art (MOHA) in New York which existed as one of the few precedents for art galleries to draw upon.

MOHA was respected for promoting industrial design as its program overcame the disparity between art and industry by allying both in the grand vision of modernism. It was the MOHA's mandate to promote modern art and its application to practical life, but the National Gallery was chosen because of it was granted responsibility for applied art in

Gallery Act of 1913. Its image as the caretaker of the fine arts in Canada was needed to lend credibility to the qualitative judgement implicit in the promotional strategy of good design. Applied art, however, was not necessarily limited to industrial production and could include graphic design, as well as craft skills such as ceramic painting, wood work and metal work. In the years following the war, the National Gallery adopted a narrow interpretation of the term in order to meet the mandate of the IDD and the NIDC.

With the formalization of the National Industrial Design Committee to the National Industrial Design Council, the opening of the Design Centre and the launching of the Design Merit Awards to Industry in 1953 the IDD was to be more closely coordinated with the activities of the NIDC. The opening of the Design Centre in the commercial district of Ottawa at Albert and Elgin streets made possible over 60 exhibitions between 1953 and 1960 "to promote better design in Canadian products and to introduce the consumer to original Canadian work of merit in articles of everyday use".¹ As a satellite of the National Gallery the Design Centre provided NIDC headquarters with a certain autonomy, but it never attempted to appear fully independent of the National Gallery. In an organizational chart of 1953 found in the personal papers of H.O. McCurry, the Director of the National Gallery, the IDD is referred to as a curatorial branch of the Gallery.² At the end of the previous chapter it was discussed how Alan Jarvis attempted to align the IDD programming to his own views of how design should be promoted. As noted both McCurry and Jarvis believed that industrial design fell within the sphere of applied art.

The National Gallery's Design Index criteria stopped short of such idealistic statements published by the MOHA as "Modern Design should express the spirit of our times,"³ but it agreed on many other points outlined in the "Twelve Precepts of Modern Design" proposed by Edgar Kaufmann of the MOHA as early as 1946, such as the importance

of functionalism, or appearance suited to purpose; "texture and colour" in proper relation to material; and no unnecessary ornament or "styling", the practice of altering the design without functional justification. In accordance with a qualitative curatorial function the Design Index met strict guidelines that combined aesthetic and technical criteria in categories of "Form and Commodity", "Production" and "Originality".⁴ In the years before copyright legislation "Originality" was included to ensure that adaptations of foreign designs weren't simply blatant plagiarism. Not only in theoretical matters was advanced American design acknowledged, it pervaded even the cover graphics of the National Gallery's 1949 booklet, Canadian designs for everyday use (Figure 7) which bears a distinct resemblance to a catalogue from about that time of Knoll Associates of New York (Figure 8). The opening lines of the Canadian publication written by Buchanan read:

Today we can observe everywhere in the western world, among both informed consumers and manufacturers, a growing emphasis on functional grace and utility as the basic requisites for good design in articles made for everyday use.⁵

The proximity of the United States no doubt accounted for its continued influence on IDD programming. The MOHA's Department of Circulating Exhibitions often sent design shows to the National Gallery of Canada. The first of these after the war was a set of 24 photographic panels, "Elements of Design" shown in January 1946 and circulated to the rest of Canada until 1953. While organizing the "Design in Industry" exhibition in 1946 Buchanan had visited New York,⁶ perhaps to seek the advice of MOHA's Department of Industrial Design. Exhibition panels for the "Design in Industry" show, containing background on the moulded plywood furniture of Alvar Aalto and Charles Eames, had been prepared by a MOHA curator, Suzanne Wasson-Tucker.⁷

Fitting for the role of an art gallery, the central concern of the MOHA was aesthetics and the recognition of quality. It is well-known today for its permanent collection of

Industrial design. In the 1950s Edgar Kaufmann, for example, worked closely with Bloomingdale's in New York to ensure the store carried and promoted only objects of good design that the museum approved.⁸ This approach was emulated by the IDD as early as 1951, when it was to work with Ottawa department stores selecting items from the stores for the annual show "Christmas Gifts of Good Design" at the National Gallery and Design Centre. In 1955 the National Gallery was to report that the Christmas gift exhibition was a tremendous success, drawing large crowds of people per day into the Design Centre.⁹ The Christmas exhibition remained a popular annual event until the Design Centre closed in 1961. As well, Eaton's and Simpson's department stores were to regularly exhibit the Design Awards.¹⁰

MOHA's debt to philanthropy and its close cooperation with private enterprise in promoting industrial design did not exclude a genuine social commitment. In Kaufmann's words: "The Department [of Industrial Design] has as its first duty to recommend to the general public the best modern design."¹¹ "Styling" was thought acerbate by both the MOHA and the publications of the IDD. Such competitions organized by the MOHA as "International Competition for Low-Cost Furniture Design" in 1948 was one of many efforts to make good design affordable and, as will be discussed in the chapter on Design Awards, was another program that the Canadians attempted to emulate with the 1951 competition "Design for Normal Living Requirements".

The Albright Gallery in Buffalo and the Walker Art Centre in Minneapolis, Minnesota were also acknowledged by Donald Buchanan as sharing the National Gallery's goal of promoting well designed mass produced objects that followed certain criteria.¹² While correspondence from the Albright Gallery suggests that they had only recently begun a Design Index in 1946,¹³ the Walker Art Centre had been active since at least 1944 with an Everyday Art Gallery to encourage a "better environment for daily living". Like the Design

Centre in Ottawa, it catered to consumer interests, and included a reading lounge with up to date magazines and books on art, architecture and industrial design. 14 (Figure 9) The Design Index's publication as Design Index annuals perhaps followed the example of the Walker Art Center, which in 1945 began publishing Everyday Art Quarterly, "a guide to well designed products". 15 Direct contact with the Walker Art Centre, however, can't be supported with existing correspondence. American influences turn up as well in the organization of the NIDC Design Merit Awards to Industry begun in 1953. As shall be discussed these awards were modelled after the "Good Design" awards and exhibitions begun in 1950 by Merchandise Mart in Chicago in collaboration with MOMA.

The MOMA, Walker Art Centre and the Albright Gallery each provided illustrations of well-designed mass production items to the consumer, press and industry. A pictorial card index, selected on less rigorous standards, had been started in 1948 by the COID and by 1951 numbered 20,000. It was only in 1953 that the COID developed from this stocklist a "Design Review" of only 2,000 photographs based on design criteria of "good materials and workmanship, fitness for purpose and pleasure in use." 16 In contrast to the British index the Canadian index included only about 150 designs by 1953. 17 Of the 150 products that did qualify for the Design Index many often appeared together during the early years in exhibitions and publications extolling the virtues of contemporary modern industrial design. One of the reasons for so few eligible products may have been the disqualification of foreign designs until 1953 when the Design Index was linked to the Design of Merit Awards. In 1951 Buchanan was to elaborate on the strong curatorial purpose of the Design Index:

In setting strict standards for this Index, the advisory group has acted on the principle that it is unreal to hope for any sound tradition of design in manufactured goods based on purely local demands and regional tastes. Canadian industry must emulate the highest international standards

if it is to compete... Hundreds of Canadian products have been examined. Only a relatively small percentage have been chosen for the Index. 18

The selections for the Design Index were judged by a committee composed of individuals representing design, education, engineering and architecture, who could apply the design criteria that was adopted by the IDD. In 1957 they included Ottawa architect Watson Balharris, Mrs. A. Davidson Dunton of Ottawa, Montreal designer Julien Hébert, Ottawa engineer H.D. Hyman, and Ottawa architect Hart Massey. These individuals had significant influence on products chosen for exhibitions, publications and eventually the Design Awards in 1953.

The Design Index required that items reflect machine values in such criteria as -- form and material suited to the mass production process, a surface without superfluous ornament, and ease of maintenance. Products spanned the range of machine age goods, including furniture, appliances as well as sports and transportation equipment. The availability of new economical materials such as moulded plywood, foam rubber and plastics combined with a world-wide housing crisis, resulted in more compact living spaces that demanded design innovation.

The home would truly become a machine for living, complete with interchangeable parts. Combining living room and dining room functions, a "day bed", or armless settee, was upholstered in foam rubber on rubber slat springs. It was designed by Robin Bush, a Vancouver designer who won acclaim for distinctive furniture designs that expressed production efficiency in lean proportions and continuous lines. 19 (Figure 10) Outdoor folding chairs had been made for many years, but only during the 1950s could Julien Hébert have designed an "all purpose" folding chair in black steel tubing. 20 Hébert, who designed the Man and His World symbol for Expo '67, was initially trained as a sculptor but turned in the early 1950s to industrial design. The plain, machine-molded forms of melamine

plastic dinnerware by Maple Leaf Plastics made their first appearance on the table. 21 One of the more innovative appliances in the Design Index for small kitchens was the refrigerator, electric stove and sink combination of 1955 designed by M. Nathanson and made by Canadian Armature Works Inc. of Montreal, which must reflect the growing popularity of the bachelor apartment 22 (Figure 11).

In two major 1953 exhibitions at the Design Centre, machine production in housing and consumer goods was to be featured. The selection of furnishings for "Canadian Designs of Merit from Trend House" and "Small Houses and Their Furnishings" highlighted the compatibility of post-war architecture and industrial design. "Trend House", a model home erected by the British Columbia Lumber Manufacturers' Association in the Toronto suburb of Thorncrest Village in 1952, promoted B.C. building products, along with contemporary Canadian architecture, industrial design, painting and sculpture. Fabrics were coordinated by the editors of Canadian Home and Garden, art was selected by Douglas Duncan of the Picture Loan Society and craft objects were provided by members of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild 23 (Figure 12). On the walls of the rooms containing Design Index furnishings were hung paintings by David Milne and Gerald Gladstone. The architect of the house remained anonymous but it was apparently designed on the open plan, with a walk out verandah through sliding doors, a fashionable house that could be easily mass produced (Figure 13). A newspaper review was to remark on the novel design of "Trend House" where the living and dining area were combined. 24

While "Trend House" was directed toward the more affluent home owner, the exhibition "Small Houses and Their Furnishings" funded by the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), featured the innumerable post-war houses of 1000 square feet or less, built under the impetus of the government's housing policy. Opened at the Design Centre in September 1953 by D.B. Mansur, President of the Corporation, the exhibition

coincided with a CMHC survey to determine average size of living areas in homes and flats built across Canada since the war. 25 It was accompanied by panels that meant to educate the potential home buyer about the amount of space available in a small house. Apparently many homebuyers were shocked when they first viewed their new home undifferentiated from its rows of neighbours, and once inside were equally taken aback by what they had envisioned from the blueprints to be much more expansive. The emphasis of the exhibition was upon the maximum comfort and pleasant appearance of furniture designed specially for "restricted" living areas of a thousand square feet.

The need of adapting to the reality of post-war living spaces was addressed by the popular magazine Canadian Homes and Gardens in a 1952 article titled "How One Couple Made More Living Space in a Standard Bungalow" 26. Consistent with the theme of the exhibition of "Small Houses and Their Furnishings" the article emphasized the suitability of modern design in the new home of industrial designer Robert Kaiser. Working with the contractor, Kaiser opened up doorways in the hallway and living room to create a combined living-dining space. As well, he designed and made his own steel furniture. The article was to illustrate his shapes which were compact and geometrical, utilizing a minimum of material. Kaiser's construction methods provide a touch of irony and that even industrial materials could be worked by hand.

