

E. Austin Weir The Struggle for National Broadcasting in Canada



THE
STRUGGLE FOR
NATIONAL
BROADCASTING
IN CANADA

E. AUSTIN WEIR



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To my beloved wife GERTRUDE BISHOP
without whose care and affection this book
would never have been written,
and to my old friend and former
colleague ARTHUR J. BLACK who prodded
me along to its completion

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INTRODUCTION

In 1960, at the request of Dr. W. Kaye Lamb, Dominion Archivist, I deposited in the Public Archives of Canada most of the material on programs and other records of early days in radio which I had. In so doing, it became necessary to write a number of prefaces and explanations to make these papers understandable to those who might some day be interested in them. It was from these notes that this book had its genesis.

Early Canadian broadcasting is singularly lacking in historical documentation. Most of the records were discarded long ago. After all, relatively few people in North America are interested in current history. It is only within the last two or three years that private broadcasters have made an effort to collect and record the experience of early operators. Likewise the CBC has but quite recently begun to collect and systematize its historical records. Fortunately the preservation of actual programs, impossible during earlier years owing to inadequate techniques and high costs, has now been greatly simplified and improved, first by recordings and then by tape.

I was born and reared on an Ontario farm and only left it when I was twenty to attend the Ontario Agricultural College. Soon after graduation from the University of Toronto I moved to Alberta and then to Manitoba, spending the better part of twelve years in agricultural journalism, first on the *Farm and Ranch Review* in Calgary, next as Editor of the *Nor-West Farmer*, and finally as Associate Editor of the *Grain Growers Guide (Country Guide)* of Winnipeg, then a weekly and fighting organ of the organized Grain Growers. As such, I came to know the geography, the people, and the moods of the west. My knowledge of British Columbia was no less thorough, for I had covered

many parts of it, including two thousand miles in the Northern Interior (twelve hundred of it on horseback) before the railway was built.

When the newly organized Canadian National Railways in the mid-'twenties sought settlers to fill the empty spaces along its lines, I was invited to go to London to direct its colonization advertizing and later all its publicity in Europe. It was my good fortune during that time to have an important part in several notable projects, the Wembley Exhibition, the Canadian Farmers' Marketing Tour, and Empire Scholarship promotion in co-operation with what is now the Thomson newspaper group, and several others, all of definite significance in influencing public opinion toward Canada. I had many close contacts with the press of Britain and Scandinavia, and with several of the chief officers of the British Broadcasting Corporation. This last was to prove of real significance when I returned to Canada in May, 1929, as Director of Radio for the Railway.

From 1929 to 1934, I lived in Montreal and Ottawa through the period of the first Royal Commission on Broadcasting, the fevered campaign for nationalization and the early administration of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission. I moved to Toronto in 1934 and engaged in radio programming until January 2, 1937, when I joined the CBC two months after it began. As Commercial Manager I served full time under four successive general managers until late in 1951 and had a major part in setting up the Trans-Canada and Dominion national networks. Ample opportunity for travel in all the provinces, save Newfoundland, enabled me to study conditions and make many friends. These and my earlier years in the West showed me clearly the vast importance of national broadcasting.

In 1938 the organizing and direction of the Press and Information Services of the Corporation were added to my other duties—at no extra salary. This publicity work I relinquished six years later after persistent efforts failed to obtain a satisfactory budget. During my remaining twelve years with the Corporation, until 1956, I was responsible for the organization of "Audience Research" though I had nothing to do with its subsequent direction. My final efforts were devoted to the first codification of the television policy of the CBC.

The "battle" falls naturally into four parts. The first is devoted to the radio operations, during the late twenties and early thirties, of the Canadian National Railways and other leading Canadian pioneers of national network broadcasting. The second covers the period between the Aird Commission of 1928 and the creation of the Canadian

Broadcasting Corporation in 1936. The third outlines the organization and radio programming of the CBC, the advent of television, the operations of private stations and the almost continuous agitation of the latter for a separate regulatory body. The fourth reviews the Broadcasting Act of 1958 which substituted dual control for a single administrative authority, the resulting conflict, the rise and decline of television, the growth of bureaucracy, the total costs of broadcasting, and suggestions for its improvement.

I have tried to pay a long-deserved tribute to a few of those dedicated individuals whose work helped to lay the foundations for broadcasting in Canada; whose eyes were securely fixed on the true purposes of broadcasting, but whose names are now fading into the mists of obscurity that envelop all pioneers. Many other names would have been included, had it been possible to broaden the scope of this book.

I am particularly indebted to many former friends, colleagues, and officers of the CBC from the most senior down to the clerical ranks—more than two score of them— who so generously lightened my research and otherwise assisted me. To all I offer a genuine “thank you.” I am proud of CBC accomplishments and jealous of its reputation. I have tried to look at it objectively and dispassionately, without fear, favour, or prejudice, and any criticisms I have voiced have but one object, to make the CBC serve still better the interests of all Canada. My thanks also go to the many publications and their staff members whom I have quoted so freely.

Other former associates and friends in the cause of nationalization and broadcasting to whom I am greatly indebted include: Graham Spry; Mrs. Dorothy Dyde, for access to the Alan Plaunt papers; W. V. George, President, Canadian Marconi Company; E. L. Bushnell, CKCH-TV; Helen Dechief, Librarian, Alice Kudo and Dave Nelson of the Canadian National Railways; Keith MacKinnon and J. C. Burkholder, transmission engineers; Dr. George A. Johnston, q.c., Librarian, Osgoode Hall; the staff of the Toronto Public Library; the Parliamentary Library; the CBC Reference Library in Toronto; Dr. Kaye Lamb; W. T. McFarlane, Canadian Pacific Communications; John White and his staff at Canadian National Communications; Jean Barwell who puzzled over, typed, and retyped many times my scrawling script. To these and many others, my sincere appreciation is tendered, in this effort to set some of the landmarks along the way in the battle for national broadcasting in Canada.

CHAPTER 1

EARLY RADIO AND THE CNR

“Broadcasting in Canada started with some test programs in 1919 carried out by the Canadian Marconi Company of Montreal. Regular organized programs commenced in December 1919 by the same company, and by 1922 broadcasting had been definitely established throughout the country.”¹ The Marconi station was XWA, now CFCF, and the transmitter was located in their new factory at 173 William Street, Montreal. The operator was J. V. Argyle, now with the Department of National Defence in Ottawa.

On May 20, 1920, a special program with an orchestra and the soloist Dorothy Lutton was broadcast by XWA, in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Royal Society of Canada at the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa. Reception was good in Ottawa, which was more than a hundred miles away, and the next day this was so reported by *The Ottawa Citizen* and *The Montreal Star*. Among those who heard the broadcast were Sir Robert Borden, the Duke of Devonshire, the Honourable William Lyon Mackenzie King, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, and Sir Henry Drayton.

Numerous experimental broadcasts, both here and in Europe, laid the foundation for CFCF, and many other stations quickly followed. The first broadcast on record was made by R. A. Fessenden, who was born at East Bolton, Quebec, and was a chemist with the Edison Laboratories. The broadcast was made from Brant Rock, Massachusetts, on Christmas Eve, 1906. It was heard by wireless operators

¹Commander C. P. Edwards, Director of Radio, Department of Marine, before the Parliamentary Committee, March 11, 1932, p. 3.

on ships hundreds of miles away. Others followed, including Dr. Lee de Forest's broadcast of Caruso's voice from the stage of the Metropolitan Opera in 1910, and the first transmission of the results of the presidential election in 1916.²

By 1922, broadcasting in America really took fire in both Canada and the United States. In that year, thirty-nine commercial broadcasting licences were issued by the Department of Marine at Ottawa, but half of the stations so licensed never started or were closed by the end of the year. Of more than ninety-one licences issued up to 1926, only forty stations were operating. The rest found the going too difficult. Nine were in the hands of newspapers; ten or more were operated by manufacturers or dealers in electrical equipment; three were owned by the Canadian National Railways; one was at Queen's University operating experimentally only; another was CKY owned by the Province of Manitoba; and one—later taken over by the University of Alberta as CKUA—was a pioneer in educational broadcasting and is now the only fully scheduled, non-commercial radio station in Canada. Still in operation at or near the same locations are the three stations first erected by the CNR, the station owned by the Manitoba government or their successors, all with greatly increased power and all under CBC call letters.

The mushrooming of stations in the early 'twenties was even greater in the United States. By the end of 1924, there were 530 stations operating south of the border. The total number licensed and launched up until that year was 1,105, but giving up the ghost in the same period were 572 stations, more than 50 per cent. The problems early stations faced were legion: the fight to maintain a dominant place in the community; the multiplying difficulties of programming; the demands

²The question concerning which radio station was the first to broadcast on a regular schedule is an interesting and debatable one. Asa Briggs in his *Birth of Broadcasting*, p. 20, wrote: "During 1920, regular concerts began to be broadcast in Europe from The Hague. Also in 1920, in February, the Marconi Company began to broadcast from Chelmsford." KDKA, Pittsburgh, operating experimentally from 1916, made its first scheduled broadcast on November 2, 1920, when the Harding-Cox election results were announced. However, WWJ of Detroit has long claimed that on August 31, 1920, a radio program was aired by it, and that the service that commenced on that day continued on a regular schedule thereafter. There seems no doubt that both stations were antedated by XWA of the Canadian Marconi Company at Montreal as a public broadcaster of regularly scheduled programs. Indeed, it would appear that CFCF is the oldest regularly operated broadcasting station in the world.

of composers for payment for the use of their property; and the utter inadequacy of their backing. Month by month these problems took their toll. In spite of the mortality, and the lack of visible means of support new stations replaced the failures at an accelerated pace.

Widely diverse opinions were held about the purposes of the new medium and how the medium should be supported. These early views were very different from the rationale of merchandising that finally took over. In June of 1922, David Sarnoff, perhaps the greatest organizing genius the industry has produced, suggested: "Broadcasting represents a job of entertaining, informing, and educating the nation and should therefore be distinctly regarded as a public service."³ As late as 1924, he continued to dream of broadcasting by endowment, "similar to that enjoyed by libraries, museums, and educational institutions."⁴

THE DEPRESSION OF 1921

Canada was still suffering severely from the depression following World War I. Though the depression in 1921 was much shorter than the depression of the 'thirties, it was very harsh and brought great suffering, deep distress, and unwarranted pessimism. The depression swept through almost every segment of the economy, particularly agriculture. The depression of 1921 helped to bring about the defeat of the Conservative government on December 6, 1921, and it was largely responsible for the rise of the new Progressive Party represented by some sixty-four members in the House of Commons. It helped to overturn several provincial governments. Even Church Union, which had its genesis in Western Canada, joining the Methodists and Presbyterians into the United Church of Canada, traces many of its roots to the depression of 1921.

From a peak in 1919, prices for farm products fell disastrously. There was little or no cash, and it was by no means uncommon for a shipment of livestock to bring less on the market than its freight charges. Business was at a low ebb, and morale among many Canadians was as depressed as the economy. Partially a reaction from the war, but mainly the result of economic conditions, a general helplessness pervaded the country. In the very centre of the picture, attracting a

³Archer, *Big Business and Radio*, p. 31.

⁴Archer, *History of Radio*, p. 342.

disproportionate degree of attention, was the Canadian railway problem, which was blamed for much of what was properly attributable to the war.

In 1919, the Canadian government had no feasible alternative but to take over and consolidate several privately owned railroads that were bankrupt. These became the Canadian National Railways, after the independent lines had spent themselves in a wild competitive scramble to span the great stretches of the Canadian wilderness westward to the Pacific. Nationalization, with government assuming their vast obligations, was the remedy applied. At the time it was imperative to keep the bankrupt lines operating to conserve the communities of producers along their far-flung lines; indeed, perhaps it was necessary to avoid the financial panic that some feared, since at least one large bank was said to be heavily involved.

The tangled mass of five major railroads—Grand Trunk, Grand Trunk Pacific, Canadian Northern, National Transcontinental, Intercolonial—with a number of lesser ones, exceeding twenty-three thousand miles in length, had to be welded into one effective unit. The man chosen to do this was Sir Henry Thornton, whose abilities, outlook, and sympathies were as great as his physical stature—and he was a giant of a man. His arena was communication in all phases: the conveyance of goods and people, the transmission of messages by telegraph and telephone, and the dissemination of ideas and ideals nationally by radio. He frequently forged far ahead of his more pedestrian contemporaries, particularly in the field of public and employee relations. Sir Henry Thornton was the father of network broadcasting in Canada. Educated at the University of Pennsylvania and trained on the Pennsylvania Railroad, he was in England in 1911 as General Manager of the London and North-Eastern Railway. As Inspector-General of Transportation for the British Expeditionary Forces in France, with the rank of Major-General, his authority extended from Great Britain to Mesopotamia. Following the war, his services were recognized with a K.B.E. (Knight Commander of the British Empire), the French Legion of Honour, the Distinguished Service Medal of the United States, and the Belgian Order of Leopold.

Sir Henry arrived in Ottawa to assume the Presidency of the defunct Canadian railroads on December 1, 1922. This was exactly one month before John C. Reith (later Lord Reith) was made General Manager of the newly formed British Broadcasting Company. Eight days after his arrival, Sir Henry commenced his first tour of inspection, and he

covered Canada from Sydney, Nova Scotia, to Victoria, British Columbia. He spoke to Canadian Clubs, Boards of Trade, and United Farmers' Conventions in some nineteen cities and many towns. He visited shops, stations, round-houses, inspected office-buildings and equipment, met officers and employees. Everywhere he went he breathed optimism, hope, and encouragement.⁵

One of Thornton's first acts was to create a Department of Colonization and Agriculture to attract immigrants and co-operate with the provinces in firmly establishing them along CNR lines. The new department was directed by Dr. W. J. Black, an energetic man with an extensive knowledge of Canadian agriculture and land settlement. He needed someone to direct the CNR's advertising and promotion in Europe. Since I had spent ten years in agricultural journalism and organization in Canada's four western provinces, his choice fell on me, though I had never met him up to that moment.

Five years later, in 1929, Sir Henry said:

Last year the Canadian National Railways was directly responsible for more than forty thousand immigrants, while of the total of immigrants to come to Canada, fifty-four per cent were ticketed over our railway. Colonists are our new blood; we solicit them in Europe, we escort them across the seas, we advise them as to plans of settlement; often we help them select the cows and pigs and horses and equipment that will go with these farms. They are the backbone of tomorrow.

SIR HENRY THORNTON'S VIEWS

Though Sir Henry took no active interest in radio before arriving in Canada, it is difficult to believe that the medium had not already touched his fertile imagination. In any event, there could be no truer measure of his intuition than the swiftness with which he sensed the possibilities of broadcasting for public service and public relations. He had to restore the confidence of Canadians in their greatest single property. He had to raise and maintain the morale of half a million employees and their dependents. He recognized at once that in radio

⁵An interview with Sir Henry in *The Saturday Evening Post*, July 6, 1929, by Courtenay Ryley Cooper, provided a graphic picture of his vision and efforts during this period.

—an instantaneous and personal means of communication—lay an instrument admirably fashioned for his purposes. Rapid and frequent communication between management and far-flung personnel, as well as between the Company and the now increasingly expectant public, was essential. No longer could memoranda and publicity releases take the place of the persuasive voice and personality of the CNR's President.

On June 1, 1923, a Radio Department within the CNR was set up under W. D. Robb, Vice-President in charge of Telegraphs, Express, and Colonization. Robb was a man of real capacity and driving force. He had a world of experience behind him and had risen to General Manager of the Grand Trunk Railway. The Director of Radio was W. H. Swift, Jr., a graduate electrical engineer. The Secretary of the Department was J. T. Carlyle, who subsequently served the cause of radio in Canada for forty years. From the beginning, Sir Henry emphasized that intensive study would be immediately made in order to make the best adaptation of radio for travellers, guests, and employees. It would be a quick and effective way to influence passenger traffic.

The idea of radio on trains was not entirely new. The earliest experiment to inspire action took place on the afternoon of October 13, 1902, ten months after Marconi's first transatlantic wireless message. The demonstration was conducted by Dr. Ernest Rutherford (later Sir Ernest), F.R.C.S., and Dr. Howard Barnes, F.R.C.S., both of whom were on the staff of McGill University. The experiment was made at the request of George T. Bell, General Manager of the Grand Trunk Railway. At St. Dominique, near Coteau, Quebec, a transmitter was set up. The receiving apparatus was on a special section of the *International Limited*, a crack train operated by the Grand Trunk. The train was carrying members of the American Association of General Passenger Agents to their Forty-seventh Annual Convention. In spite of difficulties, the demonstration of transmitting radio signals to a moving train was a success. Nothing further resulted from this effort until 1920 or 1921.⁶ Experiments were conducted on the *Capital Cities Express*, and reception was said to be good a hundred miles or more from the transmitter. Unfortunately, details of these experiments were never published, and when the effort was renewed in 1923, the work had to begin all over again.