To dramatize the role of the modern machines and technology in design for post-war Canadian society, two rooms in "Small Houses and Their Furnishings" were furnished from the Design Index and compared to a room with furnishings from the 1923 period. In his address at the opening D.B. Mansur referred to the contemporary furnishings as "convenient, comfortable, efficient and economical furnishings" and to the older furnishings as "heavier" furniture of the "previous generation". 27 Indeed, in a photograph based on the exhibition the older furniture appears less conscious of space or

new materials. The progressiveness of the contemporary furniture was enhanced by the modern abstract art on the wall, at the time an avant garde style of painting practiced in Canada by such groups as the Painters Eleven and the Automatistes. These were compared favourably to the traditional historical paintings in the 1923 room (Figure 14).

This comparison of the design values of two generations reflects the significant rationalization of environment that was made possible by industrial development over the war years. As the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur observed of the impact of new technologies on culture in his 1955 essay "Civilisation Universelle Et Cultures Nationales"

...il faut en même temps, pour entrer dans la civilisation moderne, entrer dans la rationalité scientifique, technique, politique qui exige bien souvent l'abandon pur et simple de tout un passé culturel. C'est au fait: toute culture ne peut supporter et absorber le choc de la civilisation mondiale. 28

While Ricoeur had in mind under-developed countries with traditional cultures, his notion of technology and industrialization as unifying factors in modern society, antagonistic to the cultural beliefs of previous generations, is helpful in explaining the rejection of pre-war furnishings by the IDD and the NIEC. It might also be concluded that in modern society industrial design plays the same role as folk craft in pre-industrial cultures.

Twenty years before Ricoeur wrote his essay, MOMA architect-curator Philip Johnson was to reflect the cultural impact of machine production in his influential exhibition "Machine Art" in 1934. To Johnson it was obvious that hand-crafted objects had little place in the age of modern design. In the essay that accompanied this exhibition he made it clear craft was no longer an issue of contemporary designers concerned with mass production.

The name William Morris, the founder of the Arts and Crafts Movement, is still connected with a revolt against machine production and design which had its reverberations on the Continent and even in America. But it was a lost cause....Gradually it was seen, however, that the machines and machine-like objects could have a new and very different beauty from the hand made. 29

The IDD and the Design Index were to differ from the MOHA in one important aspect. The Design Index was to include "custom built or handcraft production" that could be adapted to machine production. 30 Like Johnson, Buchanan would profess to be concerned exclusively with the "broader questions" of industrially mass produced products. He rejected the support of "minor craft" reflected in the Royal Ontario Museum's "Design in Industry" exhibit of 1946, 31 but during early preparations for an NIDC the National Gallery sought assistance from Sweden where a strong tradition in "applied art" had contributed substantially to that country's reputation for superb industrial design. H.O. McCurry, Director of the National Gallery, wrote to the Swedish Society of Arts and Crafts as early as 1946 about the possibility of a Swedish ceramicist and a Swedish furniture designer teaching in Canada, a plan foiled by Canadian immigration laws. 32 The Swedish design which Buchanan saw at the 1935 International Exhibition in Brussels had first won him over to the promise of good design and sparked his ambition to present Canadian achievement in design 33.

Swedish efforts to market craft products and encourage a high standard of design in the home through the League of Swedish Home Craft Associations and the Swedish Homecraft Association 34 were widely respected in Canada. In a letter to Canadian Art Deane H. Russell, secretary to the Interdepartmental Committee on Canadian Hand Arts and Crafts set up in 1942, to study the economic, cultural and educational benefits of a National Handicraft Program, 35 had high praise for the Swedes:

When looking for examples of successful industrial art programs, the student soon takes an interest in the Swedish appreciation of this field, where the promoters of industrial design early recognized their efforts would be incomplete unless comparable efforts were made to encourage the people themselves to participate in design and craft programs on a national scale. 36

The recommendations of Russell's Committee, published in 1944, 37 would have required widespread government intervention, justified by the increased tourist trade that would result, and unlike the NIDC program, it did not involve private sector cooperation. In his letter, Russell criticizes Buchanan for his deprecation in the review of the Royal Ontario Museum exhibition of the "very minor crafts". Ironically, in 1958 after he had resigned from the NIDC, Buchanan was to write the catalogue introduction to the First National Fine Crafts Exhibition held at the National Gallery and organized by the Canadian Handicrafts Guild. 38

The Swedish model had been emulated during the 1930s by the Quebec Department of Agriculture in a ceramic program developed through its handicraft division. In 1941 a project was launched in St. Joseph de Beauce by the Quebec government to train seasonal workers in carpentry, drawing, modelling and pottery. They made their own houses and furniture, farmed during the summer and made pottery during the winter for cash income. 39 Beauce earthenwares were among the first items to be included in the Canadian Design Index in 1947 and were described as "sturdy shapes well adapted to mass production" in the 1949 NIDC booklet Canadian Designs for everyday use (Figure 15).

In 1959 the Design Index's inclusion of non-commercial or hand-made items was publicly criticized by Lawrie MacIntosh 40. Craft simply had little place in Canada's aggressive export policy. During the 1980s, however, as the heritage value of industrial design is recognized, it has again come to be included among the applied arts. The 1982 Report of the Federal Policy Review Committee contained a recommendation that a Canadian Council of Design and Applied Arts be established to cultivate original talent in

graphic, interior, architectural, craft and industrial design. 41 As suggested by the examples in this chapter, after World War II reforms of design in machine production, advocated by William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement during the Victorian years, were found alien to the cause of industrial design. There was a negative reaction to Victorian art in the 1930s, just as there was a negative reaction to Victorian furniture. Today the evolution of industrial design in the Twentieth Century can be viewed more easily as a continuum, with the development and acceptance of technology and the abstraction and specialization of the design process as constant themes.

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5. Ibid., [page 1].
6. NGCA. 7.4-D File 1. Buchanan was sent a teletype from H.O. McCurry c/o the National Film Board office in New York City dated April 5, 1946.
7. NGCA. 5.5-D (Exhibitions in the Gallery) D.W. Buchanan to H.O. McCurry 11 April 1946 re: Susanne Wasson-Buckner's research and introductory panels put together by her on a trip to Ottawa. She was Acting Curator of MOHA's Industrial Design Department.
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CHAPTER 5

NIDC EDUCATIONAL POLICIES: SETTING PROFESSIONAL PARAMETERS

Because of the relatively late development of the field of industrial design in Canada, there was little tradition of public advocacy for good design. The notion that industry should employ individuals trained to design or improve their products was for many businessmen overextending the accord between art and industry. One of the central tasks of the NIDC was to introduce and define the industrial designer's role in commercial activity as distinct from the "in house" engineer. In 1947 a special issue of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada Journal devoted to industrial design, Buchanan described the industrial designer as a "functional artist" who was commissioned or consulted to unite "clarity of structure with fitness for purpose" in mass production, reflecting the prevailing opinion of the cultural community after the war.⁴ Furthermore, he distinguishes between an engineer who works only for one firm and independent "product designers" who work for many firms. The former is limited, according to Buchanan, because his experience is confined to the needs of his employer and may only be able to develop few designs per year. In contrast to Buchanan's point of view, Charles Moffat, industry's spokesman in the same issue of RAIC Journal wrote:

I doubt whether the designer educated via the Fine Arts is willing to compromise, and is sufficiently familiar with industry to propose a better or more aesthetic compromise than has been achieved [by development engineers.] 2

Hoffat goes on to argue that products should be developed by "appearance engineers who have had to specialize" within one industry, in other words "in-house" engineers.

What kind of professional industrial designer should the NIDC encourage and support? The "Design In Industry" exhibition had demonstrated the gap that lay between new technology - materials introduced to Canada during the war such as moulded plywood, aluminum, magnesium and plastics - and the availability of expertise required to develop well-designed products for domestic consumption. Specialization was an undeniable necessity. But the exhibition also demonstrated that there was a single creative process required to solve the technical problems of the application of any new material to mass production.

The establishment of the Affiliation of Canadian Industrial Designers (ACID) coincident with the "Design In Industry" exhibition in 1946 signaled a new era in Canadian design with the arrival of the independent consultant. Initially ACID included only 10 members who handled requests resulting from the exhibition, by deciding among themselves who was best suited to undertake a job. Industrial designers were so few in Canada it was proposed to organize into a design cooperative, along the lines of the Design Research Unit that had been recently formed in Britain. 3 By 1948 ACID was a legally constituted body which regulated and controlled standards of professional practice. The NIDC was to promote ACID's role as a body to foster high standards of design in industrial products. In 1952 the NIDC recommended that ACID members be given the responsibility of revising designs of tables, lamps and other stores for the Department of National Defense. 4 As described in an NIDC booklet, ACID was "a service to the public,

the national culture and economy".⁵ During the 1950s the majority of ACID members consisted of individuals with art college, engineering or architectural backgrounds who then turned to industrial design. For example, Julien Hebert had been trained as a sculptor before he began his design career, Lawrie McIntosh graduated in Mechanical Engineering from University of Toronto and John B. and John C. Parkin ran a successful architectural firm in addition to accepting industrial design commissions.

ACID members avoided theory or the concept of industrial design as an aesthetic endeavour. One of their first brochures General Outline of Services and Charges, undated but probably from the early 1950s, reflects the approach of American designers such as Henry Dreyfuss, Walter Teague and Raymond Loewy. The brochure outlines succinctly and methodically the advantage of hiring an industrial designer who is familiar with Canadian materials and needs. "The Industrial Designer considers fully the functional end use of the product," it explains, "as well as available materials, production facilities, and the sales problems."⁶ The success of the American designers was based on a close relationship with industry and an embrace of the business ideals of marketing and sales appeal. This philosophy was outlined in Dreyfuss' Designing For People, Teague's Design This Day, and Loewy's Never Leave Well Enough Alone.⁷ These books addressed the designer's role in society, the steps in the design process and how to deal with clients, issues close to the hearts of designers at the time. ACID members also had the opportunity to hear both Teague in 1947 and Dreyfuss in 1952 speak publicly in Toronto about industrial design.⁸

The essential need in Canada in the late 1940s was training. Such was recognized by the NIDC education sub-committee struck to establish educational policy. Reflecting a popular trend toward universities after the war, they were to recommend that industrial designers should be trained at a university level. With the numbers of veterans returning

to resume their careers and the high demand for scientific research and highly trained personnel, the post war period saw the start of a new era for universities in Canada. By the early 1950s the size of the university population was double that of 1940.⁹ As well, the Sub-Committee On Education was to recognize that the profession of industrial design was not simply a technical field but a vocation. They were one of the first to report to the NIDC in 1948:

They would need an understanding of contemporary society, an awareness of the social and economic forces and an ability to think comprehensively. Their training would need to give them first hand experience with materials and tools as well as the ability to work with ideas. The course should aim to present the social contexts...in short designers would be comparable to scientists rather than designers comparable to technicians. The latter type may be given training in some of our schools of art and technical colleges at present, but the former type are not trained at all in this country.¹⁰

Could "art and technical colleges" have been an indirect reference to the Ontario College of Art or the Ecole des Meubles, the only institutions at the time to offer design courses? While OCA had been offering industrial design courses since the 1880s, in 1945 it reorganized these courses into a special design department in an attempt to better meet the reality of mass production in industry.¹¹ Reforms included a basic course in the study of "organic shapes", "functional forms" and colour relationships, taught by Wanda Nelles and H.W. Parker, students of Josef Albers, a graduate of the Bauhaus, while he was at Black Mountain College, North Carolina between 1933 to 1949. Cooperation with industry was also being undertaken by OCA regarding decorative patterns for earthenware sets made by Sovereign Potters of Hamilton. The OCA program, however, omitted an essential aspect that revealed its distance from industry. In the continuing emphasis on applied art in textiles, woodworking and lettering Buchanan felt OCA was neglecting the

essential responsibility of design to industry - attention to new materials developed during the war.

The great overshadowing question of the machine, how to design for mass production in plastic or glass, metals or ceramic, has not been tackled as well as it should be by this school. 12

While universities were to cooperate with the introduction of industrial design courses through existing programs in architecture, they were to stop short of implementing a full industrial design degree. At University of Toronto a short industrial design course was introduced for 3rd year architecture students about 1947 along with lectures on topics such as the History of Machines and Tools. At the University of Manitoba lectures on industrial design were given by A.J. Donahue, a former student of Marcel Breuer at Harvard. At University of British Columbia, Fred Lasserre, head of the newly founded School of Architecture, planned to link industrial design instruction with specialized studies in pre-fabrication of built-in bathroom, kitchen and other domestic units. 13

As a program in Canada was not available it was decided to send promising students to the Institute of Design in Chicago, begun by former Bauhaus instructor, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy before World War II. This institution promised to train designers as well as the famous German Bauhaus in the double responsibilities of social context and the problems of the machine. The Institute of Design in Chicago was to receive high praise from the English design historian and theorist, Herbert Read in a report to the Director of the National Gallery in 1946, titled, "The Future of Industrial Design in Canada: A preliminary review of the problem." 14 In 1949 the Institute of Design, now under yet another emigre Serge Chermayeff, and renamed the Illinois Institute of Technology (ITT), was described by the NIDC as "prophetic in vision" and there was every confidence that graduates would return "fully qualified" to practice as industrial designers. 15 From 1948

five scholarships of \$1,000 per year for two years of post graduate study were granted to graduates of schools of art, engineering and architecture by the NIDC. Winners included Lawrie McIntosh, Bud Smale, John Holme and Joan Robinson. It wasn't until 1950 that the NIDC was to financially support students of OCA in a cooperative bursary scheme with the Ontario Ministry of Education.¹⁶

During 1952 educational emphasis on student training, initially intended to ensure a flow of designers into industry, shifted to support of professionals within business and industry who were engaged in some aspect of industrial design. As members representing the industry side of the art and industry equation grew more confident of their place on the Council, their influence increased. Business interests were to dominate the change in strategy that accompanied the introduction of the Design Merit Awards. In 1953 George Mallory, Director of the Industrial Development Division of the DTC, hired on a temporary basis by the NIDC to survey employment possibilities for scholarship holders, wrote to Donald Strudley, Vice Chairman of the NIDC claiming that the students they supported were receiving inadequate training at ITT for Canadian industry.¹⁷ Doubts about the wisdom of two years of study at ITT first emerged during a full meeting of the NIDC in 1952 when it was suggested that after a first year of post-graduate work, scholarship holders should serve the second year apprenticing in industry.¹⁸ By 1953 the scholarships to the "visionary" program at ITT had been discontinued in favour of the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York and the Royal College of Art in London, England.¹⁹ By 1955 "overseas" scholarships for students were dropped altogether and a "greater emphasis" placed on summer school grants for professional industrial designers already engaged in practice to attend seminars at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and University of Syracuse, half the costs of which were born in most cases by the employer.

The shift in education policy reflects the importance the NIDC attached to stressing the role of design in the mass production process on those in industry who had most influence in its inclusion - salesmen, businessmen, managers, employees already involved in some aspect of product development. Education policy became as much an instrument of propaganda, aimed at industry, as were publications or exhibitions. A survey of product design undertaken by the CMA in 1953 revealed that product improvement among Canadian manufacturers was handled primarily by the firms own engineering personnel who were familiar with the merchandise and methods of manufacturing. 21 It reported that the majority of industrial designers were hired only for trimmings or accessories because manufacturers lacked confidence in their ability to handle technical problems. Was this a fair assessment or did such pessimism stem from a misunderstanding of the designer's role in product development, exacerbated by rapidly improving technology at the time?

Coincident with the shift away from student training was the Education Sub-Committee's broadening scope of initiatives aimed at raising awareness of design at sales and management levels. In 1952 Donald Strudley, Vice Chairman of the NIDC and an executive with Imperial Furniture Manufacturing in Stratford, was to report on discussions held with the University of Western Ontario School of Business Administration in London, Ontario regarding incorporation of some design content in their Management Training Course. 22 In addition the Ryerson Institute of Technology, in Toronto, now the Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, was encouraged in its efforts to set up courses for furniture salesmen, with emphasis on design of furniture, styles in contemporary furniture and structural standards to be offered through the Furniture and Interior Design program. 23 In October 1954 the NIDC began sponsorship of annual conferences with the theme "How Can We Sell More Modern Furniture", and in 1956 it sponsored a conference titled "Design As A Function Of Management". Both these conferences were aimed at stimulating interchange between manufacturers, retailers and designers. 24

Throughout the 1950s appeals continued to be made to universities to establish design education courses. In 1952 the University of Toronto was approached about a course through the Extension Department ²⁵, in 1955 an organizational meeting attended by fifty "industrialists" was held at McGill to devise ways and means to establish a summer course to replace, presumably, those currently attended at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and elsewhere. ²⁶ Finally in 1958 a Design Degree committee was struck by the NIDC to study American and British models and to approach universities about possible program. ²⁷ Little evidence exists, however, to suggest any of these initiatives were followed through successfully. It wasn't until 1969 that a university degree was established at Université de Montreal and 4 years after that a School of Design was set up at Carleton University in Ottawa, the first of its kind in Ontario. Carleton University was rated highest among Ontario schools including University of Toronto and University of Waterloo for its open-mindedness, proximity to "people resources" and accessibility. ²⁸

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19. Canada. National Gallery Of Canada. Annual Report 1952-1953, Ottawa, 1953, p. 17.
20. Canada. National Gallery Of Canada. Annual Report 1955-1956, Ottawa, 1956, p. 27.
21. PAC. RG 20 Vol. 997, File 13-2, Part 3. CMA, "Survey of Product Design in Canada" circular 2548, March 3, 1953. Preliminary designs are always prepared by the firm's own engineering staff who are familiar with the merchandise and the methods of manufacturing it.
22. Strudley's father, Harry William Strudley was the founder of Imperial Rattan Co. in 1905, active on the board of the Western Conservatory of Music, and a Governor of the University at the time and may have had some influence for the NIDC. See the entry for Harry William Strudley in Canadian Who's Who 1949-1951, Vol. V, Toronto: Trans Canada Press 1951, p.967.
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CHAPTER 6

"DESIGN MERIT AWARDS TO INDUSTRY" 1953 - 1960

A CALCULATED MEDIA GAMBLE

The introduction of the "Design Merit Awards to Industry" in 1953 -- a certificate awarded to manufacturers and producers for use in advertising and display -- was a significant strategic manoeuvre to gain stronger support for the NIDC from industry while highlighting design's role within the mass production process. Promotion of the Design Awards was to absorb many of the publication and exhibition resources which had until then been the exclusive domain of the Industrial Design Division of the National Gallery. As a competition among manufacturers rather than designers, who received a separate award of recognition for their work, it was hoped that the basic assumption of "better design means better sales" would encourage increased use of designer talent by manufacturers eager for top honours and congratulations from Prime Minister St. Laurent and Trade Minister C.D. Howe (Figure 16).

For the first time the interests of private industry were invited to participate in the selection of products for recognition by the National Gallery. Designs were now judged by two committees. The first was appointed annually from Council members representing business, consumers and industry, as well as design. This committee assessed criteria of

"originality", as well as the newly introduced qualities of "consumer acceptance" and "good value". Although it received full credit for the selection in the press their decisions were made in conjunction with the Design Index Committee of the National Gallery's IDD, composed of architects, designers and educationalists responsible for the abstract, but more heavily weighted, aesthetic qualities of "form" and "function".² It was necessary for products to first qualify for the Design Index before they could be considered for the Design Merit Awards to Industry.

With the introduction of the Design Merit Awards in 1953 selection criteria to the Design Index were expanded to reflect not only the market-oriented, business minded concerns embodied in "consumer acceptance" and "good value", but also the reality of the Canadian "branch plant" economy, accounted for in accepting foreign designed products, 50% of the total cost of manufacturing of which was required to be Canadian. In the case of many foreign designed appliances, parts were designed and manufactured outside of Canada and the product only had to be assembled by the Canadian branch plant. During wartime foreign designed airplanes such as the Mosquito bomber were manufactured entirely in Canada for security reasons. While the war had inflated Canada's industrial capacity, there were few domestic industries that could fill the gap after it had ended. C.D. Howe was then led to attract foreign investors and hence his reputation for returning Canada to a colonial economy. Certainly it is inconceivable that public British or U.S. institutions would ever promote foreign-designed products outside of a curatorial context as they were in the Design Awards.

C.D. Howe's regular appearance at the Design Merit Award ceremonies must have reflected his approval of this symbolic celebration of Canada's industrial progress and export potential, but to a large degree this symbolism was misleading. Foreign investors

were attracted to Canada after the war by Howe's economic policy of accelerated depreciation on plant capital, ³ as well as his policy of returning to the private sector war industries at minimal cost, such as Victory Aircraft of Malton, leased to A.V. Roe Co. of Britain and Research Enterprises Limited, of Leaside, whose glass cathode ray tubes had been featured in the "Design in Industry" exhibition, sold to Corning Glass at 30 cents on the dollar. ⁴ Throughout the 1950s products of foreign design manufactured or assembled, for example, by Canadian Westinghouse, Hooper of Canada or Smith Corona of Canada were to receive Design Awards. While the 1946 "Design in Industry" exhibition had featured a section on glass including the cathode ray tubes and tumblers by Dominion Glass of Montreal, by 1954 no glassware at all won awards, and a 1960 National Gallery retrospective of Canadian design was without a single example of glassware, suggesting the extent of direct imports in this area.