Three weeks after establishing the Radio Department, several groups of Americans journeyed to Alaska to take part in the official opening

⁶ *CNR Magazine*, September, 1922.

of Mount McKinley National Park on July 10, 1923. One group from the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* chose to travel Canadian National. Before their special left Montreal on June 23, a radio receiver was installed in the observation car. Prior to departure, the first radio program ever arranged by the Company was broadcast from CHYC which was owned by the Northern Electric Company. A brief radio address was broadcast to the visitors. They were welcomed by Robb and entertained with a program of live vocal and instrumental music. A. R. McEwan, who was to succeed Swift as Director of Radio, was the operator on that first special. As the party crossed the continent, their journey was periodically enlivened with concerts picked up from Canadian and American stations *en route*. This was the first time radio was used on a transcontinental train.

"SCIENTIFIC WITCHCRAFT"

Early in October of 1923, Canada and the CNR were hosts to a world figure, the Right Honourable David Lloyd George, Great Britain's war-time Prime Minister. With his wife and daughter, Lloyd George was on his first post-war visit to Canada and the United States. Sir Henry placed at their disposal the private car *Ottawa* for the entire journey. On October 9, a radio receiver was installed at Montreal, and Lloyd George was shown how it worked. Robb extended his good wishes for their journey in a brief broadcast. This was followed by a short musical program which concluded with a newscast made up of items assembled by the CNR through the courtesy of the news agencies and the Montreal newspapers.

One of the earliest of Canadian newscasts, this was the first news report to be heard on a moving train. It was many years before any regular news service would be available to radio stations, except such local news as they could gather for themselves. Among the items was a statement given out between twelve and one o'clock that afternoon by President Calvin Coolidge to correspondents at the White House. It dealt with the attitude of the American government toward the reparations plan proposed by the Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes. Lloyd George had referred to this a few days earlier in New York; more recently, and more specifically, he mentioned it in a statement to the press at Montreal the previous evening.

Coolidge's statement, received by radio on the way to Ottawa, was

the subject of an immediate press interview by the large group of correspondents aboard. It was the first interview resulting from radio reception on a moving train. Lloyd George expressed much gratification for such prompt receipt of the Coolidge statement. Calling it "scientific witchcraft," he said:

This most excellent service of the Canadian National Railways has made me acquainted without loss of time with what has happened today in London, Paris, and Washington. The service is absolutely invaluable. Without it, I would not be in a position to answer the questions you have put to me, and I would not be in the position I am to speak tonight.

Despite the technical problems involved, train installations were pursued vigorously. On January 5, 1924, the first radio-equipped trans-continental train in regular service left Montreal for Vancouver. The operator was Walter Anderson who forty years later was serving national radio as the Traffic Manager of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The basic idea behind train radio was to attract and hold passenger traffic. Radio was effective and economical while it was used. Over the long and sparsely settled stretches of Canada, radio brought passengers the latest news, information about the country through which passengers were passing, and entertainment to make the trip more pleasant, relaxing, and comfortable. By the summer of 1929, radio served all the main-line trains of the system. The cars in regular service numbered seventy-eight.

NEWS FOR THE PRINCE OF WALES

On September 24, 1924, the radio-equipped CNR special, with Herbert Longley of Montreal as operator, took H.R.H. Edward, Prince of Wales, to his ranch at High River, Alberta. The Prince enjoyed excellent reception from 1:30 to 3:30 P.M. He heard a special broadcast from CNRW in Winnipeg, which included a seven-hundred-word newscast prepared by *The London Times* for His Highness. Gordon Olive went ahead to make an adequate radio installation at the ranch, so the Prince could be kept informed with news from the moment his train arrived until it departed five weeks later; acceptable periodic entertainment was also arranged for certain hours with nearby stations. It was

expected this would require but a few days of Olive's time, but Professor Carlyle, manager of the ranch, urged him to remain throughout the visit. When the request was passed on to the President, Sir Henry inquired if he had suitable clothes with him. Olive's mind was soon put to rest. At the first meal after his arrival, the Prince sat at the head of the table clad in riding breeches. The Prince's old woollen sweater was strapped by policeman's braces.

Not until 1928 was a receiver that could use alternating current sufficiently developed for commercial use. So for the first four years battery-operated equipment had to be used in homes and trains. By 1930, train radios did not differ materially from home installations. With rare exceptions, train reception was as good if not better than reception in well-equipped households.

This was not accomplished without a great deal of experimentation and many headaches. Overcoming interference on a fast-moving railway car that passed over all sorts of terrain—often close to power lines—was no small problem. The magnetic effect of steel on steel, the arcing of car-lighting generators, fan motors, and other electrical equipment were the noisy demons of train radio. Outside the cities, reception was far superior, for local interference was a great bug-bear. Nevertheless, interference was progressively eliminated, and the cost of equipping cars to bring the world of entertainment to train passengers was progressively lowered. By 1930, the cost of fully equipping a car had been reduced to \$600 from \$850 five years before.

There was little daytime reception. Few Canadian stations programmed during the day. In the evening, reception was generally good—especially across the Prairies—from powerful American stations. Reception was poor through the Rockies. To provide for service along the more isolated sections, combination sets—radio and phonograph—were installed. They provided good recorded descriptions of interesting points along the right of way, with other information of general interest, thus assuring regular and continuous service throughout the entire run.

Both head-sets and loud-speakers were used. A head-set, installed adjacent to each chair in the observation or lounge car, provided optional and individual reception. This avoided forcing entertainment on passengers who might not desire it. The loud-speakers were usually installed in the non-revenue section of the car, enabling passengers who wished to listen by this means to do so by occupying that part of the car. When special concerts were being staged, with either the radio or phonograph, it was a common sight, especially after dinner, to see

this section of the car crowded for two or three hours. Innumerable expressions of appreciation reached the management regarding the pleasure and satisfaction afforded the passengers.

On October 17, 1929, the Right Honourable J. Ramsay MacDonald was given a state dinner by the Prime Minister in the reading room of the House of Commons. The speeches were broadcast nationally by the CNR. A group of parliamentarians arriving in Quebec City that day was anxious to reach Ottawa in time to attend the dinner, but a delayed arrival precluded this. Their disappointment was great, but after the train left Quebec, the radio operator picked up the introductory remarks to the speeches, and smiles of delight replaced frowns of dissatisfaction. They were able to hear every word as clearly as if they had been sitting at the banquet table.

Two fight fans on their way east from Calgary, and very anxious to hear the Dempsey-Tunney World's Championship bout, travelled to Edmonton so that they could take the CNR radio-equipped train to Toronto. They were rewarded by being able to hear the fight clearly round by round. There were actual cases in which travellers, in the act of laying down their money at Canadian Pacific wickets, inquired if the train was radio-equipped; when they were told it was not, they picked up and left for the CNR. This did nothing to improve the tempers of either CPR ticket salesmen or administrators, to whom train radio was a source of constantly increasing irritation.

TRAIN RADIO AND PASSENGER TRAFFIC

The most immediate effect of radio on passenger traffic was felt between Toronto and Montreal. It was scarcely more than installed when there was a big switch of passengers from the CPR trains that had long dominated that run. CNR observation cars became crowded, and space was difficult to find. "Amos and Andy," the most popular evening radio serial of the early 'thirties, and other programs were listening "musts." In 1929, CNR radio-equipped cars provided 210,000 passengers with 77,600 hours of news, information, and entertainment. This was an 80 per cent increase in the number of passengers using radio compared with the previous year. Thirty years later, in October of 1961, a group of retired railway and radio men, of whom I was one, began reminiscing about radio on trains. A former official of the CPR, who had been in a unique position to know, remarked that there

was nothing about the CNR that was quite so generally irritating to the CPR as train radio, because of its effect on passenger traffic. That irritation soon affected more than clerks and officials of the CPR. The contagious dislike of aggressiveness spread to major shareholders, and became a weapon for politicians of the opposition.

From the very beginning it was felt that, if a suitable standard of service was to be maintained, trained and experienced attendants were essential. Each operator kept a log which showed the stations heard, the number of passengers listening, the duration and quality of reception. This enabled the Radio Department of the CNR to obtain first-hand daily reports on how well the equipment was functioning on every car, and to secure many practical suggestions for improving the service. Operators soon learned which stations could be tuned in and which stations had the most acceptable programs. They quickly acquired a sensitivity to the varying tastes of passengers.

In addition to their radio duties, operators were instructed to be alert to prospects for business for other departments of the company, and many contacts were made with passengers contemplating additional travel for their families, relatives and friends, or with shippers of freight. Between 1927 and 1930, more than thirty-five hundred direct but discreet solicitations were made by these men, a considerable percentage of which resulted in actual business.

An operator knew more than how to operate his set. He had to know about the country, the cities, the towns along the route, and about travel. He had to be alert, courteous, and attentive. One such operator was Don Roberts, who was on the Montreal-Vancouver train on December 31, 1924, running in the Mountain Time Zone that New Year's Eve. Four times that night Roberts rang out the old and rang in the new, with programs from stations in four time zones, Eastern, Central, Mountain, and Pacific. This was the more remarkable since no networks in either Canada or the United States were then in operation. It was clear evidence of the great coverage of many stations. The observation car was filled to overflowing, and passengers stayed with him until the very end. Later Roberts was for many years Assistant Supervisor of Technical Operations (Radio) for the CBC in Toronto.

This is from an anonymous article in the CNR archives:

One Sunday morning, an east-bound CNR train was flashing across the Prairie, no longer golden, but white with snow as far as the eye could see. Within the observation car a group of passengers

sat, toying with magazines and books, engaging one another in conversation that lagged, wondering how long before lunch would be served. Suddenly the sound of an organ rolled through the car. Its music softened, almost died away, and then, a clear soprano voice was uplifted in an old familiar hymn. Books were dropped. Drooping faces brightened. There was no need for conversation. Lunch was forgotten. Bible reading, sermon, and more hymns followed. Then the announcements of meetings to be held during the coming week by a church in Saskatoon, nearly three hundred miles away. Then the collection. There was silence in the car, except when a jingle of silver was heard as the offering plates were assembled in that far-away church. A passenger at the rear end of the car rose and walked to where the radio operator sat. He asked the operator for his cap and dropped a five-dollar bill into it. And then he passed the hat around. Without exception every passenger contributed. Late that afternoon, when the train pulled into Saskatoon, almost thirty dollars went from the train to the church whose service had been heard far away in the morning. It was the first known time that a broadcast sermon had elicited voluntary contributions from an unseen congregation.

THE COST OF RADIO IN TRAINS

What did it cost, all this catering to the comfort, pleasure, and satisfaction of the better-informed passengers? In 1930, the year of heaviest expenditure on train operations, when seventy-eight radio-equipped cars were in regular service, the mileage covered by such cars was 6,333,000; the average daily reception was 210 hours, and the number of passengers using the service each day of the year was 704. Figures for 1929 were only slightly less. The complete cost of all phases of train operation in 1929 was \$161,853; and in 1930, \$170,297. The average cost of this service was 2.69 cents per train-mile, or sixty-five cents for each passenger using it. A cost of less than three cents per train-mile on radio operation meant that if radio attracted one extra passenger on each run, the service more than paid for itself. Surveys and estimates made at that time indicated that the additional business very substantially exceeded the installation, operation, and broadcasting costs. Moreover, these costs included the meals and berths of

operators charged at regular rates by the Passenger Department against the Radio Department. These alone accounted for almost 30 per cent of the total expenditure. The Passenger Department usually had spare space, and extra meals were taken with the staff, so the line was actually out considerably less than the amount charged by the Passenger Department. This made no allowance for good will created by the presence of the operators on the train, nor for additional business brought to the company through their definite though guarded solicitations. The success of radio on the CNR rapidly led to its adoption on at least a dozen American railroads. In October of 1930, a travelling supervisor of the CNR in the Pullman yards in Chicago counted twenty-five radio-equipped cars of other roads. Some still maintain radio in various forms, for the information and entertainment of passengers. Train radio's success owed most to Gordon Olive.

Akin to these activities but distinct from them was the new development carried out by the Telegraph Department on the CNR: the first, two-way train telephone. The technical credit for this installation must go to J. C. Burkholder, the engineer who was also responsible for carrier-current installations which made regular, national-network broadcasting possible in Canada. On April 27, 1930, telephone service began on the *International Limited* between Toronto and Montreal. While the train carrying Sir Henry Thornton sped at seventy miles an hour, he conversed by telephone with the Vice-President in charge of European affairs in London, England. His words were relayed by short wave to carrier-current telegraph circuits which paralleled the tract. At a relay station—there were two of these between Toronto and Montreal—connection was made with ordinary, long-distance wires. The system required an unusual degree of technical skill. One-way communication had been established by German engineers in the early 'twenties, but two-way communication presented quite different and far more complicated problems. Each day two trains were equipped with telephones, and interruptions due to the failure of train-telephone equipment were very few. The Bell Telephone Company commented favourably in a printed statement on the quality of the transmission, stating that the service, according to their methods of computation, was 95 per cent perfect.

As significant as they were, the train-radio operations of the CNR were of minor importance compared with the CNR's main broadcasting activities. On December 30, 1923, the CNR from Montreal made the first sponsored network broadcast in history. That evening it leased

the circuits of the Bell Telephone Company, together with radio station CHYC of Montreal, to connect with OA in Ottawa. This was to broadcast the CNR's first anniversary program consisting of New Year's greetings, reports on operations, prospects and plans of the railway by the President and three Vice-Presidents, interspersed with vocal and instrumental music. Responses to that broadcast came from 133 different points in Eastern Canada, and eleven states as far south as North Carolina. More than 80 per cent of the points heard from were in the United States. It was the first time a railway executive employed radio as an instrument of contact between himself and the great invisible audience of employees and the public.

Announcing the Company's plans for radio-expansion during this program, Vice-President Robb said (according to *CNR Magazine*, January, 1924):

We have now under erection a powerful broadcasting station in Ottawa, which will be tied in with one of the large broadcasting stations in Montreal, so that our programs from either Ottawa or Montreal will be broadcast simultaneously from these two points and should be received by practically the entire eastern end of Canada and the United States. We are then going into the Middle West with our broadcasting stations and then further west until we span the entire country with our programs. We are doing this because we believe in the tremendous value of radio to the people of Canada at large, and because we feel it will be a great benefit and pleasure to our employees and to the large travelling public whom we are called upon to serve.

SIR HENRY TELLS WHY

Two months later, on February 27, 1924, the CNR's first radio station was opened. CKCH (later CNRO, CRCO, and now CBO) was located in Ottawa, and Sir Henry set out clearly the aims of the company (from *CNR Magazine*, January, 1924):

Let me first say a few words about the radio, and the practical use to which, I hope, we shall be able to turn it in the administration of this vast railway system You all know that to a very great degree our success depends upon the efficient, loyal, and

alert service of each of our employees; and that can only be brought about if the objects which we hope to achieve are understood, and there is confidence in the administration of the property. This, in turn, largely depends upon the degree in which the officers and myself can establish contact with our men This wonderful device puts in our hands a very useful instrument of contact and communication.

Our efforts in the development of radio have in some cases been ridiculed, and in others characterized as useless; but these are the words of the thoughtless critic, who fails to understand that the human element is the largest factor in the success of any railway. And it is also to be remembered that while I am talking to those who are employees, a large number of people both in the United States and Canada are listening and hearing something about the Canadian National Railways' System. I extend a hearty hand to them; and to those on the other side of the border I should like, if I had the time, to tell something of what a wonderful country is the Dominion of Canada; of the opportunities which exist here for those who are willing to work.⁷

In the earliest years, from 1924 to 1928, radio promotion was carried on by the President and officers. This was conducted mainly through talks and occasionally by discussions on a wide variety of subjects having to do with national development as well as with the services of the railway. Though talks have been out of fashion these many years—they were discontinued in July, 1929, except for the annual anniversary broadcast—they had large audiences at first, depending of course, on the reputation and personality of the speaker and the timeliness of his material. In this respect, Sir Henry was outstanding. As John Nelson, one of Canada's most noted public-relations officers wrote in *Maclean's* (February 15, 1925):

His talks, really fireside chats, were friendly, intimate, timely and dealt with a great variety of topics. Often for fifteen minutes or

⁷In his speech at Philadelphia, before the Advertising Clubs of the World, June 21, 1926, Sir Henry said: "One of the features of broadcasting is the receipt of pleasant and complimentary responses from what are known as radio fans. We have received such communications to the number of about one hundred thousand a year from all the provinces of the Dominion, from every state in the American Republic and from many foreign countries.

more he talks over the radio telling his thousands of assistants and the public about the road—its successes, its plans, its hopes, its policies. A patron writes him in gratitude for the attention his mother, in travelling, received from a certain porter on a specified car. The President relays the compliment to the whole system and every porter has a new pride and interest in his work. He compliments the operating staff on the low percentage of casualties for the past month, perhaps the lowest on the continent, and instantly a fresh incentive for efficiency thrills from end to end of the system.