Planning for the Design Merit Awards to Industry began in 1951 after what was perceived to be the poor reception and results of the Product Design Competition that year. These earlier design competitions were based on competitions "Organic Design in Home Furnishings" (1941) and "International Competition for Low Cost Furnishings" (1948) held by the MOHA with financial assistance from industry. ⁵ Such was the respect of American design that each year there was to be a prominent representative of the United States on the jury. In 1951 it was Serge Chernyayeff, Director of the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, and in 1952 it was George Nelson, design director of the progressive furniture manufacturer Herman Miller Limited. Sponsorship of the Canadian competitions by Canadian Lumberman's Association and the Aluminum Company of Canada was to prove conclusively industry's willingness to share with government the cost of promotional activities intended to improve design in Canadian products. ⁶ How disappointing for the organizers that of the \$10,000 in prize money in 1951, only 6

honourable mentions of \$500 each were made to individuals who were students of design or faculty in art or architecture educational institutions. No manufacturers were recognized. 7

Following the MOHA example of competitions for domestic furniture, the theme chosen by the NIDC was "Design for Normal Living Requirements". Entrants to the 1951 competition were asked to design products for the house and garden suitable for mass production in wood or aluminum. In 1952 contestants entered designs for either a chair in the home, garden, restaurants or offices of wood or aluminum; a writing desk of wood convertible to a table and finally, designs for door hardware in aluminum. A total of \$2,200 in prize money was awarded, with only one first prize of \$1,000 to Lawrie MacIntosh for a chair of moulded plywood that never went into production. Although the results were considered an improvement over the previous year's competition, one of the judges Toronto architect, J.B. Parkin, was to remark that "we still have a long way to go and we're awfully new at it...". 8

While the judges declared that entries in the 1951 competition lacked an awareness of mass production techniques and economy, it was the lack of response on the part of manufacturers that was of greater concern. According to the Jury's Report:

it is evident that a large number of known excellent designers in Canada are not product design conscious, or at least did not enter this competition in spite of the more than generous prizes 9

In achieving one of its main goals of serious support for its programs from industry, this quotation suggests that the NIDC had failed to stimulate interest in good design among its primary targets: the public, manufacturers, retailers and merchants. The results of the Product Design Competition reveal a conflict between an elite program modelled on MOHA, encouraging quality design in the traditionally more creative form of

furniture, and a program aimed at promoting design to a general public, like the COID, evaluated on such responses as attendance figures. Was it reasonable to expect manufacturers to submit original furnishings designs? Was it reasonable to expect the drawings and models submitted in 1951 to fully reflect mass production techniques? Somewhat in contradiction to their recorded statements, the Jury's "Report" speaks positively of the attention to new materials, and economy of production possible in the 1951 entries which won honourable mentions, 10 such as James Warren's sketch design for a chair in bent plywood with a tubular frame support (Figure 17), Julien Hébert's hammock-type tubular aluminum garden chair or Pierre Gauvin's design for an expanded aluminum chair with metal rods as supports, each of which reflect the latest design tendencies of Europe and the U.S.. Indeed, by September 1951 honourable mention winners from Montreal received commissions from industry. 11 Gauvin was designing a set of furniture for Valox Industries of Quebec. Hébert's design had been sold to Siegmund Werner Ltd. of Montreal who retained him to design a complete line of metal furniture. Norman Slater, who had submitted a luminaire with "an ingenious reversible lamp holder" allowing downward direction of light, was working on lighting fixtures for Rameck Supplies Ltd. of Montreal. Somewhat in contradiction to the awards made in this competition, an almost identical design submitted by Warren in the 1951 Competition won a certificate of merit in a North American contest open to professional designers in 1956, the Bloksom & Co. National Furniture Design Contest. 12

It was perhaps hoped by the sponsors of the 1951 and 1952 competitions that the relatively large sums of prize money would go back to industry. In contrast to these competitions which encouraged original designs, the Design Awards drew upon a broad variety of products already being manufactured. Ironically, products designed by Julien Hébert and Norman Slater for their new clients were to be recognized in the 1954 awards.

G. Allan Burton, General Manager of Simpsons, headed a sub-committee struck in 1951 to oversee the organization of the Design Awards. Burton had studied architecture at University of Toronto and worked with a New York fabric house before joining Simpson's design department in 1935, where he was responsible for furniture, furniture displays, houses and apartments. ¹³ Among his peers on the NIDC he was thus qualified to assess realistically the state of design in Canada and in the position to suggest the right approach to interest industry in good design. Of the previous design competitions he declared:

The weakness was that we attracted all kinds of student designs, but little practical proof that anyone needed these designs ¹⁴

The crucial strategy distinction between the product design competitions of 1951 and 1952, and the Design Merit Awards is the shift of focus from a cash award encouraging promising individuals, to a certificate aimed at attracting the attention of those who made the business decisions and presumably hired the design talent by appealing to their business sense and "pride". Both Burton and Floyd Chalmers, successful businessmen who understood the importance of marketing, were instrumental in gaining support for this position in the NIDC. The Publicity Sub-Committee of the NIDC headed by Floyd Chalmers, was to outline the premise of the new Design Merit Awards in their September 1951 report.

We feel that any effective public relations program is tied in very closely with the subject of competitions and awards for good design. We do not favour a competition of the type held last year, as it affords practically no opportunity to promote industrial design at the top levels of industry or in the design profession. ¹⁵

Of the 46 winners of Design Merit Awards in 1953, 37 were designed by Canadians, proof, according to Burton, that the designer was playing a much greater part in Canadian industry than was indicated by the 1951 and 1952 competitions. ¹⁶

The organization of The Design Merit Awards placed a greater share of the burden of design promotion in the hands of industry and, as discussed, coincided with a move initiated by Burton and Floyd Chalmers to make the NIDC independent of the National Gallery and a shared responsibility between government and industry. While the sense of shared responsibility implied by the Design Awards strategy was unique among institutional design programs in the U.S. and Britain, they were mistakenly acclaimed as the first of their kind in the world. In fact they follow very much the model of the biannual "Good Design" exhibitions and awards organized by the MOMA from 1950 to 1955 in collaboration with Merchandise Mart of Chicago to influence design and public taste in the U.S..¹⁷ In 1953 Merchandise Mart's Sales Promotion Manager was to address the Industrial Design Conference held in Toronto in conjunction with the CHA Annual Meeting. He was to outline that the purpose of the "Good Design" awards was to show the best in the past year's new home goods, as well as to elevate respect for modern design at the manufacturing level and cut down on the time-lag between new products entering the market and their recognition by consumers.¹⁸ The fact that they were held twice a year, and could include as many as 200 items chosen from up to 8,000 entries suggests the speed with which U.S. manufacturers were able to introduce new products.¹⁹

"Good Design" exhibitions and awards were selected on the basis of their "eye appeal, function, construction and price, with emphasis on the first."²⁰ Juries consisted primarily of well known designers and architects such as Philip Johnson, Eero Saarinen, as well as Edgar Kaufmann, head of the MOMA Design Department and Director of the "Good Design" Exhibition held there. On the other hand, the NIDC made a point of emphasizing that decisions were shared between representatives of art and industry, with a committee of retailers, businessmen and consumers considering "good value" and "consumer acceptance" together with the Design Index Committee who considered the aesthetics of design.

The annual showing of the Canadian award winners at the Design Centre run by the National Gallery, followed the example of the MOHA displays. Assuming the role of Merchandise Mart both Burton's employer, Simpson's, and the T. Eaton Company displayed NIDC award winners for at least one year in 1954.²¹ As part of the Design Centre's mandate to bring to the attention of the Canadian people international tendencies in industrial design, the "Good Design" awards were hosted in an exhibition titled "Trends in American Taste"²² which coincided with the second anniversary of the Design Centre in January 1954. MOHA also issued tags and labels to manufacturers printed with the guarantee "Good Design -- This item is exactly as chosen by Museum of Modern Art, New York for the Merchandise Mart of Chicago."²³ The Canadians were also to distribute labels and tags, but printed with "Design Award and the acronym "NIDC" over a colour lithographed check mark, with no reference to the National Gallery. In 1953 Canadian manufacturers were to order 63,000 stickers, 41,800 string tags, 15,000 decals to attach to their merchandise in the stores.²⁴ Britain was only to issue labels in 1956 for exhibits chosen for its newly opened Design Centre.²⁵

Such an ambitious plan was sure to have its snags and problems. The initial challenge was to encourage manufacturers to participate and not be sceptical. Of the 46 winners to receive the first certificate in 1953, 36 had been invited to enter. By including as many as 50 people in committee selection process, Burton thought there was more likelihood of catching new designs as they appeared on the market.²⁶ The NIDC's active solicitation of entrants continued well into the mid 1950s.²⁷ If manufacturers' recalcitrance wasn't enough, those that did enter and won the certificates for use in advertising very often abused this privilege. "NIDC Don'ts" warned that advertising should refrain from saying an award winning product has been judged the best or the top article in its field in Canada, or from claiming the product won "the award" of that year. They also discouraged grouping

products to suggest that an entire line had won awards, when in fact only one of them had. 28

By the mid 1950s manufacturers were openly expressing frustration with the good design principles behind the selection process of the National Gallery's Design Index Committee, and with the recognition of "foreign" designs, primarily American, at the Design Merit Awards which they perceived as unfair competition. It was at this time also that C.D. Howe's economic policy of selling Canada's natural resources and business enterprises to Americans was receiving criticism, a concern that was the basis of the Gordon Royal Commission. 29 At least one case remains documented of a CMA member angered by the requirement that products first qualify for the Design Index before being considered for the prestigious exposure of the Design Merit Awards. 30 The President of the Easy Washing Machine Company of Toronto, S. J. Randall, complained to the Manager of the CMA in 1956 that his DCW Automatic washer was unjustly rejected by the Design Index Committee for the poor lettering and surface detailing. Adding insult to injury Randall pointed out that with one exception all awards for washing machines made in 1956 were to products of foreign design. In defence of the NIDC position Norman Hay, then Director of the Design Centre and the IDD of the National Gallery, wrote to Randall informing him the design was acceptable but for easily corrected "superficial details". Tactlessly Hay explained to Randall that good American designs were accepted as an example to Canadian manufacturers of the standard of design required for the Design Awards. 31

In retrospect it would appear the reach of the Design Awards was beyond the grasp of many Canadian manufacturers. Its failure to sponsor design excellence damaged the integrity of the NIDC which was conceived in the wake of Buchanan's realistic assessment of Canadian design in the "Design in Industry" exhibition of 1946. In the period 1944 to

1946 design was viewed as a highly important way for the individual trained in the abstract principles of design to contribute to industrial reconstruction and Canada's superior trade position. To achieve these goals the NIDC focussed on encouraging indigenous design talent. The implementation of the Design Awards in 1953 reflect a shift in attitude concerned with raising consumers' awareness of good design by highlighting these qualities in the products already on the market, both foreign and Canadian. As G. Allan Burton, General Manager of Simpson's, introduced the Design Awards, this development could be interpreted as a retailer's strategy to keep good design propaganda in pace with domestic consumer spending. The affluence made possible by Canada's branch plant economy precipitated a "consumer as judge" program policy, justifying doubts about the National Gallery's authority over the NIDC. When responsibility for the NIDC was transferred from the National Gallery to the Department of Trade and Commerce in 1960, Canadian designed products were again the only ones to be accepted for Design Awards.³²