He associates a great army of men with him in his programs and policies. They not only know his plans and his features (through newspaper cuts) but the very tones of his voice are familiar to the section boss at a water tank when the President steps down to greet him.

An interesting sidelight on the company's earliest radio activities was the visit of a party of five Scottish editors who toured Canada in 1924 for the express purpose of studying reception conditions and opportunities for immigrants. They unanimously declared that radio—and particularly the recently instituted CNR broadcasts—were a vital key to the contentment of new settlers. Radio helped to overcome their two greatest enemies: loneliness and isolation. A family not cut off from friends and the world—other things being equal—would be happier and would draw more settlers because success in immigration was so largely dependent on recommendation.

COMMERCIAL ABUSES PREDICTED

Thornton considered radio a complementary part of the great communications complex which he headed. Radio was geared to serve the national interest. Encouragement to that end, within the means available, was basic. Radio has never been more purposefully directed, even under the CBC. That aim was never allowed to be debased or cheapened. To him, radio was essentially a prestige medium, and the CNR consistently strove to reflect in its programs the standards of service set for the railway as a whole. As the nation's largest organization, it could only hope to prosper as the nation grew and prospered. It was the main physical link uniting all the provinces, and to the President

the use of radio to join them in thought and purpose was equally natural.

Sir Henry's addresses constantly reflected this national ideal. He said, on October 20, 1929, while opening the All-Canada Symphony Concerts, the first transcontinental symphonic series in America:

It is only through nation-wide broadcasts that we shall accomplish what we regard as most important, the encouragement of a feeling of kinship between all parts of the country, to bring home to all sections more vividly our common aspirations and achievements We regard the use of radio as a national trust. It is essentially both a national and a local-service institution. As such it adds to the social and economic life of the nation. Service to the listener is the primary consideration. In the final analysis the listener himself makes the program. The future of broadcasting rests with the individual who turns the dials. While the broadcasting station is necessarily interested in presenting its best to its audience, it is not possible to please all listeners at the same time. Indeed, it would be undesirable if that were so, as great uniformity of taste is not always consistent with the development of individuality. Hence variety in programming is essential, and while trying to provide variety, we shall endeavour at the same time to maintain a dignity and educational value consistent with the nation's greatest single organization.

Sir Henry had definite opinions regarding the use and abuse of radio for advertising, and he did not hesitate to express them. Years before his contemporaries, he saw the direction radio advertising might take. Before the Advertising Clubs of the World, meeting in Philadelphia on June 21, 1926, he said: "There is a new marvel of science which is already playing an important part in the art of indirect advertising and which is destined to become a still larger factor in the future. It is radio broadcasting. There are certain necessary and proper limitations with respect to the employment of this agency and *it is essential that broadcasting be surrounded with such safeguards as will prevent the air becoming what might be described as an atmospheric bill board.*" The result was that commercials as we know them today were always taboo on the CNR. On its symphonies, operas, historical dramas, and national commentaries, as they developed, there were no commercials.

Though the CNR was not entirely alone in this attitude, it was definitely the most restrictive.

As part of the same speech, Thornton made another remark of almost equal significance: "To be effective, radio advertising should be linked with publication advertising of national scope." It was years before that concept settled into the minds of a large part of the radio and advertising fraternity. There are still some who do not understand it. In the 'twenties and later, advertising agencies, almost without exception, shied as far away from radio as they could. They were not prepared for the medium, and it was so much easier to patronize publications.⁸

But Sir Henry envisaged something a good deal beyond what is normally considered complementary press advertising. He actually contemplated making available to listeners more systematic and intelligible information on programs. He was well acquainted with the methods of the BBC through its *Radio Times*, as well with the inadequacy of advance information with respect to Canadian programming, an inadequacy that persists to this day.

From 1924 to 1929, the CNR published every month, well in advance of their broadcasts, a pocket-size booklet, 8½" by 4", which listed the more important programs on several stations, with details regarding them. The importance of such detailed advance information was clearly recognized. The masthead of an article in the March, 1924, issue of the *CNR Magazine*, which featured the opening of CNRO, the Company's first radio station, contained this statement: "The radio programs of the Canadian National Railways are being published in advance in newspapers and periodicals in Canada and the United States. Watch for these programs and direct the attention of your friends and associates to them."

In 1929, the format of these monthly bulletins was enlarged to 8½" by 11", illustrated, and given the name of *Radio Features*. It was similar to, and actually was, the forerunner of today's *CBC Times*. Having fewer programs to publicize, these could be treated in greater detail.

⁸ In 1930, Merlin Aylesworth, then President of NBC, told me that they had to regularly sell time over the heads of many agencies and against their recommendations. NBC nevertheless consistently sent these same agencies cheques for their 15 per cent commission.

CHAPTER 2

PIONEER STATION COVERAGE

The first CNR radio station was opened in Ottawa on February 27, 1924. The transmitter was a 500-watt Northern Electric on 690 kilocycles. The aerial, on the roof of the Jackson building, reached 220 feet above ground level. The path of transmission was mainly south-east-northwest. CNRO was heard throughout the New England States, and a good deal of the time the signal went as far south as Virginia, and into many parts of the Maritime Provinces. The extraordinary coverage in those days explains why reasonably consistent reception on CNR trains during long transcontinental journeys could be had, despite the limited number of relatively low-powered stations.¹ Power increases of major American stations were rapidly filling in the gaps. This ensured reception of American programs almost everywhere

¹In the 'twenties, radio stations, though very low in power by today's standards, could be heard over unbelievably great distances, because stations were few in number and interference was relatively little. Opened on June 26, 1922, KSD St. Louis was heard in forty-one states before winter set in, while WJZ in Newark covered practically all the United States east of the Mississippi. (Archer, *History of Radio*, p. 293.) On one occasion, CFCN Calgary, and CHNS Halifax broadcast programs to one another. They were heard in each other's city, probably because of sky-waves, which also accounted for very frequent reception of Vancouver's CNRV in New Zealand. During 1925, the CNR received not only letters of thanks from the Oblate Fathers on Chesterfield Inlet for the home news received from the company's broadcasts but also prayers to continue this means of shortening the shadows of the long winter night. Many other stations could confirm such distant reception from their own experience.

across Canada; indeed, in numberless places no Canadian station could be heard.

The first program at CNRO opened with "O Canada" played by the Chateau Laurier Orchestra under James McIntyre. The Chateau's rotunda was thronged with visitors who came to hear the music. Members of the Press Gallery and their friends heard the entire program from a set installed in the recreation room of the Gallery. Several Ottawa clubs installed receivers for the convenience of their members. Sir Henry was making radio history, and his speech showed that he understood, as few did, the significance of the event.

For its first anniversary, CNRO received in advance so many varied and valuable gifts from listeners—not advertisers—that their disposition presented a problem. It was decided to award these as prizes at a draw by the Mayor of Ottawa. Those listeners who sent in prepaid wires clearly identifying the program and station would be eligible. Over six thousand messages were received. Two-thirds originated in Canada, one-third in the United States. There were 515 wires from New York State, 205 from Pennsylvania, 187 from Connecticut, and 102 from New Jersey. Others came from all the Atlantic States, from the Gulf of Mexico, Wisconsin, and Minnesota; in Canada, from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, and Ontario. At the second-anniversary broadcast of CNRO, telegrams, phone calls, and letters exceeded twenty thousand. Again, the responses originated in the same areas and in proportions similar to the previous year's, thus indicating consistency of reception.

On November 7, 1924, a second CNR station was opened at Moncton, New Brunswick. The power was 500 watts, the channel 960 kc. The studio was thirty feet by forty, with an anteroom fifteen by thirty. There was remote control connection with the organ of the Imperial Theatre close by, and with the clock of the Dominion Observatory at Saint John, eighty-five miles away. Programs were relayed regularly from both Saint John and Halifax, transmission being excellent without intermediate amplification. The aerial was directed to give maximum coverage southwest, into the New England States, and northeast, to cover as well as possible those areas along the St. Lawrence and the Atlantic Seaboard. Actually it covered consistently far more of the three provinces than any other AM transmitter has since covered.

CNRA BROADCASTS TO GREAT BRITAIN

As forecast two months before the opening—in the September, 1924, issue of *CNR Magazine*—reports of reception of the new station began to trickle in from Great Britain. These became so numerous that it was decided to put on a special broadcast for listeners in the United Kingdom and the Irish Free State on February 3, 1925. The British Broadcasting Company co-operated by announcing it a number of times before the broadcast. The power of CNRA² was stepped up to 850 watts for the occasion. Although the program was not heard in London, it was heard clearly in many parts outside London, and a number of complete logs were turned in, though there had been no previous announcement of the details of the program. After midnight, reception improved, and the CNR switchboard at the Cockspur Street office, just off Trafalgar Square, was kept open until well after 1:00 A.M. to receive calls from excited people who wanted to say they had heard CNRA.

On February 5, *The Ottawa Citizen* reported:

The Canadian National is making brilliant use of broadcasting to keep the nationally owned system before the travelling public. After penetrating the United States, CNR publicity is beginning to blanket the Atlantic Ocean It is possible that Sir Henry Thornton's engineering training has helped to make him more ready to grasp the possibilities of modern invention as it brought him more directly in contact with the industrial revolution of this present time.

Only nine days later, a Conservative Senator from New Brunswick, the Honourable F. B. Black, seeking any club with which to belabour the government, complained in the Senate: "I understand we have in Canada six radio stations operated by the CNR—some cost \$90,000, some \$70,000—there are different amounts but the investment amounts to \$500,000, and the amount expended for upkeep is \$200,000 and

²At that time, the frequencies of KDKA and CNRA were close. When the news of the proposed broadcast to Britain became known, there were so many advance requests to KDKA to cease for a time during the broadcast from CNRA that KDKA generously co-operated by closing down for twenty minutes, so that listeners in its extensive coverage area might hear and register their reception of CNRA and this special program.

at 5 per cent the interest is \$25,000. There you have \$225,000 a year loaded on the people." Then he added: "It is the greatest advertising scheme I ever heard of, and it is not worth one cent to the people of Canada."

At that time, the CNR had erected only two stations, for which the total capital was \$48,826.46, or less than one-tenth that stated by the Senator. In its six "phantom" stations (stations existing in name only), it had no investment, and the total capital expenditure for all purposes over the entire ten years of operation from 1923 to 1933 was only \$170,000, or less than one-quarter of the figure stated by the Senator. His statement regarding operating costs was equally erroneous. These are mentioned here only because they mark the beginning of a stream of gross misrepresentation hurled by certain opposition politicians at the CNR and Sir Henry, as soon as his CNR promotion began to grow effective.

EARLY "TWIDDLERS"

The extensive coverage enjoyed by pioneer stations everywhere encouraged feverish interest among early listeners to log as many stations as possible. Radio was a wonderful toy, a tremendous scientific curiosity. Listeners were far more interested in distant stations than in the quality of programs heard. Some stations encouraged this and prepared elaborate maps, indicating population and listener-coverage, utterly unwarranted on any consistent basis.

In the mid-'twenties and later, enthusiastic radio fans sat up half the night and longer, hunched over their sets, trying to pick up far-distant stations with their home-made receivers. Silence reigned in the house, and the harassed housewife abandoned her dishes, while the head of the house listened intently for sounds out of space. Brimming with anticipation, his trembling fingers twiddled with knobs or handles that were sensitive to the slightest adjustment. With a shout of triumph, he announced: "I got St. Louis," or perhaps some even more distant station. There was often competition between father and son, when there were two or three sets in the same house. The early sets were battery-operated.

On the wall, the "twiddler" kept a large map of North America, sometimes a map of the world. It was dotted with pins in a variety of colours to show when and where he had picked up this or that. His

ambition was to set a pin wherever there was a station. The map was the most frequently consulted thing in the house. His first chore in the morning was to add new pins, and to bring the family up to date with his accomplishments. The next thing to do was to inform his office colleagues, and the first gossip of the day was how many stations had been brought in. It was a proud man who could boast that he had heard twenty-five stations the night before, for often his efforts were frustrated, and he got no further than tuning in the wave that was being sent out by the oscillating receiver of his neighbour next door. An announcer who failed to reiterate his call letters at least once every ten minutes fell under the ire of these searchers in space, and he was summarily condemned.

Family relations were often strained, as the wife wondered how she ever came to marry such a morose fanatic who was driving his family as crazy as himself. Many homes were littered from kitchen to garret to cellar with parts about to find their place in some set as yet unfinished. In sheer desperation, the wife banished him for good to a place where he could putter away to his heart's content. In the 'twenties, the press carried very few advertisements for finished sets, but plenty for kits and parts, so that weekends would be fully occupied assembling the widely varying contraptions that emanated from the brains of their builders. It was little wonder there was a lucrative market for thoroughly good sets when they finally arrived. But they were expensive. According to *Radio Industry* published by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics in 1930, 222,646 standard receivers were sold in Canada. Of these, 4.3 per cent were battery-operated, and 95.7 per cent were A.C. sets. Of the latter, 15 per cent cost less than \$100, 44 per cent between \$100 and \$200, and 41 per cent over \$200, a lot of money at that time.

PIRATING — PHANTOM LICENCES

But doubts often crept in about the tuning accomplishments of listeners. Neighbours said, "Show me," and demanded proof of these claims. Hence many stations sent out confirmation cards or verification stamps. These were printed by an enterprising agency and sold to the station, to be resold to tuners-in for a nickel or a dime. This looked like good business, especially for the printing industry, but it did not last long. In 1932, WLW Cincinnati emerged with 500,000 watts and the slogan

"The Nation's Station." Gradually high-power networks and better programming altered listening habits. Some stations had these stamps on hand a decade later, when they disposed of them as souvenirs of a bygone era in broadcasting.

Difficulties in reception led to a helpful idea for filling schedules, but this brainwave was outlawed before long. Some stations set up one or more receivers at favourite points, carried programs from them over telephone wires to their own studios, and then rebroadcast them. At CKY in Winnipeg, officials of the telephone system that operated the station had several powerful superheterodyne receivers with loop antennas arranged in different parts of the city. When reception was particularly good in one area, the studio would be called. If the local program being broadcast permitted it—there were almost no sponsors to argue with—the distant program was cut in. It was quite a common thing to make a "radio tour" of the continent during a single evening. Occasionally this mystified listeners, who would phone the station to inquire how the station had received such and such a program when they could not pick it up.

At Calgary, one station had three super-receivers on the hills south of the city, and from there piped in programs from one or other of the American networks or powerful American stations. This pirating, if not excusable, was understandable. These stations were struggling to stay on the air, under desperate conditions, with revenue virtually non-existent. One of the first steps of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission in 1933 was to outlaw this practice, one reason being that the American networks and stations objected to it. Far be it from me to defend pirating, but the western stations were trying to supplement their schedules with programs from New York; in the early 'thirties these were made available over wire from NBC and CBS to stations in Toronto and Montreal, but western stations still had no access to them.

The problems of financing stations were not alleviated by the highly restrictive and somewhat ill-defined regulations of the Department of Marine with respect to advertising. Direct advertising by private commercial stations was not permitted between 6:30 and 11.00 P.M. local time. Indirect advertising could be undertaken at any time. *Direct* advertising was explained by the Department as "an automobile firm renting the station for, say, ten minutes, for the purpose of extolling the virtues and merits of their particular make of machine." *Indirect* advertising: "A departmental store renting the station for a couple of

hours and putting on a first-class entertainment, with no advertising in it at all, the only connection between the store and the program being the announcement of their name and the fact that they were contributing the concert, before and after every number.”

The licensee had to have the consent of the Minister in writing to “receive or collect any tolls, fee, or other consideration on account of services performed.” Moreover, in dividing up time in which the same channel might be used by different stations, “preference will be given to those stations which do not undertake advertising service.” As late as 1929, express permission of the Department was necessary before *direct* advertising was permitted and “such permission will only be granted in special cases.”

Up to the advent of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission in 1933, a sponsor could lease the facilities of a station and use his own call letters while his programs were being broadcast. Though the equipment and technical staff were identical, the program staff was usually different. Such stations were known as “phantoms.” Credit for originating phantoms is claimed by W. W. Grant, the original owner of CFCN Calgary and now at CKLC Kingston. Government restrictions for a time prohibited direct sponsorship as we know it, so phantoms were devised as an acceptable means of overcoming the difficulty. At one time, CFCN had ten different phantoms for as many different advertisers. It was amusing to hear some listeners claim quite emphatically that reception was better when the phantom took over. Others claimed with equal emphasis that it was worse. The CNR at one time held phantom licences on eleven stations, all carrying the prefix CNR plus the first letters of the cities where they were located. Originally the prefix CN was allotted by international agreement to Morocco, but through negotiations conducted on behalf of Canada by the British Foreign Office with Morocco and France in 1924, the CNR obtained the right to use these letters. Many others used phantoms, particularly religious organizations. As late as 1932, some eighteen phantoms were still in use in Canada, but with the advent of nationalization all were discontinued.