ENDNOTES

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6. Ibid..
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22. Canada. National Gallery Of Canada. Annual Report 1953-1954, (Ottawa, 1954) p. 20.
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25. Doris McCarthy, A History of British Design 1830-1870, London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1979, p.93.
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27. PAC. RG 20 Vol. 998 File 13-2 parts 3 through 6.
28. "NIDC Issues New Advertising Rules", Product Design and Materials, Vol.1, No.1 (April 1956) p. 19.
29. Walter Gordon, "Royal Commission On Canada's Economic Prospects (Gordon Commission)", Canadian Encyclopedia, Vol. 3, Edmonton, Hurtig, 1985, p.1603.
30. PAC. RG 20 Vol. 1429, National Design Branch 1000-240/C13, Correspondence from S.J. Randall, Easy Washing Machine Co., Toronto to J.C. Whitelaw, General Manager, Canadian Manufacturers' Association, July 13, 1956.
31. PAC. RG 20 Vol. 1429, File NDB 1000-240/C13. Correspondence from Norman Hay to S.J. Randall July 18, 1956.
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CHAPTER 7

PRELUDE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE

As the 1950s progressed, Europe recovered its industrial strength and Canada was gradually supplanted from the superior position it held in world trade after the war. In 1957 the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects was to observe how resource industries came to play an increasing role in Canada's economy over the commodity manufacturing sector, one of the reasons cited was the lack of a strong domestic market needed to launch foreign sales. 1 Achievements in Canadian industrial design continued to be made throughout the 1950s under the guidance of the NIDC, but a lack of a strong domestic market, combined with the threat of increasing imports, could only reflect poorly on its industrial design. Consequently this provoked frustration among designers, National Gallery staff and government officials who wondered whether the NIDC was indeed effective enough and placed increasing pressure on the NIDC to emphasize the concrete advantages of industrial design over the abstract aesthetic principles that governed good design.

During the late 1950s enthusiasm for such NIDC programs as the Design Index and exhibitions at the Design Centre such as "Small Houses and Their Furnishings", both implying aesthetic assessment of design,

was supplanted by the singular vision of "Design for Export". This goal would require that the NIDC become an instrument of the Department of Trade and Commerce. Canadian industrial designers took an active part in policy change as their prosperity and survival were closely linked to Canada's better trade position. In 1958 industrial designer Robin Bush sat as Chairman of the NIDC subcommittee for Relations with Canadian Trade Associations and in 1959 it was John C. Parkin, the second industrial designer to head the NIDC, who initiated the "Design for Export" policy.

The 1950s undoubtedly witnessed some tangible Canadian accomplishments in the industrial design field. By 1958 the status of industrial design was such that it was a feature section in the publication The Arts in Canada: A Stock Taking At Mid-Century.² At the IX Milan Triennale in 1954, Canadian industrial design received its first major international exposure. Of the 46 exhibits chosen by Donald W. Buchanan from the NIDC Design Index to show how dining and living areas combined to save space in a Canadian contemporary home, seven of these were selected by Triennale directors for the international section of the exhibition.³ Three of the products shown by Canada, modest and practical though they were, won gold medal diplomas; an automatic steam and dry iron, designed by Lawrie McIntosh for Steam Electric Products Ltd of Toronto; a set of aluminum kitchenware by Ernest Orr for Supreme Aluminum Industries Ltd., Toronto and an outdoor wrought iron barbecue set by William Angus for Armson Iron Works of Windsor. In 1955 the Canadian Milan display was invited to show at the Salon des Arts in Paris, followed by showings in Ghent, Belgium and Dublin, Ireland.⁴

It was most likely a direct result of the high profile at Milan Triennale that Jacques Guillon's nylon cord laminated plywood chairs made by Modernart of Montreal (Figure 18) were licenced for production in the U.S. and by 1955 were displayed at Macy's Department

Store in New York. The interest in Orr's aluminum kitchenware was such that he was encouraged to organize a European sales program. Other Canadian successes abroad included a plywood chair made by a Toronto furniture company and exhibited by the NIDC whose design had been pirated by a New Jersey firm. A convertible davenport made in Oshawa was so popular in the U.S. that the company, whose name was not recorded, set up a branch plant there. 5

Such recognition, if anything, should have established industrial designers as major contributors to Canadian culture. The success at Milan was an admirable achievement considering it was the first time Canada had exhibited there. For whatever reason, the success of the Milan Triennale was not as well-received in Canada as one would expect. The award winners were mentioned only as a matter of reportage in the CMA journal, Industrial Canada, 6 and Maclean Hunter's Financial Post, 7 and no documentation from the major newspapers or popular periodicals has been located. The Financial Post and Industrial Canada ordinarily reported on business and manufacturing news, and might have been at a loss as to how to highlight the contribution of a single member of a process that began with the manufacturer's commission and ended with his distributor.

This lack of attention, however, suggests that the media and its clients were not aware of the importance of the Milan Triennale as a major international showplace of secondary industry and testing ground for the professional designer and product design. The Canadian press ignored the NIDC Press Release which reported on the gold medal diplomas, discussed above, won by Canadians. However, the prestigious Swedish design magazine, Form, compared the soberness of the Canadian home utility goods with those of the Dutch. 8 The dearth of informed commentary on industrial design in Canada was such that Donald W. Buchanan reported on industrial design in Canadian Art, the magazine he edited, while sitting as secretary of the NIDC and heading the IDD of the National Gallery.

Industrial design's greatest hurdle remained its difficulty as a concept in the minds of business and industry. This is no more evident than in Floyd Chalmers' negative reply to a request to give more visibility to industrial design in a newly launched Maclean Hunter periodical Design Engineering in 1955. If anyone should have been sympathetic to the encouragement of industrial design, it was Floyd Chalmers, who sat as Vice Chairman of the NIDC from 1951 to 1954.

One of the reasons we haven't devoted too much attention to the abstract subject of industrial design is because we want to emphasize the engineering appeal of the magazine. After we have engineers sold on it we can venture into broader fields and give them material which they can discuss with their managements. 9

Despite Chalmers' seeming indifference to the industrial designer, they were gaining prominence as a profession both in Canada and overseas. In 1953 John Ensor, then President of the Association of Canadian Industrial Designers, represented Canada at the International Industrial Design Congress in Paris, 10 a meeting that preceded the founding of the International Council for the Societies of Industrial Design in 1957. In 1956 a periodical was founded that, initially at least, was devoted to the problems of the industrial designer in Canada, Product Design and Materials edited by Monte Kwinter and published from 1956 to 1959 by Wallace Publications of Montreal which also published Canadian Builder, Maintenance Engineer, Batiment-genees construction. In the Editorial of the premiere issue of this magazine, Kwinter outlines the focus on Canadian products, their design and materials, as well as the components in their manufacture. While he presents the more concrete argument of the advantage of design in industry, Kwinter boldly makes the case for consideration of aesthetics: "We have set as our task the promotion of good design and the proper use of materials...(with) emphasis on design as a creative activity which when applied correctly means a better product." 11 However, Product Design and Materials was not intended to be a globally distributed showcase of

advanced designs such as contemporary European periodicals Domus, Casabella, or Form, but depended for its revenue on advertisers of such trade-orientated products as screen doors, machine tools and plumbing fixtures.

The articles featured in Product Design and Materials were concerned with the design process, aimed at Canadian businessmen unfamiliar with the service of industrial design. Consulting Technical Editor Lawrie McIntosh, a scholarship recipient of the NIDC and recent graduate of the Illinois Institute of Technology, presented a series of articles stressing industrial design's importance in manufacturing with titles, "Design for Production" or "Effective use of Design Talent".¹² However much the concrete benefits of industrial design were emphasized, its abstract nature would appear to have hampered the wide spread acceptance of the periodical. In 1959 it was sold to Southam Business Publications, Don Mills and the name changed to Product Design and Engineering. By the time of its last issue in February 1964, editorial policy had completely swung over to design in heavy engineering.

While the profession of industrial design seemed to be gaining a stronger footing in Canada since the war, serious criticisms of Canadian design began to emerge in the late 1950s from the National Gallery staff with regard to the quality of domestic design. In surprising contrast to Canada's success at the Milan Triennale in 1954, a Canadian contribution to the 1957 Triennale was debated because of the "relatively low calibre of contemporary design in much of Canadian commercial production, by international standards."¹³ A hint of frustration can be detected in a NIDC Press Release of 1957 announcing the Milan Triennale exhibit organized by Norman Hay.

To enter again with a miscellany of household furnishings would, it was felt, be repetitive and unsuccessful in comparison with the exhibits of European countries whose

design production has a far greater turnover and breadth than that of Canada. 14

As discussed in the chapter on the early years of the NIDC, the arrival of Alan Jarvis at the National Gallery in 1955 saw the reaffirmation of the mission-orientation, evangelical spirit in support of design quality. His protege Norman Hay, appointed to succeed Donald Buchanan as secretary of the NIDC and Director of the IDD in 1956, was to write in 1958:

The Canadian market is still glutted with poorly made, shoddy and tasteless consumer goods which are annoying to use and depressing to live with...the real battle is between superficial pretentious styling and honest and beautiful design 15

Even Donald Buchanan from whom the NIDC had required so much time and personal effort, for the first time publicly criticizes industry for its failure to cooperate with the one NIDC policy that encouraged a stronger domestic market. He felt that the impact of the annual Design Awards had never been as widespread as the sponsors had hoped:

...for this scheme to be successful, the winning manufacturers had to cooperate generously by advertising the labelled products and by underlining in the advertising the principles of merit governing the awards 16

Both Buchanan and Hay imply that manufacturers ignored the principles of good design because they were abstract or not relevant. Lawrie McIntosh was to concur with Buchanan's assessment of the Design Awards program in 1959, claiming they resulted in few first rate designs, but his criticisms were aimed at those who made the choices, not at manufacturers. 17 Indeed, industry was not entirely to blame for the poor state of industrial design in Canada by 1960. Technical problems and retooling persisted as high costs in a relatively small domestic market. The success of the Bombardier snow-vehicle during the 40s and 50s, while never included in the transportation category of the Design Index, is a good example of how a strong domestic market in Canada can serve to

strengthen and ensure the success of industrial design. 18 Specialty vehicles were included in the Design Index (Figure 19) and articulated buses and heavy-tracked haulers made by Canadian companies continue today to achieve design distinction. But according to one observer in Industrial Canada during the 1950s, developing and marketing a product to compete with imports in Canada required manufacturing resources on a much grander scale than Bombardier began with. 19 Hence companies apparently saw fit to submit a winning design to the Design Awards for years at a time rather than going to the expense of remodelling. Finding new products year after year to present awards to may have been easier for the "Good Design" exhibitions organized by MOMA and Merchandize Mart with resources 10 times that of Canada to draw upon, but to expect such turnover in the NIDC Design Awards was perhaps unfair.

The severity of the problem of Canada's dependence on resource industries in the export market was such that the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects headed by Walter Gordon was struck in 1955 to address this matter, as well as the impact of foreign ownership in Canadian industry. The Gordon Commission Final Report in 1958 makes no clear reference to industrial design, but addresses issues that were direct concerns of industrial designers such as "...the bulk of our exports are still composed of goods which recieved comparatively little processing". 20 The smaller market would continue to be a handicap for secondary industry in Canada, the Report warned, and continued growth depended on the ability of Canadian manufacturers to keep pace with technology in order to meet product competition 21— another potential contribution of industrial design that had been a concern of Donald Buchanan's from the outset of the organization of the NIDC.