Whatever one’s views on phantoms, their use gave the sponsor a greater sense of public responsibility toward what he put on the air than today, when much closer supervision must be exercised in regard to the acceptability of sponsored program material. Sponsorship under phantom licences could only go into effect where and when stations had so much time available that they could not fill it properly. To

many stations, such an institutional sponsor as the CNR was manna from heaven. It helped to fill his time, especially evening time, with programs that he himself could not afford, and it gave him cash which almost invariably was badly needed. Private stations were paid from \$25 an hour on such stations as CJGX Yorkton or CKLC Red Deer to \$100 an hour to CKAC Montreal and \$128 to CFRB Toronto. W. W. Grant recalls receiving \$500 for one month of CNR programs on CFCN Calgary. In 1929, of \$222,224 spent by the CNR on broadcasting, 23 per cent was paid to stations other than its own for leased time, while 52 per cent was for talent, exclusive of any remuneration to employees. In 1930, though broadcasting expenditure dropped to \$187,878, payments to stations rose to \$58,159 or 31 per cent. Talent payments still stood at 52 per cent. Thus the CNR in addition to serving its own interests was indirectly of definite assistance to many struggling private stations.

PAYMENT FOR TALENT

During the early years of radio in Canada, most talent was unpaid. The capacity of the announcer-manager was often judged by his ability to persuade talent that it was a privilege to be permitted to broadcast. Certain top talent, of course, was immune to such sophistry and had to be paid from the start. Hotel orchestras were on salary and were glad to broadcast. At CNRA in Moncton, until 1927, for all visiting artists, transportation was provided, and meals and accommodation were paid for at the hotel. This far exceeded what most performers would have received in cash fees. It was also a change and a brief holiday for the performer, and it satisfied the great ambition to broadcast. After all, who could tell what might come of it? Fame and companionship beckoned, but the great aspiration was the longing to be heard beyond the bounds of the local church or hall. After 1926, all talent was paid in cash at CNR stations.

The elimination audition, or the "amateur show," was sometimes a way to use talent with little or no pay. At other times, it made an invaluable contribution to the development of Canadian talent and better programming. Undoubtedly it put many aspiring artists on the first rung of the ladder. "Major Bowes' Amateur Hour" was a popular feature of early American radio, and his local auditions extended into many parts of Canada. There are artists performing on the CBC today

who started with Major Bowes. "Ken Soble's Amateurs" was another that launched more than a few careers. How many such programs were genuine efforts to develop talent, and not simply an economical method of programming, will always be debatable. Undoubtedly there was a fair measure of both motives in early radio.

During the 'twenties and early 'thirties, communities, organizations, and individuals competed to be heard on a greater stage than the local auditorium. More than a little early radio lacked sophistication and professionalism. Nevertheless, it had sincerity and wholesomeness; these qualities became apparent in later years, when only professionals need apply. In the early days, vocalists put all they had into radio, and many musical network programs attained a standard seldom approached today. But the days of the amateur could not last, and the advent of unions ended amateurism forever. To a considerable extent, unionization closed this period of inspiration for the young radio performer.

Broadcasters in the 'twenties and 'thirties were beset with endless requests to play special musical numbers, to find lost children, husbands, and what not. In 1930, at CNRM, we received a letter from a lady in Framingham, Massachusetts, imploring us to find a mate for her. After giving a somewhat detailed description of her physical attractions, capabilities, and unusually affectionate nature, she gave an even more detailed description of the man she hoped we could find for her. He must be 5' 8" or more, weight 175 pounds, be very strong, have raven black hair and piercing eyes, but above all he must be ravishing in appearance. Descended from French-Canadian settlers in Massachusetts, she preferred a French-Canadian if possible. The letter produced an animated discussion among many would-be-aspirants but, alas, none of them measured up to the requirements.

At first the finding of lost persons was looked upon as a public service, and sometimes as fun. But it was soon discovered that a lot of people had no wish to be found. They had been hidden, sometimes for years, and preferred to remain that way. Some threatened to sue the radio stations. Soon such broadcasts were confined to co-operation with the police, and one more intriguing aspect of early radio disappeared.

PUBLIC-SERVICE PROGRAMMING

Up until 1929, when a few network programs began, all radio stations were programmed locally. There were occasional network shows between Toronto and Montreal in 1928, and the first network programs to embrace all three Prairie Provinces started that year. Canadian stations would broadcast almost entirely during the evening hours, and some only on certain evenings, for many stations shared the same channels. It was not until well into the 'thirties that daytime programming was developed on any large scale. For some years, governmental regulations restricted the use of records after 7:30 P.M., and all programs after that hour had to employ live talent.

From the opening of CNRO in Ottawa, in February of 1924, all CNR stations emphasized public-service broadcasting: information, education, co-operation with governmental and other representative institutions. Grain prices to farmers commenced from CNRS Saskatoon as early as April, 1924; livestock and other market reports were first broadcast on January 8, 1925, at CNRO Ottawa, CNRA Moncton, and CNRW Winnipeg. With these reports were broadcast talks and discussions on farming. In June, 1925, the Farm Young Peoples' Convention at the University of Alberta was broadcast from CNRE, and the Edmonton Exhibition was described from the grounds that year. There were also on-the-spot reports over CNRA from the Nova Scotia Provincial Exhibition at Amherst. The first Canadian time-signals were heard in March of 1924 from the Dominion Observatory in Ottawa. These chimed over CNRO at 9:00 P.M., and over CNRA at 10:00 P.M. from the day that station commenced. Time signals were used to check timepieces by ships at sea; by trappers, hunters, fishermen in Quebec and Labrador; on Anticosti; in Newfoundland; and along most of the Atlantic shores. In 1927 the CNR began broadcasting messages to the far north from Edmonton and Winnipeg.

Good children's programs were part of the early-evening schedules. "Bedtime Travel Tales" was heard from Toronto and western stations; "Uncle Alf" at CNRA; and at CNRO, "Uncle Dick and Aunt Agnes." Uncle Dick was Norman C. Cole, journalist, traveller, poet, specialist in children's interests and development. He was meticulous and highly sensitive to what should or should not be broadcast for children. Book reviews, talks, or discussions on varieties of scientific and practical subjects also had places in most schedules.

FIRST SCHOOL BROADCASTS

School broadcasts were attempted at CNRA and CNRO, but only at CNRV did they assume any real importance and regularity. In 1927, by arrangement with the Vancouver School Board, a series of educational programs for children was broadcast regularly on Friday afternoons. Preparing the series were J. A. Gordon, Municipal Inspector of Schools for Vancouver, and the principals and teachers from twenty-four city schools. This was the first series of school broadcasts in Canada. CNRV had extensive coverage, and there was a marked response from teachers in country schools who often arranged for children to meet in a home that was equipped with a good radio to listen and learn. In some instances, children came as far as fifteen miles to hear the broadcasts. In one region of scattered fishermen's houses, they came in row-boats across deep channels and through narrow fjords. Many teachers in distant places wrote for further instructions. The musical portions of these programs were under the direction of Miss E. R. Roberts, Assistant Supervisor of Music for Vancouver Schools. At a meeting of school principals in the spring of 1928, deep appreciation of the part played by CNRV was expressed. These school broadcasts continued for several years.

A few comments about early broadcasts will suggest the type and standard of programming set by the CNR at the time. During October of 1925, CNRT Toronto presented: *The Yeomen of the Guard*, directed by Reginald Stewart; Alfred Heather Opera Company; *Music Makers*, under J. Campbell McInnes, in a series of programs, one on the work of Bach. It also presented that month the inaugural broadcast of the Hart House String Quartet, following the CNR's signing an exclusive contract for broadcasting rights to the Quartet. At that time this group was the leading chamber group in Canada, with an international reputation. It made a cross-country tour of CNR stations in 1927, during which special attention was devoted to the Beethoven Centenary. There was a great unsatisfied hunger for good music in Canada at the time. Today such music is being slowly elbowed off the air-waves or shoved into times when audiences are minimal.

The first complete radio performance in Canada of *The Mikado*, with a chorus of fifty voices under Fred Whitely, was broadcast in December of 1925 by CNRM Montreal. In October of the next year, again by permission of D'Oyly Carte, there was the first complete radio presentation in Canada of *The Gondoliers*, with the Montreal

Operatic Society and a chorus of fifty. The McGill Operatic Society under Walter Clapperton broadcast all three acts of *Tom Jones* in April of 1927. In March of 1926, CNRO carried an abbreviated presentation of *Faust*, and the same month broadcast German's *Merrie England* with a cast of eighteen. In August, CNRO presented the first of many broadcasts by the most famous of all singers of French-Canadian folk songs, Charles Marchand, in a program of songs never previously performed. Other almost equally distinguished French programs and artists were featured. About that time CNRO broadcast abbreviated presentations of *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *La Bohème*, and *Madame Butterfly*. At CNRV Vancouver the most was made of broadcasting the British Columbia Music Festival which was supported annually by the Knights of Pythias. Winning individuals and groups, vocalists and instrumentalists, were featured, often with a thirty-five-piece orchestra.

EARLY DRAMA AT VANCOUVER

CNRV, almost as soon as it opened in 1925, showed an active interest in dramatics and presented plays of real merit. Much of this was due to the presence, in and around Vancouver and Victoria, of many people from the United Kingdom who had both a general knowledge of theatre and a personal acquaintance with the stage through previous participation. The emphasis on drama in Vancouver carried over into the CBC, and many of the best actors and producers had their start there. Vancouver, in my opinion, exercised a more far-reaching effect on radio drama than any other English-speaking city in Canada. This influence only dimmed in recent years, when many of the ablest participants went to Hollywood or Toronto.

In 1926, the CNRV Players emerged. This group produced many adaptations of noted plays and stories. These were no mere half-hour productions, abbreviated to fit the time slot, less two or three commercials. They were plays an hour and sometimes more in length, modelled after the BBC's pattern, with no interruptions. Audiences were encouraged to listen in the dark, and a high degree of concentration was attained, as evidenced by the interest that was aroused throughout the whole listening area. Between 1927 and 1932, more than one hundred dramatic productions, very many of them serious plays, originated at CNRV. They included *The Merchant*

of *Venice* and *Othello*, produced in co-operation with the local Shakespearean Society. Though most were adaptations, there were many original scripts. On June 8, 1928, a local author's night was featured, and three original, one-act plays were presented. When the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission appeared in 1933, it adopted the CNRV Players as its chief dramatic effort, renaming them the CRCV Players. At that time the group included: Elsie Swan, Frank Sparrow, Mona Brown, James K. Stansfield, Alan Broughton, Mary Reynolds, and Frank Vivian. The chief producer was Jack Gilmore.

Health talks, in co-operation with the British Columbia Medical Association, and a series of programs in co-operation with the Women's Institutes of British Columbia both began on April 6, 1926.

CNRA AS A COMMUNITY STATION

No better example of community and regional service during these years could be found than the service performed by CNRA of Moncton. As it was the first 500-watt station in the Maritimes, there was immense interest in CNRA's activities from the day it began. Since there was no permanent orchestra in Moncton, the staff was thrown entirely on its own resources. Never has so much and so varied talent been drawn together in a single year in the Maritimes or perhaps any city in Canada from so many different places within the listening area of one station.

During 1925, the year after CNRA opened, choirs, quartets, bands, groups of players, and soloists were brought from more than twenty-five different towns and cities in these three provinces. They came from Saint John, Halifax, Charlottetown, Sydney, Fredericton, Sackville, New Glasgow, St. Peter's Bay, North Kingston, Bridgewater, Lunenburg, Sussex, Salisbury, Chatham, Pictou, Truro, Glace Bay, Edmundston, Stellarton, Port du Chêne, Amherst, Windsor, Bedeque, and Westville. On May 8, 1925, for a special program, twenty different artists from seven cities were heard together. Presbyterians, Baptists, Salvation Army, Knights of Pythias, Knights of Columbus, Masons, French-Acadian Male Choir, Jewish groups—all had air time.

As everywhere, the great bulk of programming in Moncton consisted of music: Acadian, French, Scottish, popular and classical,

vocal and instrumental, with emphasis on vocal, together with a modified effort at dramatics. CNRA provided an outlet for the exchange of inter-community expression and inspiration at a time when this was greatly needed. It was truly the voice of the Maritimes.

Occasionally it was much more. During the winter of 1925-26, the cable service between the island of Anticosti and the mainland of Gaspé was damaged and went out of commission, terminating daily communication. The administration of Anticosti appealed for aid to the Canadian National, and an arrangement was made for a special daily service in both French and English, which evoked high praise from the administration. No part of the varied service of CNRA was more significant than that to ships far out to sea in the Atlantic and to fishermen off all the Maritime coasts.

Here it might be mentioned that the name "Nation's Business," so long a part of CBC schedules, was first used in May of 1929, for a series over CNR stations. "Nation's Business" held discussions by federal Cabinet ministers and political leaders of the functions of various government departments and commissions. R. B. Bennett, then leader of the Opposition, agreed to participate on May 30 by explaining the duties of His Majesty's Loyal Opposition. Under pressure from his colleagues, who termed the series Liberal propaganda, he withdrew at the very last moment and turned to criticism. The series terminated in December. An impartial reader, scanning these scripts, would have been hard put to discover anything in them that even remotely resembled party propaganda.

Two of the dominant features of present-day local and national programming were almost, if not completely, absent up to 1933. These were newscasts and weather reports. The Canadian Press carefully guarded its news from use by radio stations. Even where both the local paper and the local radio station were under the same ownership, the radio station received little or no consideration from the paper in the matter of news. The federal weather service was far from being as well-organized as it is today for the dissemination of weather reports. Moreover, the fact that weather is, day in and day out, the most important news to the greatest number of people had still not dawned on the managers of radio stations.

CHAPTER 3

HOW NETWORKS BEGAN

By the end of 1926, expansion of the Canadian economy and improvement in business had been so great that the telegraphic services of both the Canadian National Railways and the Canadian Pacific Railways were taxed to the limit. Pressure from business was such that regular service had to be extended well into the evening hours with consequent delay. Both the CNR and the CPR were faced with the imperative need to obtain additional facilities either by stringing more wire across Canada or by finding some method of making multiple use of wire already in service. The Canadian National was the first to move. In April of 1927, a step was taken that would prove to be of the utmost significance to the future of broadcasting in Canada, as well as to the regular telegraphic services of the Company. This was the installation between Montreal and Toronto of the first leg of what was very soon to become a national system of carrier current.

About 1886, Gray, Bell, Edison, and others discovered the carrier-current system of telegraphy, but its practical application was considerably delayed. The principle involved is an adaptation of an experiment frequently demonstrated to students in physics laboratories. When one tuning fork is vibrated, a second fork, tuned to the same frequency, will by itself shortly begin to vibrate, because of impulses received through the air from the first fork. A third fork, tuned to a different frequency, will remain motionless. Extensive elaborations of this principle, using radio-electric currents, furnished the basis of carrier-current telegraphy, the modern high-speed method of sending and receiving messages. The first such carrier system was set up experi-

mentally between Chicago and Maundee, Ohio. In 1917 and in 1919, the first commercial carrier-current telegraph system of ten channels commenced between Pittsburgh and Chicago. The modern microwave system is an expanded and more economical extension of carrier current.

The cost of stringing additional copper wires across Canada and maintaining them seemed prohibitive. So Vice-President Robb of the CNR, accompanied by W. G. Barber, General Manager of Telegraphs, investigated thoroughly the system then being used in Chicago. It was much faster and more economical than any other known method. A brilliant young engineer from the Bell Telephone laboratories, J. C. Burkholder, was added to the staff as Chief Communications Engineer. Under his supervision, the first installation of carrier current on the CNR was completed on April 26, 1927, between Toronto and Montreal.

With carrier current, one pair of copper wires (which was already in use) could carry all thirteen signals—ten full-duplex Morse circuits, two composite Morse circuits, and a long-distance telephone circuit. The new installation increased by ten the channels of communication afforded by this one pair of wires, and under the old system corresponded to the stringing of ten new pairs of copper wires between the two cities. What would have run into enormous and endless cost was reduced to a relatively small sum.

On this ten-channel system from Montreal to Vancouver, it was possible, by the use of multiplex printing machines, to transmit over one pair of wires ninety-six messages simultaneously, forty-eight in each direction, and still use the wires for private telephone conversations. By operating printing machines at fifty words a minute, this one pair of wires, following the carrier-current installation, was capable of transmitting 4,800 words a minute, 2,400 words a minute in each direction. Before long a second installation of ten channels was made between Toronto and Montreal. When the system was completed, with all sections increased to ten channels, it provided facilities equivalent to 33,000 miles of additional wire, which would have cost at the time over \$2,500,000, with another \$50,000 for the repeater equipment necessary for the physical-line operation.