In the twenty-five years since the Gordon Commission it would seem industrial design has gained only the passing respect of economists in Canada. The 1985 Report of the

Royal Commission on The Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada headed by Donald MacDonald discusses the encouragement of industrial design in superficial terms only and makes no tangible recommendation. 22 The Gordon Commission encouraged, at least, industrial design indirectly through generalized recommendations that proposed more Canadians be employed in managerial and technical positions of foreign branches, 23 while these branches should purchase goods and services in Canada. Industrial designers, on the other hand, were supportive of the Gordon Commission findings, as its concerns were echoed by Product Design and Materials in 1959 in an editorial which called for more government action to promote Canadian manufacturers' goods. 24

The theme of the Canadian contribution to the 1957 Milan Triennale, organized by the CNIDC, provides an ironic corollary to the Gordon Commission findings. Instead of highlighting a selection of designs by Canadian designers across the country, it was decided to highlight the "industrial growth" of Canada with modern furniture and furnishings designed by Robin Bush for the new industrial town of Kitimat, B.C. developed by the Aluminum Company of Canada. 25 Kitimat was considered a novel achievement because it was hoped that by asking Bush to provide pleasant accommodations, there would be a lower turnover in labour. The theme panel of the Canadian exhibition was a large photographic blow-up of a working man in his mining clothes standing behind a chair of "advanced" contemporary design. The irony is that at the premier showcase of secondary industry and product design Canada would admit openly its reliance on the primary or resource industries that had so overwhelmed the place of designed products in the export market since the war. Against international standards in Japan, Germany and Italy especially, those countries hardest hit by the war, it was realized Canada had fallen behind considerably.

As if to restore vision and purpose to the NIDC and align programs more to the economic realities of industry in the late 1950s, a subsequent "Design for Export" policy was adapted by the NIDC in 1959, initiated by recently elected chairman John C. Parkin, partner in a successful architectural firm and an early member of ACID. In order to achieve a higher standard of product design the Design Merit Awards were reorganized to follow the Triennale pattern, membership of the NIDC was reduced to 10 and an Associate Membership created to meet once a year at a "Design Congress".²⁶ The Design Index would broaden its eligible categories to architectural components and engineering equipment, while craft-based articles for custom production were now clearly segregated from "accepted" industrial design that was mass produced. It soon became apparent to John C. Parkin, Chairman of the NIDC, that the Department of Trade and Commerce with its Branches in Commodities, International Trade Relations, Exports Credit, Trade Publicity and Trade Commissioners was the more appropriate body to handle the marketing and product development support implied by such a policy.²⁷ Parkin felt compromised by the NIDC's association with the National Gallery, was sure this was why the NIDC had trouble attracting "top drawer businessmen" and wrote as much to George Haes in December 1960, suggesting the Council should report directly to the Minister of Trade and Commerce.²⁸

The unpopularity of aesthetic judgements inherent in the National Gallery's role is reflected in the distancing of the NIDC from the orbit of the National Gallery in 1959 as a prelude to its move to the DTC. At that time the NIDC budget was still recorded with the expenditures of the National Gallery's Annual Report, and presumably allocated by the Board of Trustees. The transfer of the NIDC to the DTC in 1960-61 suggests a clear change in this Department's opinion of industrial design and in the concept of the role of industrial design in general. In 1960 Parkin felt direct access to government was necessary if industrial design was to play a greater role in the export trade, but only a

decade earlier, in 1948, it was felt inappropriate for the DTC to appear to be making qualitative decisions or to rate products.

A change in attitude toward the National Gallery's role coincided with the revised character of what constituted good design. The abstract notion that product design must conform to "functionalism" -- an idea that appeared more sensible when new materials had to be adapted to mass production of consumer commodities in the most efficient way to facilitate rebuilding after the war -- had by 1960 made room for a more concrete notion, a popular or emotional one aligned with nationalism, accounting for difference and regional character. In 1960 the Minister of Trade and Commerce in the new Conservative government, George Hees, was calling for design which was distinctly Canadian, design that would bolster Canadian exports on the international markets of the world.²⁹ Hence, functionally designed, economical products were a high priority just after the war, but by 1960 the priority was clearly on the easy-to-grasp concept of cultural distinctiveness. Donald Buchanan, who wrote so effectively of the merits of "functionalism" in the late 1940s and early 1950s, was by 1958 deeply concerned how design reflected a national character in his description of the Canadian Pavilion at the Brussels World's Fair.

Canada, as befits a middle power, is neither scientifically ostentatious as are the Russians nor open handed in design as are the Americans. The Canadian pavilion stands firmly overt in rectilinear righteousness enlivened by strong colours.³⁰

The metaphors of Canadian design abound in this quotation which associates design with politics at the height of the Cold War. "Rectilinear righteousness" are anti-ideological words that resonate with responsible government and neutrality.

On May 1, 1961 the parliament passed Bill No. C-85 for the establishment of a National Design Council with the full support of the Legislature. George Hees' call for a high

quality, distinctive Canadian design was to be achieved through more direct assistance to and participation of the CMA and "other influential business organizations", rather than through any national public education program. 31 With the transfer of authority for the NIDC from the National Gallery to the Domestic Commerce Service of the DTC in 1961, "trade development" replaced "elevation of public taste" as the ideal behind promoting industrial design. The transfer of the NIDC coincided with a number of major changes at the National Gallery. Without the Design Centre, transferred to Montreal and Toronto by the DTC, the National Gallery ceased an active program of industrial design display and plans to begin a permanent collection of design never materialized. Within a year of the Design Act Alan Jarvis, Donald Buchanan and Norman Hay had each left their National Gallery positions.

The passage of the Design Act prompted a series of congratulatory speeches comparing Canadian industrial design to such distinctive native food stuffs as Alberta steaks, B.C. salmon, cheddar cheese and bacon. 32 However, one example was to demonstrate that Canadian designers were far from the respected and thriving professionals that the members of the legislature suggest. Judy LaMarsh, Liberal member from Niagara Falls, pointed out that Canadian National Railways had hired in 1959 James Vallus Inc., a young New York City design firm, to do its entire corporate identity program. At the time Canadian National was the largest railway in North America, with a fleet of trucks, string of hotels, steamship and ferry lines, and telegraph service. The Vallus firm redesigned railroad cars, stationery, reports, tickets, signs, linens, dinnerware, uniforms, interiors, building exteriors and also handled the interior design of furniture and furnishings of the new Canadian National Railway hotel in Montreal. The company symbol designed by Allan Fleming, one of the Canadian designers Vallus retained, remains a familiar sight. 33

Vallus opened a Canadian office and hired Canadian designers, providing a great impetus to the design profession. This example, however, reveals that while industrial designers may have increased in numbers and influence during the 1950s with the encouragement of the NIDC, the industrial design profession was at a stage of growth where it lacked the larger design practices and expertise to handle such a volume of work. Thus we see in 1960s the development of partnerships and growth of individual practices to accommodate clients who required corporate identity through the distinctive design of a complete line of products.

ENDNOTES

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CONCLUSION

The task of promoting industrial design in Canada with public resources was not one with a straightforward strategy or predetermined institutional authority. Industrial design had been part of the curriculum at Ontario College of Art since the 1930s, yet in post-war Canada it was still a youthful, evolving concept that was not widely understood by the general public. As discussed in Chapter 1 it was the art community who took the initiative in calling for greater support and awareness of industrial design in Canada. The post-war years were euphoric with optimism for Canada's industrial future and organizations such as Federation of Canadian Artists headed by Elizabeth Wyn Wood were confident that the time had arrived for artists to take a more prominent role in society by ensuring that its industrial potential was properly directed. As Chapter 1 pointed out, they were supported in their efforts by the writings of influential British art critic Herbert Read, who articulated in the 1930s the point of view that the aesthetic qualities of form, colour and texture should be considered in mass production.

Faced with the return of Europe to industrial prominence after the war the government of Canada recognized the need to facilitate in every way possible continued high levels of Canadian exports which had been artificially inflated by war. As discussed in Chapter 2

the "Design In Industry" exhibition held at the National Gallery of Canada in 1946 proposed a convincing case for an industrial design support program on a national scale. It underlined that the problem of product design was best solved with imagination and a knowledge of the material it was manufactured from. The National Gallery was chosen as the institution to undertake the promotion of industrial design because it was responsible for encouraging the applied arts, a mandate which best qualified it to rate products and choose examples that reflected the principles of good design defined by the Design Index Committee of the National Gallery. Traditionally independent institution with its own Board of Trustees, the National Gallery's image would be significantly altered by this new function. No longer would it be an aloof institution that symbolized Canada's cultural pride and quietly cared for the nation's visual arts heritage. By promoting in exhibitions, publications and awards the articles of everyday use with which Canadians furnished their homes the National Gallery through the Industrial Design Division and the NIDC took a much more prominent position in everyday life.

In Chapter 4 recent precedents of art galleries promoting industrial design were outlined. The MOHA in New York, the Walker Art Centre in Minneapolis and the Albright Gallery in Buffalo each held exhibitions, published design material and maintained a photographic index of industrial design that met certain curatorial standards. Unlike the Industrial Design Division of the National Gallery the American institutions were not affiliated with such a body as the NIDC with a mandate that encompassed the economic, educational, technological as well as social and cultural well-being of the nation. To succeed in this goal a cooperative alliance was struck among representatives of education, retail, business, government and industry who shared an interest in promoting well-designed products. Not surprisingly such a diverse group brought with them to the NIDC differing views about how to achieve support and awareness of design in Canada.

NIDC members Floyd Chalmers, of Maclean-Hunter and G. Allan Burton of Simpsons were able to influence the direction of NIDC policy most significantly in the areas of education discussed in Chapter 5 and awards discussed in Chapter 6 -- policy changes which ultimately encouraged indifference to the role of art in industrial design.

The central problem of managing new technology with imaginative solutions was clarified in the "Design In Industry" exhibition of 1946 discussed in Chapter 2. The number of prototype designs shown and the absence of products designed by consultants underlined the distance between the requirements of industry in Canada and designers able to deal with new technologies and machine production. In the late 1940s and early 1950s the NIDC endeavoured to establish a progressive vanguard by sending selected graduates of engineering, art or architecture to prestigious foreign schools like the Illinois Institute of Technology which instructed students on the basis of the German Bauhaus school of design's functionalist dogma. Competitions held in 1951 and 1952 for original home product designs emulated MOMA competitions which launched the careers of leading American designers. The entries reflected the latest design trends but failed to convince the conservative jury of their potential for commercial mass production. Chapter 5 discussed a gradual shift in education policy beginning in 1953 that would see the scholarship program phased out in favour of support to designers already employed in industry to enable them to attend seminars or summer courses and for conferences with the theme "How Can We Sell More Modern Furniture" where they could meet with other designers, retailers and businessmen. As shown in Chapter 6 it was discussed how this redirection in education policy coincided with a shift in awards strategy, planned by Burton and Chalmers as early as 1951, to recognize a wide range of products already being manufactured with a certificate that could be used in consumer advertising.