The weight of the copper, for 33,000 miles of wire at 2,200 pounds per mile, would have exceeded 3,500 tons. Sleet storms annually cost the wire companies large sums. A normal ten-wire pole line was subjected to 2,200 pounds per mile; but with ice, it sometimes reached 5,000 pounds or more; and with heavy winds, the destruction and

confusions could be enormous. On thirty-wire or forty-wire pole-lines, the weight and damage was hardly to be contemplated. Carrier current enabled the confusion caused by sleet storms to be overcome with a rapidity and ease never before possible. Another advantage was that the system was unaffected by the Aurora Borealis, whereas earlier circuits occasionally went out for an hour or more at a time, causing delay and inconvenience.

With the installation of carrier current, the CNR's telegraphs no longer found it necessary to delay messages filed in the late afternoon until well into the evening hours. By 6:00 P.M., the business of the day, whatever its volume, was cleared, and the circuits became immediately available for broadcasting.

THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

In the meantime, an event of great national importance loomed over the horizon: the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation. To mark the occasion, the government sought the most promising ideas, and the Association of Canadian Clubs proposed a national-network broadcast to celebrate Canada's sixtieth birthday. The installation of carrier current had only commenced on the CNR, and the regular wire-lines of the two railway-telegraph systems were in no way co-ordinated. The telephone systems were equally unco-ordinated, and it was not until five years later that the latter constituted a national operating unit. If a national broadcast was to be made, it could only be done through the united efforts of the several communications systems.

A technical committee was appointed by the government to bring this about. The Chairman was Thomas Ahearn of Ottawa, the Vice-Chairman was J. E. McPherson, Vice-President of Bell Telephones, while the Secretary was Commander C. P. Edwards, Director of Radio of the Department of Marine. A sub-committee under John L. Clarke, Transmission Engineer of the Bell Telephone Company, was set up to survey the vast reaches of telegraph and telephone lines to be used. It was discovered quickly that an immense amount of additional, intricate amplifying equipment would be necessary. Involved were transmitting circuits with entirely different characteristics. Not only did the circuits of the telegraph and telephone companies vary widely in standard, but this was equally so among the numerous telephone companies themselves. Line-engineering was carried out by the Bell

engineers with the enthusiastic co-operation of the staffs of all the participating companies. Bell also secured—or manufactured on very short notice—a large amount of the additional essential equipment.

Here is the wire mileage of the several partners in the first national broadcast in 1927:

	<i>Miles of Two-Wire Telephone Connection</i>	<i>Miles of Telegraph Connection</i>
Canadian National Railways	1,950	4,105
Bell Telephone Co. of Canada	1,920	745
Canadian Pacific Railways	1,915	3,015
American Telephone & Telegraph Co.	1,100	1,100
Saskatchewan Government Telephone	1,100	
British Columbia Telephone Co.	640	
Alberta Government Telephone	525	
Manitoba Government Telephone	500	
New Brunswick Telephone Co.	300	
Maritime Telephone and Telegraph Co.	375	
National Telephone Co.	240	

The circuits contributed by the American Telephone and Telegraph Company provided alternative or stand-by circuits from Windsor, through Chicago and Minneapolis, to Winnipeg. There were double circuits available in all parts, thus providing stand-by facilities, except from Lévis to Moncton, where the CNR had the only circuit available. Fortunately it worked perfectly throughout. The facilities necessary exceeded 23,000 miles of wire and the services of eighty-five technicians, in addition to the staffs of the broadcasting stations.

In this first national hook-up, twenty-three radio stations participated, including WWJ Detroit, which gave coverage that would not otherwise have been available in Southwestern Ontario. The CNR was made responsible for all the wiring in Ottawa to the several pick-up points and to the loud-speaker system. It was also responsible for the several pick-ups themselves, for the master control in Room 184 of the Centre Block, and for feeding the programs to the transmission companies. Pick-ups included the speaker's stand at the foot of the Peace Tower, the massed choirs, the carillon, and the studios. All pick-ups and studio operations in Ottawa came under the supervision

of J. G. McMurtrie, Manager of CNRO, a former locomotive engineer who fell under the spell of radio and was one of its most dedicated and venturesome pioneers. It is significant to note that the Department of Marine, in anticipating the celebration on July 1, reserved that date on the licences of all radio stations at the annual renewal at the end of March—thus establishing a precedent for reserved time for national purposes.

Preliminary tests for the great effort were made on June 19, from Ottawa to Winnipeg and London, Ontario. One week later, a test program, broadcast from the Parliament Buildings, was re-broadcast to Great Britain by Marconi beam from Drummondville. On the Australian beam, the concentration device was removed, permitting dissemination in all directions. This program was heard in New Zealand, Panama, Peru, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, and other parts of Brazil. A re-broadcast of the test program by stations in these areas was picked up by the Marconi receiving station at Yamachiche, Quebec.

Three programs were broadcast on July 1. The first, from 10:45 to 11:20 A.M., saw the inauguration of the great new carillon, with Percival Price, the carilloner, playing "O Canada," "The Maple Leaf Forever," and "God Save the King." More than forty thousand people were assembled before the Parliament Buildings for the ceremony. The second was from 2:00 to 3:00 P.M., again featuring the carillon; with the Centenary Choir of one thousand selected voices, augmented by the voices of ten thousand school children from the cities of Ottawa and Hull, singing in French and English; and addresses by distinguished French and English Canadians.

The third and final national program commenced at 9:30 P.M. It featured Governor-General Lord Willingdon, Prime Minister Mackenzie King, and other speakers. These talks alternated with first-rate Canadian entertainment. Margaret Anglin, Canada's most famous actress, and the only Canadian ever born within the precincts of the House of Commons, read a poem specially written for the occasion by Bliss Carman. Vocal solos were given by the Canadian *prima donna* Eva Gauthier, and by Allan McQuhae, while the Hart House Quartet rendered instrumental numbers. The most stirring item was the singing of the famous Bytown Troubadours under Charles Marchand. The Chateau Laurier Orchestra, under James McIntyre, included in its contribution a suite composed by Lord Willingdon. The gold-plated microphone used by the dignitaries was presented later to Thomas Ahearn in recognition of his efforts. The English-speaking announcer was Andy Ryan of CNRO's

staff. The French-speaking announcer was Jacques Cartier, Manager of CKAC, later a member of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S REACTION

No one was able to describe this broadcast and its significance better than the Prime Minister himself, in a speech on August 27, 1927, at the Canadian National Exhibition. He said:

There has been nothing comparable in its way to the nation-wide broadcasting of the proceedings on Parliament Hill on July 1, as effected through the co-operation of the railway, telegraph, telephone, and radio companies, under the direction of the National Committee. For the first time in the history of Canada, the words spoken on Parliament Hill and the sound of the chimes and bells, the greatest carillon in the world, were carried instantaneously to all parts of this vast Dominion. It is doubtful if ever before, at one and the same moment, the thoughts of so many of the citizens of any country were concentrated upon what was taking place at its capital, or whether those in authority were brought into such immediate and sympathetic personal touch with those from whom their authority was derived.

On the morning, afternoon and evening of July 1, all Canada became, for the time being, a single assemblage, swayed by a common emotion, within the sound of a single voice. Thus has modern science for the first time realized in the great nation-state of modern days that condition which existed in the little city-states of ancient times and which was considered by the wisdom of the ancients as indispensable to free and democratic government—that all the citizens should be able to hear for themselves the living voice of a single orator—a Demosthenes or a Cicero—speaking on public questions in the Athenian Assembly or in the Roman Forum. Hitherto to most Canadians, Ottawa has seemed far off, a mere name to hundreds of thousands of our people, but henceforth all Canadians will stand within the sound of the carillon and within hearing of the speakers on Parliament Hill. May we not predict that as a result of this carrying of the living voice throughout the length and breadth of the Dominion, there will

be aroused a more general interest in public affairs, and an increased devotion of the individual citizen to the common weal.

The Prime Minister was profoundly impressed by the broadcast—so much so that it is said to have been an important factor in his decision, a year and a half later, to appoint a Royal Commission on Broadcasting. Though convinced of the importance of radio, he characteristically made no haste in such a potentially contentious area.

Thousands of messages of congratulations were received. These attested to the clarity of reception and the gratitude of listeners for the opportunity to share in the national celebration. They came from every part of Canada, including the Yukon, from Newfoundland, from Alaska, and all sections of the United States, from Mexico, Central and South America, Hawaii, Jamaica, Great Britain, and the Continent, particularly Holland, and even from New Zealand. CNR trains hurrying across the continent picked up the programs in many different locations, and numerous wires of congratulations were received by A. R. McEwan, Director of CNR Radio, attesting to the excellence of the reception.

At many cities, towns, and small communities, enterprising citizens and organizations arranged for local loud-speaker installations. At Montreal, speakers were installed on Fletcher's Field, where more than twenty thousand gathered to hear the King's message delivered by His Excellency.

This first national broadcast provided both an inspiration and an object lesson. It demonstrated clearly the inadequacies as well as the possibilities that lay ahead. Unfortunately the lesson of co-ordinated and shared transmission facilities was largely lost, and the race to see who would be first to provide these facilities was on. This competition has persisted with increasing intensity until this day, and it will be discussed in detail later.

FIRST SPONSORED NATIONAL NETWORK

Even prior to carrier current, the CNR had commenced network broadcasting (or "simultaneous broadcasting," as it was first called) of English programs on a regular schedule, using its own circuits between Montreal and Ottawa on January 7, 1927. On April 7, CNRQ in Quebec City was added, and French-network programs also were regularly scheduled after that date. Following the Confederation Jubilee Broad-

cast, the CNR pushed on rapidly with the extension of carrier current, basically to satisfy the pressing needs of its Telegraph Department. In September of 1928, this reached Winnipeg, and on December 27, for its special anniversary program, the CNR was able to boast the first Canadian network broadcast produced and distributed nationally by a single organization. Although the CNR's circuits were by far the major part of the lines used, the circuits were supplemented in a few places by local telephone lines. These, as well as those of the CNR Telegraphs and the radio stations, were all paid for by the CNR Radio Department, so this constituted the first national network-sponsored program in Canadian history.

Letters, almost unprecedented in number and enthusiasm, arrived at every one of the sixteen stations and at the headquarters, many from men of prominence in business and the professions, clergymen, and from men and women interested in musical organizations. There were even letters in some numbers from CPR employees and those of railways in the United States. They came from twenty-three separate states, stretching all the way from Maine to Seattle, and including many from points deep in the neighbouring territory. Requests were numerous for more programs of similar quality from people in all the provinces and south of the border. Over 90 per cent reported excellent reception.

In many letters, there were references to the recently appointed Royal Commission on Broadcasting (the Aird Commission). In almost every instance, the writer expressed the hope that the great success of this particular broadcast would strengthen the hand of the Commission and assist in obtaining for Canada some lessening of interference from stations in the United States.

Approximately one hundred and fifty men were needed to handle the broadcast: Morse, repeater, station and studio operators, wire-chiefs, engineers, and announcers. Extensive testing was necessary before the final rehearsal. During the night of December 22, a tree fell across a pole-line one hundred miles east of Quebec City, carrying with it all wires on the cross-arm, including the broadcast pair supplying the four Maritime radio stations that were to carry the program. Linemen were despatched from the nearest point some fifteen miles away. They had to travel by snowshoe and work in sub-zero weather, but they succeeded in re-establishing communications in time for the first complete test. While the dress rehearsal was being carried out on the evening of December 26, trouble developed west of Jasper, Alberta, due to a landslide, but the circuit was re-established the following day.

AN UNREHEARSED CONTRIBUTION

During the actual broadcast, a freight train was stalled in deep snowdrifts east of Fort Francis. In an effort to get a message through to Winnipeg for help, the brakeman climbed a telegraph pole and connected his emergency telephone set across what he thought was the train dispatchers' circuit. When he heard the strains of "Honey Love," it is said that he almost fell off the pole. But he steadied himself in the howling blizzard and inquired, "What the hell is going on?" He then continued in the choicest of railroad language to ask where the dispatcher was. His was the most spontaneous, unrehearsed, and realistic contribution ever made to a network program, and it was heard clearly from Winnipeg to Vancouver.

By June 4, 1929, the extension of carrier current made possible the first regular network to all three Prairie provinces. The Maritime provinces were linked to both English and French networks on August 7. Other stations—CNRL London, CKX Brandon, CJGX Yorkton, CNRD Red Deer—were added that summer. On December 1, carrier current reached Vancouver, enabling the inclusion of CNRV, thus completing a national network of thirteen stations reaching from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Less than one year after its broadcast on December of 1928, several sponsors were broadcasting regularly over the national network and in that first year CNR revenue from leased circuits exceeded \$115,000. Thus the way was opened for what was to become a very substantial and highly profitable source of revenue to the CNR. Within a very few years it would surpass in earnings every cent spent by the railway on all phases of radio, multiplying its revenue many times in later years.

As soon as these early installations of carrier current proved successful, the Canadian Pacific followed immediately, using Bell Telephone's engineers to complete a national installation in 1930. It also began broadcasting numerous programs nationally, and at least one important program internationally. Of these accomplishments more will be told later.

CHAPTER

4

EARLY TRANSATLANTIC BROADCASTS

Four months after the first transcontinental broadcast of the CNR in 1928, the Director of Radio, A. R. McEwan, died, and I was appointed to succeed him. These were fascinating years of ups and downs, of accomplishment and frustration. But they were also years of great satisfaction, of helping to build through national broadcasting what I hoped would be a greater and more nationally conscious Canada.

I returned from London and was in Canada less than a month when the BBC announced that it would broadcast the Thanksgiving Service from Westminster Abbey for King George V's recovery. During his long and critical illness, I had often joined the crowds in front of Buckingham Palace to read the latest bulletin; had seen Their Majesties leave for Bognor on the south coast for the King's convalescence; and shared the anxiety over his health which pervaded the whole nation. I believed that Canadians shared that anxiety. As Director of Radio, I asked the Canadian Marconi Company if they would transmit the program as picked up by the BBC over their transcontinental beam so it might be broadcast over the CNR network in Canada.

This was the first of many transatlantic broadcasts to Canada, and these were the direct result of my contacts with Britain and the BBC. The Thanksgiving Service was followed on November 11 of that year by the Armistice Service in Whitehall. The response was tremendous. More than twelve hundred letters of appreciation were received at CNRW Winnipeg alone, although the writers of many of the letters had to be up at 4:00 A.M. to hear the program. In January King George V opened the Naval Parley in London. It was the first time he had spoken

publicly since his illness, and the first time his voice was heard across Canada. The response to this was almost equally great, and especially so from many remote areas. One elderly lady in Saskatchewan wrote a charming letter protesting that it was a shame to get "our dear King" up at such an hour — 4:00 A.M. in much of that province.

Here a belated but long-deserved tribute must be paid to the unselfish co-operation of the Canadian Marconi Company. This company repeatedly placed its beam stations—Yamachiche (receiving) and Drummondville (sending)—at the disposal of the national service for many transatlantic broadcasts between 1929 and 1932 without any monetary remuneration whatsoever and, indeed, with but a modicum of recompense in the way of publicity. No one in this country knows better than I how whole-heartedly Canadian Marconi co-operated in those numerous inter-empire and international broadcasts.

Other broadcasts, transmitted from or to Great Britain by the Marconi beam during this period, and broadcast nationally by the CNR, included the unveiling of the monument to General Wolfe (designed by the Canadian sculptor Tait Mackenzie) by the Marquis of Montcalm at Greenwich Park in June of 1930; and the opening of the radio station in Vatican City, on February 12, 1931. For these and other programs, Canada was also indebted to the BBC, without whose generous co-operation none would have been possible.

By 1929, the miracle no longer amazed. From now on radio would be judged not so much by how many stations or by which stations it could be heard, but more by what was put on the air and by how exciting it was. This was the first thing I had to attend to following my arrival in Montreal. Before the end of July, as the result of new plans, the Vice-President was able to announce major improvements in both programming and network coverage. The national network was extended in September from the Maritimes to the Rocky Mountains, and in December to the Pacific coast by a network of thirteen stations. National programs, of an hour's duration each, were scheduled on Sunday afternoons from 5:00 to 6:00 P.M., and on Tuesday and Thursday evenings; and also over the French network, composed of four stations, on Tuesday evenings.

FIRST NATIONAL SYMPHONIES

In 1930, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra was a well-established institution about to commence its eighth season. But it had never broadcast, and it would not broadcast unless there were assurances that reproduction on radio would be as remarkable as that in Massey Hall. This was not easy, for Massey Hall is acoustically one of the finest halls in the world. After considerable dickerings, an agreement was signed for a series of twenty-five symphonic programs using fifty-five musicians. The prospect of broadcasting on a national network, and assurances that everything would be done to ensure good rendition and dignified publicity, finally turned the management's reluctance into enthusiasm. This feeling was by no means diminished by the knowledge that the series, in keeping with the CNR's policy, would be confined to institutional and prestige promotion, and would be free from direct-sell commercials.

Sunday afternoons at five o'clock were finally selected from among the many choice times available as a period when the audience had the most time to listen and was most likely to be in the mood to do so. It was a radical departure from the evening programming so all-pervasive then. It had still another advantage, for the series had been going but a very short time when it was discovered that Sunday afternoon listening groups were being formed spontaneously all across the country, both in towns and in rural areas, in lumber and mining camps, and in other isolated places.

The studio problem was next. There was no studio available in Toronto to hold such a large orchestra. The problem was solved when the Robert Simpson Company permitted the orchestra to use the Arcadian Court dining room on the eighth floor of the Toronto store. The orchestra was placed in the east end, and the control room was on the floor immediately above and contiguous. It proved to have superior qualities as a studio, although when empty (it was not possible to bring in an audience), the resonance was slightly too strong to be perfect.

The series was opened on October 20 by Sir Henry Thornton, who said in his address (according to *The Montreal Gazette*, October 21, 1929):

One of our first considerations is the encouragement of Canadian talent. In Canada we have long watched our most promising

artists depart for other lands where, all too frequently, they lose their identity as Canadians. Through this and other programs we hope to present to Canadians those gifted individuals, thus offering encouragement to them, directly or indirectly, to remain in their own country and labour for the advancement of art with that ardour which has always characterized Canadians in their varied efforts. We also hope to bring back, temporarily at least, some of those Canadians who have attained international fame on the concert and radio stage. During November we shall feature at least five Canadian artists of international importance, two of whom are almost unknown to their fellow citizens.

The All-Canada Symphony was conducted by Dr. Luigi Von Kunits, a most talented and sensitive musician, who was the first conductor of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

It was decided as a matter of policy to feature on each program one outstanding Canadian vocalist or instrumentalist at a standard fee of one hundred dollars. Though considered inadequate at first, it was accepted later, for to sing or play on the All-Canada Symphony Series soon became a mark of distinction few would miss. In only one case was this fee exceeded, and that was for Jeanne Gordon of the Metropolitan Opera, who was paid five hundred dollars to open the series.

Interest in the last program of the first series was heightened by making it all-Canadian in both composition and talent. It was a gesture of good will and concern for the contribution Canadian composers were making to the national life of Canada. This was also the first occasion on which a symphonic broadcast, featuring Canadian composers exclusively, was heard across Canada. In the All-Canada Series, every effort was made to take soloists from as many parts of Canada as possible, and much pride developed in being represented. Occasionally this gathered a slight aura of the cheer-leader. Wires of congratulations were received for one charming soloist before she had actually sung, but we held these until the show was over, so she was never the wiser.

Each program opened with forty-five seconds of chimes and the striking of five by the great clock in the Peace Tower. This was followed by the strains of "O Canada." The effect of these sounds, emblematic of national unity, was admirably described in April of 1931 in *The Winnipeg Magazine*, by John Hurley, the well-known Winnipeg journalist, in an article reviewing the series. He wrote:

We have never yet been accused of being a high-powered patriot, but we frankly confess that we know of nothing more quietly moving on the radio than the chimes at Ottawa booming out the hour of five every Sunday afternoon, followed by the strains of "O Canada" played by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, which precedes the Canadian National Symphony hour. There is something about these preliminaries that seems to knit Canada in one compact whole that is readily felt. The sprawling prairies; the great mountain ranges; the vast inland seas; the gentle Ontario of apple orchards and fat cattle; the harsh Ontario of rock and muskeg; the mighty St. Lawrence journeying down to the sea; the Sunday afternoon smell of Toronto; the warm geniality of Montreal; history buried in the Heights of Abraham; slumbering St. Boniface; the Atlantic and Pacific pounding both shores . . . all this greatness is grasped in one, quick glimpse as the chimes at Ottawa swell out over Canada from coast to coast. One can even forget the politicians for a while!

One year after the CNR featured the Toronto Symphony nationally, the Columbia Broadcasting System began its great sustaining series with the New York Philharmonic. Then came the National Broadcasting Corporation with Walter Damrosch, Leopold Stokowski, and the great Arturo Toscanini in another series—sometimes sponsored, more often not. These were followed by other famous programs, like Fred Waring and his Pennsylvanians. Today they—along with the great comics and others—belong to the Golden Age of Radio. They have been either removed or relegated to almost-forgotten places in the schedules.

NATIONAL NETWORK VARIETY

The All-Canada Symphony not only set new standards, but it demanded similar standards for all other CNR national network productions. Vice-President Robb said in July that the next twelve months would see great advances in programming, and this prediction had to be lived up to. It became imperative to add to the staff someone thoroughly bilingual, with an extensive and intimate knowledge of the arts, particularly music and drama. National networks inevitably meant greater centralization of program activities in Montreal and Toronto, and proportionately less opportunity for local talent. This pattern has

become more and more accentuated over the years. It also meant less dependence on orchestra conductors at local points who, though talented men, all had their local attachments, obligations, and limitations.

In September, we added to the staff Miss Esmé Moonie, a native of Edinburgh, who had come some months previously to make her home in Canada. She was the only daughter of the late J. A. Moonie, conductor and composer, who probably did as much as any man to influence and develop the musical life of Edinburgh. From the closing months of 1929, until April of 1932, she was a dominant force in Canadian network programming, both French and English, dramatic and musical, but particularly in music which then, as now, formed the bulk of the broadcasts in both languages. Her contribution to national broadcasting was one of the most significant in this country.

The CNR's programming now became more subjective, more topical, and more entertaining. The diverse talents of various orchestra conductors were given more co-ordinated direction, and the best of them came to like it. Though demanding to a degree, the new program director had knowledge and imagination, and was content with nothing less than the very best others were capable of producing. These improvements also opened the way to far more effective program promotion.

It is quite beyond the scope of this book, or my capacity, to portray the variety and standard of the programs on both English and French radio at the time. Largely concert in nature, though far from entirely so, these programs featured brilliant and noted vocalists and instrumentalists, both as individual soloists and as groups. They were thoroughly rehearsed, and continuities were meticulously prepared. They included many first performers on radio. Though Canadians dominated the scene, there were many artists of international reputation.

Only a few of the several hundred programs can be mentioned here: the world-famous Nicholas Medtner playing his own compositions; the Imperial Welsh Singers; Hart House and McGill Conservatory String Quartets; Gyrfas, the famous exponent of Hungarian Gypsy music, with Melba Melsing; legends of Skye with Heloise Russell Ferguson, authority on Hebridean music; Madelène Monnier, one of France's greatest cellists; the Shriners' Band of Boston on the occasion of their convention in Toronto; the Royal Russian Choir recently returned from ceremonies at The Imperial Japanese Court; the Canadian National Pipe Band under Pipe Major McKinnon, all prize-men

on pipes or drums and all CNR employees; Mohawk Chief Os-Ki-Non-Ton, who appeared for several seasons with the Royal Choral Society at Albert Hall and at the Hollywood Bowl in the Indian opera *Shanewis*; a Dickens program with Hugh Reynolds; French-Canadian folk music; Spanish and Indian folk songs by authoritative interpreters; *Parsifal* at Easter; a Manx program heralding the Manx Homecoming, with two noted native singers as guests; *Cotter's Saturday Night* and *Tam O' Shanter* with John S. Daniels; many significant anniversaries, including Confederation; the first network program to originate on the Pacific coast, with Calvin Winter; the Detroit Symphony Orchestra with the Hudson Singers, a reciprocal contribution of *The Detroit News'* WWJ for being permitted to broadcast the All-Canada Symphony Series. For the first time over the national network, weekly health talks were instituted in co-operation with the Canadian Medical Association, on February 15, 1930, with Dr. A. Grant Fleming as the speaker. And very many other programs featuring, in the main, Canadian talent, both French and English.

The 1930-31 season saw a shift of emphasis from such diversified programming. Condensed versions of the great operas, operettas, and musical comedies found a major place, with five or six Canadian singers in the leading roles. The singers were all Canadians. Among them were: Jeanne Pengelly, the first Canadian-trained singer to appear at the Metropolitan Opera, Mrs. Franklyn West, Mrs. Carlyle Duncan, Mrs. George Patterson, Jack Van der Straeten, George Dufresne, Gaston Molin, Irving Levine, E. Walton Brown, Finlay Campbell, Germain Lefebvre. When she adapted and produced these operatic programs, Esmé Moonie was at her best. Orchestras had between twenty and twenty-five musicians and were mostly under the direction of Henry Miro, a very talented and co-operative conductor. Among the major musical programs were *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Faust*, *Veronique*, *Tom Jones*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Maid of the Mountains*, *Il Trovatore*, *Il Pagliacci*, and *The Tales of Hoffman*.

Then as now, summer schedules were lighter. The railways used this time to promote effectively their summer hotels and tourist resorts. At the best hotels some very fine orchestras were maintained. At Jasper Park, Irwin Plumm furnished a weekly Sunday evening program for several years.

FRENCH NETWORK PROGRAMMING

The CNR broadcast in both French and English. The standards set for French programs were in no way second to those for English programs, whether musical or dramatic. As it is today, the main production centres were Montreal and Toronto. Though the All-Canadian Symphonies originated in Toronto, nearly all other network programs originated in Montreal. Though French artists and musicians were used almost exclusively on French programs, they also had a very prominent part to play on a regular basis on English-network features, including the Symphonies, and quite often on English dramatic productions. Montreal had the greatest pool of musical talent at the time, most of it French. This lent not only excellence but a certain indefinable colour and charm to more than a little network programming.

CNRO Ottawa was broadcasting programs in French as early as 1924, the year it opened, and CNRA began in September of 1925. Occasionally French programs originated at CNRW Winnipeg and CNRE Edmonton. The University of Montreal had its night on CNRM on January 14, 1926. The French network, as such, began on January 6, 1927, when CNRO and CNRM broadcast simultaneously. On April 7, Quebec City was added, and subsequently CNRA Moncton, as soon as carrier current was available to the Maritimes.

In the main, French programming until the summer of 1930 was musical—light compositions combined with operatic arias. The majority of music was selected from the French opera repertoire of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries—such composers as Gounod, Massenet, Delibes, Saint-Saëns, Thomas, and Godard. At times the work of Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, and Tchaikovsky was performed; Debussy was the modern composer used most. Arias from well-known Italian operas by Puccini and Rossini were not infrequently sung. Orchestras usually consisted of from fifteen to twenty musicians, with two soloists. Later, in 1930, a somewhat wider range of music was presented. Bach appeared, and occasionally the compositions of Eugene Goossens and Sir Arnold Bax were broadcast. Maurice Ravel and Jacques Ibert mingled with Debussy. In chamber music, the concerts conducted by Albert Chamberland were among the most notable.

Under the direction of Esmé Moonie, a series of adaptations and condensations of opera and operettas was initiated in September of 1930. This continued, interspersed with concert programs, until the

following May, and was renewed in October. These included: *Les Cloches de Corneville*, *La Mascotte*, *Mireille*, *Les Noces de Jeannette*, *Bon Soir Voisin*, *The Chocolate Soldier*, *La Fille du Regiment*, *Le Roman de Suzon*, *Lolita*, *La Fille de Tambour*, *Le Petit Duc*, *L'Diner de Pierrot*, *Les Saltimbanques*. There were also adaptations of Leoncavallo's *Il Pagliacci* and excerpts from Rossini's *Stabat Mater*. Several *Grand Guignol* plays were presented, including *Icone que s'etient* and *Catherine Goulden*, as well as a highly praised production of *L'Aiglon*.

CHAPTER 5

THE ROMANCE OF CANADA

In 1930, it became increasingly important for the CNR to develop something else besides the musical programs on the network. This would have to be instructive and inspiring, yet essentially Canadian. Rambling through old Fort Chambly on the Richelieu river, one Sunday afternoon in May of 1930, ruminating on the history this setting had seen for nearly three centuries, an idea occurred to me. Why not dramatize a series based on the epic stories of the early Canadian discoverers, adventurers, and explorers? There were real possibilities in such a series. Both talent and listeners badly needed programs like these, for those days were the cheerless days of the Great Depression.

The idea was discussed with an old and trusted friend, Mabel Williams of the National Parks Branch in Ottawa. Miss Williams was a lady of great charm and culture, thoroughly steeped in Canadian history, who had written some excellent books on Canada's national parks. The proposal intrigued her, and together we prepared a list of possible episodes, but writers to prepare presentable Canadian dramas still had to be discovered. There was no indigenous radio drama of any kind in Canada and what did exist was almost entirely based on adaptations. The only important Canadian dramatic group that had broadcasted up to that time was the CNRV Players in Vancouver.

Miss Williams suggested that Merrill Denison of Toronto, who had published a collection of short plays as well as numerous magazine articles, might be able to write such a series. In the meantime, she would think about additional subjects and would undertake factual research on the most promising of the episodes. I saw Denison, who

was quick to perceive the possibilities. He had an alert mind, wide knowledge of Canadian history, unusual understanding of early pioneer traditions, and youthful aspirations. He was very apt at character portrayal. He would undertake it, an ambition not entirely unrelated to the economic conditions then existing.

The project had now reached the point at which it needed the approval of the President of the CNR who was on a trip west, and it was August before he returned. Sir Henry listened not more than three or four minutes to a recital of the purpose and possibilities of the series, then promptly seized the idea and proceeded to enlarge upon it. He envisioned its scope instantly, showed an astonishing grasp of its significance to Canada and the CNR, and gave his approval there and then. The importance of a competent producer and the need to go outside Canada to get him was explained, since no experienced producer was then available in Canada. Sir Henry said, "Just one thing, don't go to New York for him." I said that I had hoped to find him in London, as the BBC had already developed radio drama to a high pitch, and that even in New York experienced radio producers were difficult to find. He said, "That's quite satisfactory, go right ahead."

The entire interview had not taken ten minutes. Such was the perception and decisiveness of this man, a unique personality among the many unusual people I met in nearly fifty years of public service. He was warm, kind, generous, attentive, and decisive, idolized by the staff and employees of the company from one end of Canada to the other. I arranged and sat in on many press conferences with him in Europe. In such meetings, he had lightning intuition. The slightest remark tossed to him by way of a verbal cue to indicate the proximity of danger and the need to detour was seized without apparent recognition, and he was far away on a new tack with few, if any, realizing it.

In the sudden and satisfactory end to the interview, I forgot to mention to Sir Henry that we would need two suitable studios to make these productions possible. Only on the stairs returning to my office did I remember this, and I proposed to go back to correct the omission. But Vice-President Robb knew better and reminded me that we had enough success for one day. To ask for more would be to tempt fate. Nevertheless, this oversight was to prove embarrassing later.

Approval was secured for twenty-five productions, and a definite arrangement was concluded with Merrill Denison to prepare scripts at \$250 each. Canadian and American broadcasting rights and Canadian and American publication rights for free distribution were to be

the property of the CNR, while movie and theatrical rights were to remain with the writer. Publicizing the scheme in a big way at the earliest moment became imperative. The series was named "The Romance of Canada." On September 27, 1930, Sir Henry, in announcing it, said:

We intend in the coming season to provide broader diversity in our national programs. We hope to kindle in Canadians generally a deeper interest in the romantic early history of their country. No country has a richer background of achievement than Canada. The tales of courage, heroism, fortitude, and valour are legion. Among the records of the early explorers, colonizers, missionaries, traders, and warriors from Cape Breton to the Yukon during the past three hundred years, are to be found countless incidents which stir one's blood by their sublime heroism. Among other peoples such incidents furnish the source of national folklore and have been woven into the great sagas of the past. When the busy season is over and listeners can gather around their fireplaces, it is our purpose to provide a series of dramatizations depicting some of these historic incidents.

TYRONE GUTHRIE COMES TO CANADA

In October, I sailed on the *Europa* for London. I was to find a producer and, incidentally, to gather additional source material for what we thought would be the first play of the series, *The Last Voyage of Henry Hudson*. My five years in London, from 1924 to 1929, now came in handy. Gladstone Murray was directing public relations for the BBC. He was most helpful and, armed with a selected list of producers who had to be approached with circumspection, I set out for various BBC production centres—Bristol, Belfast, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and, of course, London—where there were several likely candidates. Even before my arrival, Frank England, a former assistant of mine in London, and an unusually capable public-relations man, had scouted several of these prospects and provided me with notes on them.

Several prospects were interviewed, nearly all able men doing thoroughly good but, it seemed to me, scarcely inspired work. I had one more prospect on my list—Tyrone Guthrie, who was then producing at the Festival Theatre in Cambridge. At Cambridge, Guthrie had

produced first performances of several ambitious stage plays. He had also produced two of his own radio plays for the BBC, *The Squirrel's Cage* and *The Flowers Are Not for You to Pick*, which were outstanding. I explained the CNR's idea to him and showed him our sample script. He quickly demonstrated to me why it was unproducible. Then, for half an hour, he explained in detail the weaknesses of historic episodes as dramatic material. They were bounded by all the limitations of fact, with more-or-less fixed characterizations and factual conclusions. They severely circumscribed the scope and expression of the dramatist and the producer. This he demonstrated and much more. Nevertheless, a great deal would depend on the selection of the plays and the ability of the writer.