This policy change, highlighting the economic advantages of industrial design over aesthetic considerations, corresponded to an initiative to free the NIDC from reliance on National Gallery. This might be achieved, as suggested by the Department of Trade and Commerce, through the subscription of public and private members. Floyd Chalmers was strongly supportive of this suggestion as a measure to gain the confidence of industry and business. However, a fully independent council funded in this way, would reflect a significant change in attitude toward design promotion since the end of the war. In the span of five years, from 1948 to 1953, the orientation toward government intervention in industrial matters had been replaced by a free enterprise model based on a faith in mass consumption.

A change in values regarding design promotion from a concern with solutions to utilitarian needs, to an emphasis on design's role in economic nationalism, can be read in the promotional publications of the Industrial Design Division of the National Gallery and the NIDC. Just after the war Donald Buchanan emphasized functionalism, form suited to purpose and economical production as moral qualities of good design. These concepts were used as propaganda to stimulate Canadians to buy domestically made products and thus assist Canadian industry in efforts to reconvert to peacetime production. Over the 1950s this utilitarian tone gradually relented to greater emphasis on Canada's trade position and a "Design for Export" policy. As pointed out in Chapter 7, by 1960 industrial design is compared by Members of Parliament to exported Canadian agricultural products such as bacon, cheese and maple syrup and the design of the Canadian pavilion at the 1958 international Brussels exhibition is compared in ideological terms to those of the U.S. and Soviet Union.

The policy shift that proposed the consumer as ultimate judge may have succeeded in establishing a general awareness of industrial design, but a price had been paid. As

shown in Chapter 7, by the late 1950s Donald Buchanan, Norman Hay and Alan Jarvis of the National Gallery leveled severe criticisms at private enterprise for the poor quality of Canadian design. Obviously the philosophy inherent in the slogan "Good Design Means Better Sales", used to kindle enthusiasm for the Design Merit Awards beginning in 1953, overwhelmed the cultural objective of high aesthetic standards in design.

The National Gallery found itself in an anomalous and untenable position. With roots in the 19th Century, it was an institution which shared a 19th Century European concern with applied art, a term understood in 1913 when the National Gallery Act was passed to elevate the manufacture of practical everyday goods to the level of fine art, whether graphic or printing, interior decoration, or work in traditional materials of ceramic, wood, metal, and glass using a combination of tools and machines. This history created a conflict after the Second World War when new materials and manufacturing processes required a canon of judgement based on machine values that was opposed to the canon of judgement of applied art. A second anomaly stemmed from the Canadian attempt to respond to both U.S. and British models of industrial design support in the establishment of the NIDC, a conceptual dilemma that would lead to the eventual conflict of opposing ideals of success. The British favoured passive persuasion and a government funded body to promote industrial design, the U.S. model was clearly involved private enterprise and supported by private non-government philanthropy to achieve the same goal. Canada attempted to unite these two approaches by following the British example of designating a government funded, central institution to operate in the national interest, while adopting programs and policies of the MOHA in New York based on free enterprise involvement and funding. Problems arose in the NIDC when private interests expressed the opinion that successful promotion of industrial design resulted in higher sales and exports, while the public interests hoped for general acceptance of design as a cultural ideal and proud showings of

design at international reviews. As the representative of the abstract principles that governed good design, the National Gallery was in no position to resist the policy changes initiated by business and retail interests in the early 1930s without disrupting the premise of public and private cooperation. Hence, establishing the NIDC as a cooperative, democratic undertaking among the private and public groups known through U.S. and British precedent to have an interest in industrial design was bound to break down under pressure of two opposing ideals of success and two opposing canons of judgement.

There is no simple solution to the question of design support, whether privately or publicly funded, machine or applied art in focus, yet it remains a complex issue of cultural environment and technology that lies at the core of our daily lives. What is the context of industrial design in the contemporary world? In his book The Unknown Craftsman, Soetsu Yanagi provides a similitude for industrial design in his definition of folkcraft:

It is my belief that while the high level of culture of any country can be found in its fine arts, it is also vital that we should be able to examine and enjoy the proofs of the culture of the great mass of the people, which we call folk art. The former are made by a few for a few, but the latter, made by the many for many, are a truer test. The quality of the life...that country as a whole can best be judged by the folkcrafts.

In modern society technology is undeniable and necessary in production; today industrial design might be the equivalent in industrial culture of the folkcraft Yanagi discusses. Surely the history of industrial design in Canada has depth enough to warrant further serious study in the Humanities. Research should continue, for instance, into the impact of the NIDC's promotion of industrial design ideals. One of the initial tasks of the NIDC was to act as a consultant to government to see that purchasing policies encouraged good design. To this end the NIDC consulted with government departments such as National Defence, discussed in Chapter 5, and held the exhibition "How To Furnish Your

Office" in October 1954. This exhibition compared a Canadian civil service office of the 1940s to a contemporary one furnished according to revised and improved standards that had been recently formulated by the Department of Public Works. Further studies might examine to what degree the activity of the NIDC influenced government purchasing policies during the 1950s and if it ultimately acted as a catalyst for the Public Works policy of 1965 to devote 1% of the cost of a federal building to fine art.

The search for NIDC influence could be extended to other government departments and agencies. Canada's contributions to the Milan Triennales of 1954 and 1957, discussed in Chapter 7, were organized by the Industrial Design Division of the National Gallery in cooperation with the Canadian Government Exhibition Commission. An area of possible future research would be to examine the image of Canada projected at international exhibitions and how that image became more design conscious under the influence of the NIDC. Participation in international exhibitions has often been a source of agonizing searches for a Canadian identity that lie somewhere between industrial might and land of milk and honey. Recall Donald Buchanan's humble description of the Canadian Pavilion at the 1958 Brussels Exhibition, discussed in Chapter 7, which in its "righteous" sentiment echoes Joseph Howe's prescription for Canadian involvement after he visited the Paris exhibition of 1854.

Let us be honest and modest, and not attempt too much, but go to the next World's Fair with what we have and send...a fair, candid account... 2

This paper has shown that both private and government interests in Canada have had input into the development and nurture of design. Further research must cover both areas, even though the government involvement might be easier to research or more readily apparent. However, public support does prove the best starting point. At the end of Chapter 7 the corporate identity program was discussed in relation to the Canadian

National Railway project in 1959. The launching of the Design Awards in 1958 with its own recognizable symbol on certificates, publications, publicity material and correspondence is an earlier instance of the application of corporate design. The development through the impetus of Expo 67 into the 1970s and 1980s, of corporate identity as well as the consultant design practices in Canada that were to undertake them, could shed valuable light on the pattern of current design practice in Canada. The impact of technology and new materials during the 40s has been only briefly outlined in Chapter 2 in the discussion of the exhibition "Design In Industry", but could be followed through in a broader study from the 1950s to the present dealing with the extent to which new technology determines form in design, or conversely whether design needs lead the development of new technology. The discussion in Chapter 4 of the 1953 exhibition "Small Houses and Their Furnishings" touched on the close relationship between housing and design in the post-war period and the important role of the Research Committee begun in 1948 by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation under Humphrey Carver. A study of the Research Committee and the Canadian Housing Design Council founded in 1956 with Carver's encouragement could more fully investigate the influence and degree of government intervention in the design of post-war housing in Canada.

From the very beginning in 1948 the NIDC program, especially the Design Awards, acknowledged the importance of mass media in transmitting the message of good design to a large audience through newspapers, journals, radio and film. The use of media in this way was second nature to Donald Buchanan, son of a newspaper publisher, who began his career as a freelance writer, as well as being a founder of the Canadian Film Institute in 1936 and working for the National Film Board during the war. He was able to respond rapidly to changing communications technology. Media journalism during the 1950s, however, could work against the cause of design by simplifying reports of the problems and

complex issues. Chapter 7 discussed the poor reception by media of Canada's outstanding success at the 1954 Milan Triennale. The absence of an informed and balanced perspective would hamper the public's awareness of industrial design, as well as presenting only one side of a story such as American James Valkus' contract with Canadian National Railways, concentrating on his citizenship rather than investigating how Valkus would encourage Canadian designers. Further studies might concentrate on the portrayal of design in Canadian media for it is here that one finds an essential link between designers, manufacturers and merchants on one side and consumers on the other.

After 1960 the NIDC, known as the National Design Council, continued to be active under the DTC, although by 1986 it was dismantled by the Department of Regional Industrial Expansion. Between 1960 and 1980 there has been another significant shift in attitude toward the degree of government intervention in the promotion of good design. While in 1960 it appeared that the British model of direct government intervention had prevailed with the NIDC's move to DTC, the gradual phasing out of the National Design Council's programs over the late 1970s and early 1980s suggests that political ideology has given way to what had been implicit in the mandate of educational, cultural and business institutions. Its responsibilities have been distributed to more specialized organizations; education to universities, exhibition and collection to museums, award giving to business, ethics and practice to professional design organizations. As this paper does not cover the years beyond 1960, further studies of the relationship between design and government might concentrate on the particular vision of purpose projected by the Design Council after 1960. To what extent were its publications and programs consistent with those of the DTC and to what degree it was able to influence government policy on design, education and the profession?

In the 1980s industrial design is no longer a government concern. Only the future will tell if this is a reflection of the industrial decline of a nation or represents a strengthening of design consciousness where it can thrive without the artificial stimulant of government. It is a culture of impoverished vision, or lacking in ambition that fails to recognize that the application of aesthetic principles of design to manage technology or enrich the work place and home has profound results in daily life. Certainly there are instances in Canadian history where the failure of government initiatives in the areas of technology or in attempts to make art more public have been a question of loss of nerve or chronic indecision.