I knew in half an hour that Guthrie was the producer I must have. Frank England had said: "If you take Guthrie, you may have difficulties" (we never had) "but you will have a flash of genius," and I agreed. We reached an arrangement there and then by which he would come to Montreal at the end of November. Then, together with his fiancée Judith Bretherton, the future Lady Guthrie, we had tea in his bare little attic. Even in later and more prosperous years, some streak of puritanism, probably derived from his Presbyterian grandfather, always made him despise bourgeois comfort.

I returned to London with a feeling of complete satisfaction. When I reached my hotel, there was a cable from Vice-President Robb to tell me that no money was available for the necessary studios, and that the series might have to be abandoned. I had been through two similar threats over major public-relations projects within the company, first in 1927 and again in 1928, when bold stands had to be taken. I was not easily daunted and cabled at once the strongest reply I dared. It was just short of impudence, and my words were probably influenced by the fact that the Atlantic Ocean, and at least one full week, separated me from Robb, who was far from amiable when aroused. I reminded him of the President's announcement, the reams of publicity already put out by the company, particularly an article in *The Canadian Home Journal* that was being printed in what was then a most popular magazine, and I inquired what the people of Canada would think if we turned our backs on the scheme now. The moment I reached Montreal, I saw the Vice-President, and was told I would have to see Lee Hummell, the incisive, efficient, hard-swearing assistant to the President. After a brief but spirited argument with Hummell, who said he had never heard "any damned radio drama in Montreal yet

worth listening to," with which I fully agreed, the money was forthcoming—less than five thousand dollars for the two studios with a control room in the King's Hall building at 1231 St. Catherine Street in Montreal.

I had brought with me from the BBC the plans for a multiple-studio, dramatic control panel. The engineers under Gordon Olive's supervision immediately began constructing both the studios and the panel. Guthrie arrived at New York in December, where Denison and I met him. In his book *A Life in the Theatre*, published in 1959, Guthrie tells in his characteristic fashion about his arrival and experiences in Canada during the next six months.

SCHOOL FOR RADIO ACTORS

The series was publicized to open on January 15, 1931. A week before the fateful date, Guthrie and Denison came to me and said they needed one more week to perfect the opening play *The Last Voyage of Henry Hudson*. With that extra week a finished production could be assured; without it, the results would be doubtful. The time for finding and developing the entire cast of seventeen players had been too short. The actors had limited experience on the stage, and the first man auditioned, Rupert Caplan, was, I believe, the only one who had professional stage experience; later he reached great heights nationally and internationally as the leading producer in Montreal of English-language dramatic broadcasts for the CBC. None of the actors had any actual experience with radio drama. From the middle of December until May of 1931, Guthrie conducted an intensified search for the best dramatic talent in the region. Under him, the CNR actually carried on a school, in which at least a hundred players from Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto got their start. Guthrie was forever on the search—often in the most unexpected places—for talent to meet his exacting demands for the right actor for every part.

Several who had their start in radio drama under Guthrie—men like Alex Baird and George Alexander—went on to play leads in radio and television and National Film Board productions. Baird, who played in most of the episodes, recalled his first meeting with Guthrie. Arriving home at 9:30 P.M., Mrs. Baird told him there was a call for him. Answering it, he heard: "Mr. Baird, could you come down to the CNR studio?" Alex hopped into a taxi and arrived in a few minutes. There

was Guthrie, six-foot-five (the staff soon took to calling him "Six-Foot-Five" and Denison "Five-Foot-Six"), towering above him in a roll-neck sweater, super-baggy tweed trousers, and sandals. "Recite the Lord's Prayer, Mr. Baird." That done, he thrust a page of script into Alex's hand. Alex read it, and Guthrie said: "Rehearsals are at six-thirty tomorrow night – and don't be late." Late-comers to a Guthrie rehearsal rarely repeated their tardiness. Rehearsals continued from six-thirty to ten-thirty or later, five or six days a week. When Guthrie left, the staff presented him with a travelling bag that had a combination lock. It was set at six-thirty.

One female part demanded a Hebridean accent. After diligent search, a woman with the right accent was finally found, but her acting instincts were decidedly nil. After a gruelling afternoon, Guthrie, in desperation, said: "Yes, the accent is right but it has no guts." The lady was shocked. She was not accustomed to the producer's expression, and she burst into tears. But Guthrie consoled her and finally got the result he wanted. In the production of *Radisson*, authentic Mohawk pronunciations and expressions were important. Guthrie took four of the most linguistically sensitive of the cast to the Caughnawaga Indian Reserve near Montreal for a day to ensure authenticity.

The average time spent in rehearsal for the first seventeen plays was sixteen hours. *Henry Hudson* had twenty-two hours and thirty minutes of rehearsal time given to it, but the time was well spent. It had to be better than good, and everyone rose to the occasion. Guthrie called it "an excellent script and an excellent cast." Few who heard it have ever forgotten the closing scene, how Hudson himself – played by Ivor Lewis, Director of Public Relations for Eaton's – was seized by the mutineers and lowered with his young son and seven sick and feeble companions into a shallop, to be towed a short distance, and then cut adrift in the icy waters; or how the wandering, demented mind of the starving, almost frozen man recalled, as in a dream, his peaceful departure as the *Discovery* floated down the Thames in the opening scene, followed by the screaming wind and roaring waters and the final words: "That is the end of the play."

HISTORY OF EARLY CANADA

Sixteen historical episodes were produced by Guthrie between that date and May 14, when the series terminated for the season with the

thrilling story of *Dollard des Ormeaux*. The titles of the episodes in order of broadcast were: *The Last Voyage of Henry Hudson*, *Madame de la Tour*, *The Plague of Mice* (about Prince Edward Island), *The Selkirk Settlers* (Parts 1 and 2), *The Battle of Seven Oaks*, *Red Snow at Grand Pré*, *Marguerite de Roberval*, *The Isle of Demons*, *Laura Secord*, *Druccour at Louisberg*, *Pierre Radisson*, *Alexander Mackenzie*, *David Thompson*, *Montcalm*, and *Dollard des Ormeaux*. In the final scene of the last play, the magnificent two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Dollard episode in 1910 in the Place des Armes, before Notre Dame Cathedral in Montreal, was re-enacted. On that occasion, the Sixty-fifth Battalion of Canadian Infantry was drawn up at the foot of the statue of Dollard and his sixteen companions. At the appointed hour, the doors of the great Cathedral swung open, and the waiting concourse of people was joined by the procession, led by the Archbishop, who took his place upon the dais, and a deep stillness fell upon the place. Standing at attention, the Captain unrolled a scroll. His strong voice rang out across the silence: "Adam Dollard des Ormeaux—Commandant." For a moment there was no sound, and then a voice from the ranks replied: "Mort au champ d'honneur—Dead on the field of honour." The bugles sounded and the drums rolled. As the name of each hero rang out, a voice answered: "Tous Morts au champ d'honneur." Thus ended the last play of the first series.

On the Thursday evening before Easter, the series was interrupted for an impressive production by Guthrie of John Masefield's play *Good Friday*. A large section of the clergy throughout Canada had been advised, and expressions of appreciation were legion, with many ministers referring to the program from their pulpits on the following Sunday. It was a timely interruption. It gave the producer a splendid showcase, and it gave the writer time to catch his breath.

Including *Good Friday*, the average cost of the seventeen programs was \$725, which covered scripts, producer's fees, players, musicians, and miscellaneous expenses. But this did not include studio, technical staff, or administration costs. Most productions averaged a little less than one hour.

The series was discontinued for the summer, but many players came forward as a group and urged us to carry on into the summer, offering to continue without pay if it could be arranged—so much did they appreciate the opportunity to work under Guthrie. Every effort to keep him in Canada was made, and with his help several programs to that end, far in advance of their time, were drafted. Had the way

been open to do these and other projects, in keeping with his vision and capacity, undoubtedly Guthrie would have remained in Canada, at least for some time. However, it was not long before the pressures on the CNR to “get out of everything but railroadin’ ” were so intense that all such fine ideas had to be abandoned.

Before he left Canada, the CNR made it possible for Guthrie to cross the country from Montreal to Prince Rupert and Victoria. In his book, he called this a tip added to his salary. But it was much more than a mere appreciation for the job he had done. We realized then that here was a man who should not be permitted to leave Canada without an opportunity to glimpse the vastness and variety of the entire country. That this was worthwhile is attested to in *A Life in the Theatre*, where Guthrie wrote:

This trip gave me a glimpse of Canada, an impression of its immensity and diversity, and the chance to meet many kind and congenial people who have become lifelong friends. I left Canada thrilled with what I had seen, eager to return and to be somehow, at some time and in some way, a participant in the adventure of developing this land with its vast possibilities, so many of them still dormant, still undreamed—the romance of Canada.

How dramatically this aspiration was to be fulfilled!

Early in 1956, twenty-five years after his radio work for the CNR, following his production of *Tamburlaine* at the Stratford Shakespearian Festival, Guthrie took the Canadian company to New York. It had rave notices from the critics, and these were widely reprinted in Canadian papers. I clipped a number of notices and sent them to him with my card, just as the show closed after a very brief run. I received his acknowledgement the evening before Sir Tyrone and Lady Guthrie sailed for home:

Tamburlaine has met with no success in the box office, but the Canadian company has been warmly praised by all the critics. I think Canadians pay far too much attention to what “America” thinks. There is no America, only a wildly diverse mass of Americans, and anyway one simply can’t judge artistic merit in terms of box-office receipts. *Tamburlaine* mayn’t have been any good artistically—I am not the best judge of that; but *politically* it is important—this I know you agree—that Canadians begin to

show the world they are of adult status and I think the impression made on a numerically small but politically important group of people by this little effort has been favourable.

I want to see you again. Ever since our pleasant and happy association in 1930-1, I have regarded you as a sort of uncle, have felt, though we have so rarely met, a pleasant sense of security in our friendship. I think the very genuine warmth of feeling which I have had all these years for an abstraction called "Canada" largely centres about you.

"LAST STAND OF ALMIGHTY VOICE"

Eight plays in the "Romance of Canada" series remained to be produced: *Pierre le Moyne, Frontenac—The Founding of Kingston, Maisonneuve—The Founding of Montreal, Quebec—Samuel de Champlain, The Great Race of Jean Baptiste Lagamonière, The Last Stand of Almighty Voice, Valiant Hearts—Fort la Reine*, and *The Fathers of Confederation*. The first of these was heard on February 11, 1932, and the last on March 31. The drastic reduction of CNR Radio operations made it impossible this time to engage a producer outside the Radio Department, but Esmé Moonie's musical programs had been severely curtailed and this enabled her services to be turned to the production of the remaining plays. There was now available a pool of experienced and capable players. The resulting plays, in spite of many difficulties, particularly through seriously restricted rehearsal time, were a great success. The standards set in the previous season were well-maintained, an opinion confirmed by several of the most experienced actors.

Two of the remaining plays still arouse vivid memories thirty years later, *The Great Race of Jean Baptiste Lagamonière* and *The Last Stand of Almighty Voice*. The first was the story of that intrepid French Canadian who, alone in the depths of winter on snow-shoes, traversed the wilds for eighteen hundred miles to bring a message from the beleaguered settlement, now called Winnipeg, to Lord Selkirk at Montreal, covering thirty miles a day, and living off the country. He arrived on New Year's Eve, 1815—fortunately for the play—in the midst of New Year's festivities. His wife was the first white woman ever to set foot on the western plains, and his youngest daughter, Julie, was the mother of the ill-fated and sadly misunderstood Louis Riel. For the full story, see *The Winnipeg Evening Tribune*, Magazine

Section, January 13, 1927, for an article by W. J. Healy, the Provincial Librarian in Winnipeg. Both Lagamonière and his grandson lie beside the Cathedral of St. Boniface. His heroic exploit was a turning-point in Canadian history.

The Last Stand of Almighty Voice, owing to its subject and its relatively recent occurrence, seemed to me out of place in "The Romance of Canada" series, but the determination of the author to prepare this play overcame all my reluctance. It had to do with the last stand of the Red Man in America, and the greatest man-hunt in the history of the west, when Almighty Voice, the giant son of Sounding Sky and Spotted Calf, stood off the entire RCMP force from Prince Albert and Regina, until artillery had to be brought from Regina to Duck Lake to blast him out. During the siege, the camp-fires flared momentarily at midnight when new wood was being added. A strange wailing cry floated across the darkness. It was Spotted Calf singing her son's death song. "Hi-heh, Hi-heh, Heh-yo, heh-yo," a strangely pitiful wail, not unlike the keening of the Irish. Standing on a rise of ground within the woods that hid Almighty Voice and his two companions, she sang to her son to give him courage. No persuasion of the Mounties could induce her to leave, as she kept reciting to him the brave deeds of his grandfather Chief One Arrow and his father Sounding Sky. There she remained to the end. Spotted Calf was played by Rojene Brosseau, who gave a superb performance in this extremely difficult part, in spite of the hourly expectation of a visit from the stork.

Copies of the original scripts of the series are deposited in the Public Archives in Ottawa. Unfortunately almost all the producer's scripts have been lost. These would have shown many revisions and improvements. As Guthrie predicted, many of the scripts presented unusual difficulties in production. The limitations of historic material for drama rapidly became more apparent as the plays proceeded. There were plenty of stirring events, but many of them were scarcely suitable for radio. Lonesome men struggling through a great wilderness made fascinating and heroic stories. But their thoughts and actions had to be conveyed by narration and not by drama, and this made unusual demands on the talents of both author and producer.

THE PUBLIC'S REACTION

These plays evoked a great file of commendation. The first telephone call at CNRO, following *Henry Hudson*, came from Sir Robert Borden, who extended his congratulations and pleasure that the CNR had undertaken a series of this character. The English and History Association of the Secondary Schools of Toronto urged that the adaptations be printed and made available to high schools and collegiate institutes. The teachers of history at the Daniel McIntyre Collegiate in Winnipeg wrote: "The plays themselves, in their weird and dramatic conception and their artistic presentation, have undoubtedly stimulated interest in the story of Canada's past and tended to inspire in all her citizens, young and old, that steadfastness which comes from the knowledge of hardships endured with fortitude and difficulties overcome."

The corresponding secretary of the Local Council of Women of Saskatoon, representing forty-five women's societies and clubs of every form, wrote to President Thornton:

We feel that these are of inestimable value and trust that they will be continued. . . . Just to illustrate, may I tell you about my 'women-by-the-day' whose husband made a little radio, and on Thursday nights she gathers the children of the neighbourhood, and with her own kiddies, with map and history books, they relive the stirring stories of the past. It is only a little four-room place and a home-made radio, but what worlds are opened to these little prairie folk to whom the sound of waves and the songs of the sailors and the sea have been alien sounds.

Professor C. W. Kierstead in Winnipeg urged an earlier hour for the programs, so more children could hear them. He added: "We are exceedingly anxious that as many children as possible might have an opportunity of learning history in this acceptable way."

The Minister of Public Works for Saskatchewan congratulated the company. The notorious secret society, the Invisible Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, which had infiltrated Canada in several places at that time, wrote from its No. 1 Lodge at Regina to express appreciation. However, shortly after the second series started in February of 1932, the same Lodge sent an emphatic protest about the number of broadcasts glorifying the heroes of New France, a protest rather easily answered in the light of their former letter. Actually, without planning,

exactly half of these early heroes whose stories were so dramatized sprang from each of the two basic races.

The Ottawa Journal voiced the view of a substantial section of the press: "There has been a lot of discussion in Canada about the future of radio, as to how it should be used. If it could be used either under government ownership or under private ownership, with intelligent supervision to do what the Canadian National Railways made it do, it would meet the wishes of a vast number of people."

Perhaps the most dramatic interest in the series was shown when 180 direct descendants of the Selkirk settlers gathered on February 26, 1931, in the Fort Garry Hotel in Winnipeg, to hear the *Battle of Seven Oaks*. *The Winnipeg Free Press* of February 28 told the story:

Old eyes blazed anew with the fire of youth, and young heads were tossed with rightful pride in the glorious accomplishments of heroic ancestors when about 180 descendants of the first settlers of Manitoba's pioneer Red River Colony gathered Thursday in the Fort Garry Hotel, on the site of historic Fort Garry, to listen to the production of Merrill Denison's play *Seven Oaks*. Brought together for the first time since the tragic incident of Seven Oaks in 1816, when Governor Semple and twenty-one followers met death at the hands of the North West Company, descendants of rival fur traders, the Metis and the Selkirk settlers were united in a common bond of pride in their gallant forefathers.