ENDNOTES

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CHRONOLOGY

1944

necessity of raising "artistic standards" with respect to improving exports first mentioned in the National Gallery Annual Report 1943/1944

Donald W. Buchanan, Supervisor of Rural Circuits, NFB

Council of Industrial Design founded in Britain

National Housing Act passed

Feb Elizabeth Wyn Wood of the Federation of Canadian Artists proposes "National Program for the Arts in Canada" including support for industrial design in February 1944 issue of Canadian Art

June 21 Special Committee on Reconstruction and Reestablishment hears briefs from the Sculptor's Society of Canada, Federation of Canadian Artists, Royal Architectural Institute of Canada and other arts groups

Oct 14 Ministry of Reconstruction established under C.D. Howe

1945

Donald Buchanan made Supervisor of Displays, National Film Board to organize the "Design in Industry" exhibition, visits the National Research Council

Ontario College of Art opens Design School

Apr 12 C.D. Howe delivers White Paper on Employment and Income in House of Commons

May Toronto "Design in Industry" exhibition opens at the Royal Ontario Museum, receives negative reaction from Donald Buchanan

1946

- Jan 1 Department of Reconstruction became the Department of Reconstruction and Supply
- Jan "Design in the Household" opens at the Art Gallery of Ontario
- June Donald Buchanan and Alan Jarvis address the Canadian Manufacturers Association Annual Meeting in Toronto
- Oct 1 Ottawa "Design in Industry" opens at National Gallery and begins tour of Canada

1947

- Jan 1 Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation established
- Apr Interdepartmental Committee on Industrial Design meets and an
- June Donald Buchanan heads Information Services and Design Index at the National Gallery
- July Affiliation of Canadian Industrial Designers formed
- Nov Emergency Exchange Conservation Act passed to conserve American dollars by prohibiting certain imports, said to have been impetus for government support for Industrial Design

1948

- "International Competition for Low Cost Furniture Design" held at MOMA
- Jan C.D. Howe becomes Minister of Trade and Commerce
- June National Industrial Design Committee formed of 30 manufacturers, retailers, designers research and educational officials
- July Research Committee of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation formed under Humphrey Carver
- Aug "Design Centre" exhibition opens at the C.N.E.
- Autumn 5 post graduate scholarships of 1500 dollars each awarded by NIDC for study at Illinois Institute of Technology

1949

"Good Design" Awards organized by MOHA and Merchandize Mart, Chicago

July

Industrial Design Session, held at the Canadian Manufacturers' Association Annual Meeting in Toronto

October

British Columbia Industrial Design Committee established as affiliate to NIDC, Paul Wisnicki, secretary

1950

What is Modern Design by E. Kaufmann published by MOHA based on Bulletin of MOHA (Fall 1946)

Bursaries to JCA students in industrial design co-founded by National Gallery, Department of Labour, Canada and Ontario Department of Education

First product design competition held by NIDC "Design For Normal Living Requirements" funded by Canadian Lumberman's Association and National Gallery

July

"Survey of Design Requirements and Conditions in the Canadian Furniture Industry" by James Ferguson and John Low-Beer released in conjunction with the Furniture Manufacturers' Association

1951

Second Product Design Competition held for a chair, writing desk and door hardware, 1st prize won by Lawrie McIntosh for plywood chair

1952

W.A. Trott of Lighting Materials Limited, Winnipeg is chairman of the NIDC

series of display panels illustrating good design organized by the National Gallery Industrial Design Division and circulated by Western Canada Art Circuit

May

Industrial Design Session, Canadian Manufacturers' Association Annual Meeting assisted by National Gallery

1953

International Design Congress held in Paris, attended by John Enson, President of ACID

Jan Design Centre and headquarters of NIDC opened in Laurentian Building at corner of Albert and Elgin streets in Ottawa with "Trend House" exhibit

March First Design Merit Awards held in Ottawa

May Industrial Design Session, C.M.A. Annual Meeting

Sept "Small Houses and Their Furnishings" opens at Design Centre

Oct By-law passed by Board of Trustees of National Gallery changes the name from National Industrial Design Committee to National Industrial Design Council, membership reduced from 20 to 30

Donald B. Strudley, Vice-President of Imperial Furniture Manufacturing Co. Ltd., listed as chairman of the NIDC

1954

Mar NIDC announces design competition for a five piece silver tea set and tray of contemporary design in cooperation with the Canadian Jewellers Institute

Aug X Milan Triennale opens

Oct NIDC sponsors conference in Toronto "How Can We Sell More Modern Furniture"

1955

Jean A. Raymond, President of Raymond Manufacturing Company Limited becomes Chairman of the NIDC before July

Alan Jarvis appointed Director of the National Gallery

Courtaulds' Canada sponsors the "First Annual Competition For Drapery And Upholstery Fabrics"

National Film Board produces "Designed For Living", a film outlining the work of the Design Centre

April NIDC and Canadian Homes and Gardens co-sponsor the First Annual Canadian Furniture Conference in Toronto

Spring Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects announced by Walter Harris, Minister of Finance

1956

April Second Annual Canadian Furniture Conference

June Donald W. Buchanan resigns duties as secretary of NIDC and director of the Design Centre to become Associate Director of the National Gallery, Norman Hay replaces him

Oct NIDC sponsors international discussion conference at McGill University "Design as a Function of Management", principal speaker Sir Gordon Russell, Director of COID

1957

XI Milan Triennale opens

International Council for Societies of Industrial Design formed

Norman E. Hallendy appointed Industrial Officer with the Design Centre

NIDC and Canadian Homes and Gardens co-sponsor third annual Furniture Conference

1958

Design Centre arranges displays of Canadian products at Brussels World's Fair, Foire de Paris, the annual exhibition of the Industrial Design Institute, New York

J.S. Corrigan, Vice-President John Wood Co. Ltd., Toronto, Chairman of the NIDC

Speaker's Bureau opened offering qualified talks about design across Canada

Jan NIDC and Canadian Homes and Gardens co-sponsor Fourth Annual Furniture Design Conference

Mar four evening lectures on industrial design held at OCA

April Design Degree Committee formed to prepare report on design education

1959

"Design For Export" policy adopted by NIDC

1961

May National Design Act, Bill C-85 passed in legislature

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FIGURE 1

Canadian products developed for war needs, 1945. NFB photographs that appeared together to illustrate the use of moulded plywood and aluminum in airplane manufacturing during the war. "Canadian Products Developed For War Needs Are Available For New Experiments In Industrial Designs", Canadian Art, Vol. 2, No. 5 (Summer 1945) p. 197.

FIGURE 2

Entrance to the "Design in Industry" exhibit, National Gallery of Canada, 1946, with couple observing plywood chair made in Vancouver, B.C.. Photograph taken by Jack Long. NFB Collection PAC PA 151333.

INDUSTRY
Canada
A Division of the
Department of
Manufactures
and Commerce

FIGURE 3

Plastics Section of the "Design In Industry" exhibit, 1946.
Caption reads "Pamela Forbes inspects enamelled aluminum
thermos made in Toronto." The display panels illustrate the
uses of various synthetic plastic materials. Photograph by
George Hunter, 1946. NFB Collection No. 26415, PAC.

26415

FIGURE 4

X-ray tube, paper weight and plate shown in the Glass
Section of "Design In Industry", 1946. Photograph by Jack
Long, 1946. NFB Collection No. 26969, PAC.

26969

FIGURE 5

Vinyl raincoat shown in "Design In Industry", 1946. Caption reads: "Vinyl raincoat is waterproof, transparent, easily cleaned." Photograph by George Hunter. NFB Collection No. 26906, PAC.

FIGURE 6

Two furniture prototypes manufactured by the National Research Council, Ottawa for the "Design In Industry" exhibition, 1946. The caption on the left reads: "This is a nesting table made of moulded plywood in the Structures Laboratory of the National Research Council. It was designed by Douglas Simpson and made experimentally to show the possibilities of this process in furniture manufacture." On the right: "This stacking chair was specially designed and made for showing in the Plastics Section of the exhibition. It is moulded by the same process as described in the panel on "moulded plywood" only the materials used are different. They consist of cotton laminations, held together with plastic adhesives, to which has been added a top veneer of fibre glass. A final coating of airplane paint has also been used. Original design by James Donahue and Douglas Simpson. Constructed by the National Research Council in the Structures Laboratories". From the National Research Council Archives. File No. 3-12-N.4-2.

FIGURE 7

Cover design for booklet Canadian designs for everyday use,
Ottawa: National Gallery [1949].

canadian

designs

for everyday use

the canadian design index

the national gallery of canada

price 50 cents

FIGURE 8

H.G. Knoll Associates, New York advertisement, 1942, for chairs designed by Jens Risom, c1941-1942. Graphics by Alvin Lustig. This ad mediates very much the design philosophy promoted by the Museum of Modern Art in New York during the 40s. The words on the cover read: "form/structure/economy to improve design/to perfect craftsmanship/ and to lower costs is our constant aim". From E. Larrabee, Knoll Design, New York: H. Abrams, 1981, p. 41.

M. O. KNOLL 1910-1911

FIGURE 9

Design Centre reading room, National Gallery of Canada,
1953. From Canadian Art, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Spring 1953)
advertisement section.

FIGURE 10

Day Bed of foam rubber with rubber slat springs, walnut frame and Mansfield cover designed by Robin Bush and manufactured by Robin Bush Associates, Vancouver. From NIDC. Design Award 1955.

FIGURE 11

Combination refrigerator, electric stove and sink No. 1045
designed by M. Nathanson and manufactured by Canadian
Armature Works Inc., Montreal. From: NIDC, Design Award
1955.

FIGURE 12

Furnishings selected by the Design Index Committee and art for "Trend House" the inaugural display at the Design Centre of the National Gallery in January 1953. Included in the photograph are chairs designed by Robin Bush and Earle Morrison, a painting by David Milne and a nude torso in wood by Elford Cox. From: Canadian Art, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Autumn 1952).

FIGURE 13

An artist's rendering of "Trend House", built by the British Columbia Lumber Manufacturers Association at Thornhill near Toronto, 1952. From B.C.L.A., Furnishings In The Trend House, (exhibition catalogue) [Toronto: B.C.L.A., 1952].

FIGURE 14

"1923-1953 Compared. Two living-dining areas of equal dimensions, one with over-stuffed furniture, the other with light contemporary furniture, proving that modern designs are better adapted to the smaller homes and apartments characteristic of building trends today." From: H. Carver, "The Design Centre -- The First Year", Canadian Art, Vol. 11 (Spring 1954) p. 105.

FIGURE 15

Pottery teapot by Medalta Potteries, Medicine Hat, Alberta.
a cup and bowl by Beauceware included in the Design Index.
From: Humphrey Carver, Review of Design For Use In Canadian
Products, Canadian Art, Vol. 4, No. 2 (February/March
1947).

FIGURE 16

Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent and Minister of Trade and Commerce, C.D. Howe at the 1953 Design Merit Awards to Industry. They discuss prize winning open handle iron (No. 1B-22) and turnover toaster (TT-12) designed by Thomas Penrose of Canadian Westinghouse, Hamilton with two unidentified men, possibly from Canadian Westinghouse. From the National Gallery of Canada Photo Documentation Centre, File "Design Awards 1953".

FIGURE 17

James Warren's entry to the first design competition sponsored by the National Industrial Design Committee in 1950 - 1951. From: "Picked As winners for their Good Design", Canadian Homes and Gardens, Vol. 28, No. 6 (June 1951) p. 56.

FIGURE 18

Laminated wood and nylon cord dining chairs by Jacques Guillon of Montreal featured in the X Milan Triennale, 1954, made as early as 1952. Seen here is the graphic design by Jean Fortin for a brochure of the manufacturer Andreef Chairs Inc., who also made tennis rackets. The brochure was published by Cambridge Press in 1953. From: Fifth Annual Of Advertising And Editorial Art, Art Directors Club of Toronto, 1953, p. 44. The same chairs appeared in the Triennale manufactured by Modernart of Montreal.

andreef

FIGURE 19

Heavy Duty Front End truck attachment designed by L. Parry and manufactured by Hayes Manufacturing Company Ltd., Vancouver, c1950. It was designated as "Good Industrial Design" by members of the Design Index Committee who were impressed by design features including cost-cutting body work of sheet steel, easing maintenance, and the front bumper platform that served as a workbench during engine repairs. From undated clipping in the National Gallery Library documentation file on the National Industrial Design Committee 1947-1953.

Exemplifies Good Industrial Design

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