I can clearly recall another illustration of the effect of these plays on public morale. They were broadcast during the Great Depression which deepened every month. A young Finn, tired and discouraged, decided to quit Canada and was on his way back to Finland. Stopping in Montreal overnight *en route*, he happened to hear the second play of the Selkirk settlers. Listening to the trials of these exiles from Sutherlandshire, his own troubles faded into insignificance. He decided that if these Scottish settlers could endure what they had, he could surely face up to his problems. Then and there he decided to stay, and the next morning he cancelled his return trip.

An interesting sequel to "The Romance of Canada" took place the following year, when Denison took the idea to New York, and did an almost identical series for the National Broadcasting Company entitled "Great Moments in History." These episodes included the original Henry Hudson play, Christopher Columbus, Custer's Last Stand,

Alexander Graham Bell, and others. It was the first time that a Canadian dramatic series provided the inspiration, as well as some of the material, for a similar series on an American network.

CHAPTER 6

BUREAUCRATIC INFLUENCE AND VILHJALMUR STEFANSSON

Network broadcasting in the early 'thirties had its thrills and its disappointments—perhaps more of each than today, for national programming was still a novelty. Late in 1929, when the All-Canada Symphony had been launched, another all-Canadian but quite different series was planned. The new series would tell something of the story of Canada's northland, through the exploits of such noted explorers as Vilhjalmur Stefansson, Captain Robert Bartlett, Captain J. E. Bernier, Dr. J. B. Tyrrell, and others. It was to be opened with two talks by Stefansson on January 23 and January 30, 1930. The first talk was on the Arctic as an aerial highway, the second on the economic possibilities of Canada's northern regions.

The inspiration for this series arose from reading Stefansson's *Northward Course of Empire*, surely one of the most prophetic and fascinating books ever written about Canada. The famous explorer forecast the present trans-polar air traffic and the use of under-ice submarines. Another source to inspire the series was the flight of Sir Hubert Wilkins from Point Barrow to Spitzbergen in April of 1928. As a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, it was my privilege to attend the dinner tendered Wilkins on his return to London in June. There I hear a first-hand account of that fantastic experience from the most colourful and versatile figure ever to make history in polar exploration.

The announcement of the series in *Radio Features*, the CNR's program schedule, was laudatory of Stefansson's work. It also made

passing reference to Dr. R. M. Anderson, anthropologist and second-in-command on Stefansson's most famous Arctic voyage. During this expedition, the *Karluk* was lost, and Stefansson with two companions crossed seven hundred icy miles over the Beaufort Sea, "living off the country," reaching Bank's Island, where he was found by Wilkins on September 11, 1914. This historic expedition was originally planned by Stefansson with the support of two institutions, the American Museum of Natural History and the National Geographic Society. It was taken over by Sir Robert Borden on behalf of Canada to conserve for this country any discoveries that might result and to avoid any possible future international misunderstanding. The entire expedition is discussed in Stefansson's *The Friendly Arctic*; *Stefansson, Ambassador of the North* by D. M. LeBourdais, and *Sir Hubert Wilkins* by John Grierson.

The series was announced only three or four days when I was called to the Vice-President's office and told that Stefansson's programs would have to be cancelled forthwith. No explanation was offered, nor could any be obtained. I would have to go to Ottawa and see Dr. Charles Camsell, Deputy Minister of Mines, and Dr. R. M. Anderson. They would tell me why.

I saw Dr. Camsell who told me what I had not heard before. Probably owing to five years' absence, I had not realized that there was a long-standing and unbelievably bitter feud raging about Ottawa in which Anderson and Stefansson were the central figures. The feud followed their return from Stefansson's 1913-18 Arctic expedition, and it flared wildly after the publication of *The Friendly Arctic* in 1921. It seemed strange to me that the feud should still be raging with such intensity ten years later. Only when I met Dr. Anderson, and saw the livid indignation that seemed to distort his countenance at any lauding of Stefansson or his work, did I fully realize the depth and bitterness of the disagreement. It was clear from our conversation that nothing had been forgiven or forgotten, or would be in the near future. From neither Dr. Camsell, Dr. Anderson, nor the several others with whom this matter was discussed during my visit did I obtain information to justify such summary and bureaucratic interference as had been focused on these programs.

I was told by Dr. Camsell that, following the initial heat of this row, he had convinced both groups to agree to make a statement of their sides of the case in the magazine *Science* and then drop the whole thing. Also, it was said, Stefansson agreed at the time to forego public lec-

tures in Eastern Canada for five years. A search of the files of *Science* disclosed no statements, save one on July 7, 1922, by Diamond Jenness, who accompanied the expedition and maintained there were really two expeditions, one under Stefansson, the other under Anderson, though this did not accord with statements made by Sir Robert Borden. Jenness was replying to the review of *The Friendly Arctic* by Dr. Raymond Pearl in *Science* four months earlier. Stefansson's explanation of his decision to forego lectures for a time in Eastern Canada was quite different and was set out in a letter to me, quoted below.

There was no alternative but to convey the bad news to Stefansson, who was very understanding. Though he was not entirely surprised, it was a great disappointment to him, not for monetary reasons, for he could have enforced his contract. His real concern was the spectre of this undying feud, which once again raised its ugly head. He told me that this obstruction was in keeping with other more-or-less similar experiences. When *The Friendly Arctic* was first published, he was invited to Cambridge University to lecture. No sooner was this announced than a shower of letters descended on Cambridge, some thirty of them, all originating in Canada, most of them from Ottawa, all objecting to his lecturing there. Nevertheless that did not deter Cambridge. "You, Weir," he said, "are going through an identical experience." And in a letter to me, on January 25, 1930, he wrote:

It has long been my belief that the issues which I am trying to press on the notice of the Canadian public are of importance to Canada and that the country will gain by facing them at once, since they will have to face them some time in any case. Unfortunately, personalities and emotions have been so involved that I have never been able to do this—they always attack me rather than my views, or, what is the same thing, want to show that the views are not to be taken seriously for the reason that I, myself, am not worthy of serious attention. To give these emotions time to quiet down I stayed away from Canada for several years and only returned on the strong persuasion of two of my friends, Hugh S. Eayrs of the Macmillan Company, my publisher, and D. M. LeBourdais, an old friend. It seems now that they were in error, for the same thing has happened again—nobody faces issues and everybody calls names. The worse single incident is the cancellation of your broadcasts. I quite understand how it happened and do not blame you in the least, but want to urge that, without

owing me anything else, you do owe me the fullest possible explanation both for my records and for the public insofar as you can get it into circulation.

In the face of this hornet's nest, there was nothing to do but abandon what promised to be a useful and interesting series about Canada's great northland.

From this, to me, Stefansson emerged a towering figure, reasonable and tolerant, who saw things on the grand scale, a man vastly unappreciated in the land of his birth, for which he would have liked to have done so much more.

AMERICAN SENSIBILITIES ARE PRICKED

Another highly controversial incident, and one that almost raised international complications, was sparked in January of 1932, when the CNR sponsored the first of its national commentaries. The pressing nature of Canada's economic and social problems at that time, plus the need for still more drastic cuts in government spending, led to a series called "Canada Today" featuring Grattan O'Leary (now Senator O'Leary) who was the editor of *The Ottawa Journal*. These commentaries were fifteen-minute discussions on national and international questions of great moment which demanded intelligent explanation. In their preparation, O'Leary had the assistance of Grant Dexter, Parliamentary Correspondent of *The Winnipeg Free Press*, one of the most competent journalists and researchers ever to sit in the Press Gallery at Ottawa.

In opening the series, O'Leary said:

I have stipulated and the sponsor has agreed that in no circumstances must there be anything of propaganda for any government or political party or group or organization of any kind whatever. We shall not attempt to take sides upon any question about which there is political controversy, or seek to give praise or blame. What we shall do, or try to do, will be to give an intelligible picture of the week's events, to amplify, explain, and interpret national activities, to try to enable radio listeners to get a more complete, more continuous, and a clearer grasp of the nation's business.

It is no exaggeration to say that in timeliness, thoroughness of preparation, clarity of presentation, and over-all effectiveness, the O'Leary series has never been surpassed in this country.

The year 1931 was one of crisis, with political upheaval, social disturbance, and financial panic around the world, a time of great stress. In January of 1932, a conference on one of the world's burning issues – war debts and reparations – was to be held at Lausanne. With a view to clarifying Canadian thought on this issue, O'Leary dealt with the topic in his broadcast of January 3.

He recalled that in July of the previous year, at the instance of President Herbert Hoover, a one-year moratorium had been declared on all reparations and war-debt payments. But the United States Congress decided later that this moratorium could not be extended or renewed, and that war debts could neither be cancelled nor scaled down. Here is how O'Leary concluded his first talk on the subject:

So long as the United States insists upon war debts being paid, without either cancellation or reduction, then just so long will those debtor nations insist upon reparations from Germany, the consequence being a vicious road that can lead only to disaster.

All competent observers agree that war debts and reparations are a curse upon the world. No one believes that Germany can pay. No one believes that France and Italy can pay the United States unless Germany pays. Yet the United States, forgetting her own past, forgetting that she was built up by Europe's aid, forgetting too, that eight of her States repudiated their bonds, and that they are in default to Europe to the amount of sixty millions of principal and three hundred millions of interest, insists upon driving Europe to the wall, in maintaining a debt structure that crucifies mankind.

Immediately heavy mail descended on both the CNR and O'Leary. Hundreds of letters were received, most of them from well-informed Canadians, many from distinguished persons. A few questioned the validity of certain statements, others sought greater amplification. Interest was so intense that the following week O'Leary classified some of the numerous questions asked. He then devoted the succeeding broadcasts to raising the following issues. First, where, when, and under what circumstances did Great Britain offer to cancel all international war debts? Second, if it is held that Germany cannot pay reparations,

and if, in this event, the Allied nations decline to pay, or are unable to pay the United States, will not the United States be made to bear the greater part of the cost of the war? Third, when, in the course of the war, the United States made these loans to the Allied countries, was it understood that they were loans to be repaid, or was it generally believed that they formed a part of America's contribution toward winning the war? Fourth, with respect to certain states in default to Europe, is it not true that these loans were made to Confederate states at the time of the Rebellion?

THE DEFAULTING STATES

To all these questions, O'Leary gave complete answers. Regarding the last and most provocative question, he said over the air:

Eight states are in default. They are Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Florida. The total of the principal sum in default is about sixty million dollars and the accumulated interest is three hundred million. Some of these defaulted loans go back as far as 1831, but most of them were made in the Reconstruction Period following the Civil War.

He then detailed the states, the dates, the purposes of the loans, and the amounts in default, adding:

Widespread misconception exists in regard to these repudiations. It is commonly believed, for example, that the money was loaned during the Civil War to the Confederate States, and that no payment has been made because such debts were declared null and void by the Federal Government of the United States. The historic truth is that not a dollar of this money was loaned to a Confederate State, not a dollar loaned during the period of the Civil War.

O'Leary quoted various American authorities to show that the claims of British bond-holders had never lacked powerful friends in the United States, but not friends powerful enough ever to do anything about the claims.

The morning after the second broadcast, on January 10, Wesley Frost, the American Consul in Montreal, phoned me to protest these broadcasts vigorously. He condemned them as erroneous and as a slight on his country. He was particularly incensed over the reference to the repudiated bonds and asked me to have O'Leary visit him. Frost intended to make an official protest. If he wished to complain, I could take no exception, but I could not accommodate him with regard to O'Leary, since the latter lived in Ottawa. Perhaps he could ask the American Minister, the Honourable Hanford McNider, to discuss it with O'Leary. But this suggestion was clearly not to his liking, and he reported the matter directly to Washington, which took it up with the Canadian government. The Prime Minister spoke to Sir Henry Thornton, who staunchly defended the broadcasts. He called the Prime Minister's attention to what Bennett had already sensed: the great interest the talks had provoked all across Canada. Bennett asked to see the letters which, in the meantime, had considerably increased in number. Almost without exception, they expressed strong opinions, and ninety-five per cent were commendatory. A box containing more than seven hundred letters was sent to the Prime Minister's office. This was the last ever seen or heard of them.

What further discussion ensued between Ottawa and Washington, or between Bennett and Sir Henry, was never disclosed. For a brief period, consideration was given to suspending the broadcasts, though this was not disclosed to O'Leary. However, it was finally decided that they should be continued to their scheduled termination. Fortunately, the Prime Minister had been made acquainted, although quite unofficially, with the general plan for the series before the talks commenced, and he had expressed satisfaction that such commentaries were about to be undertaken by the CNR. He was, therefore, scarcely in a position to be censorious, even if he had wanted to be—especially as the facts set out in the broadcasts had been carefully assembled and were incontrovertible. It is interesting to note that the war debt bogey was still being harped upon in the United States Senate as late as June of 1965.

ARRIVAL OF THE "R 100"

One of the world's largest airships, the "R 100" left Cardington, England, on a final test flight before being taken over from its builders by the British government. The huge dirigible started out on July 29, 1930.

With a sister ship "R 101," these were the two largest airships ever built. "R 100" was 709 feet long, had a maximum diameter of 135 feet, with accommodation for one hundred passengers. It was powered by six Rolls-Royce engines of 650 horsepower each, and it travelled between seventy and eighty miles an hour.

Three months before "R 100"'s flight to Canada, the CNR announced its intention to broadcast the arrival. This item was carried in the May, 1930, issue of *Radio Features*. A few days before the ship left for Canada, the Department of National Defence, which had erected a mooring mast at St. Hubert in Quebec, announced that the Department would provide official broadcasts in both English and French direct from the mast. The Department had installed its own master-control, excluded all other broadcasters, and engaged three announcers. The CNR Radio Department believed these official broadcasts, limited as they were to the mooring mast, must lack mobility, colour, and any dramatic quality. With such an unprecedented event, we decided to proceed with our own broadcast which could include anything of definite news value from the mast. Our decision to carry on independently rested mainly on the great public interest in the event as the departure time approached. We felt the public would not be satisfied with bulletins from St. Hubert.

It was decided to report as much of the flight as possible, from the moment "R 100" hove in sight far down the St. Lawrence River, until it tied up at St. Hubert. A small observation post sixty feet high, on top of tall telephone poles, was erected on CNR property about five hundred yards from the mooring mast. Here a commentator, W. V. George, was stationed, together with a dirigible expert, Captain Barron. They had a commanding view of the entire area and the particularly tricky operation of fastening the ship. A second observation post was established on the roof of a building on St. Catherine Street in Montreal; a third was set up in Quebec City in a glass tower on the roof of Laval University. Here Charles Finlay, formerly attached to the British Navy, a resourceful technician, and Andy Ryan, the commentator, were stationed. Finlay carried a short-wave receiving set and a pair of powerful field glasses.

The network included fifteen stations from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and the Columbia Broadcasting System took the CNR feed throughout the United States. *The Toronto Star* teamed up with the Canadian Pacific Telegraphs in an independent broadcast over a network of seven stations from Montreal to points west. Their commenta-

tor was Foster Hewitt, but he was handicapped by a lack of mobility and by being confined to a low platform considerably removed from the mooring mast.

The "R 100" passed directly over Quebec City at 6:30 P.M., E.S.T., on July 31, and moored at St. Hubert at 5:00 A.M. on August 1. The journey was remarkably smooth until some sixty miles below Quebec, where the dirigible was hit by a cold north squall that produced more motion than the ship experienced at any time before. It pitched and rolled, but the ship came out of it and headed toward the south shore.

Soon after this, Finlay from his observation post caught sight of the "R 100" through his binoculars, but only for a moment. It disappeared, turning back below the Isle of Orleans. Next it rose in the sky south of the island, then dipped, and again disappeared. These mysterious manoeuvres continued for nearly two hours, while we anxiously waited every minute to open the network. In 1930, a network was not the permanent thing it is today. It had to be set up, and as this was the busiest part of the day for the telegraph company, we wished to avoid inconveniencing regular business by using needed lines any more than necessary. We learned later that a sudden violent squall had damaged the ship's fins, particularly the port fin. A hole about fifteen feet long was torn in the fabric. The ship was slowed to a standstill, while riggers climbed about on wires like tightrope walkers with safety belts, a thousand feet above the St. Lawrence.

STORMY WELCOME AT QUEBEC

Finally, after more than two hours of hide-and-seek on the eastern horizon, "R 100" rose in the sky and headed straight for Quebec, passing directly over our Observation Tower and the Chateau Frontenac. At 6:40 P.M., E.D.S.T., Andy Ryan began his description of the ship. The description was little short of inspired. As the dirigible slowly approached, the great silvery hull glistened in the late afternoon sun. It was a magnificent sight, and Ryan made the most of it. The approach was heralded by a steady and rising crescendo of whistles, fog-horns, auto, and fire sirens, and every other noise the observers below could make. It seemed every man, woman, and child in Quebec lined the river, the streets, and the heights up to the Citadel more than three hundred feet above the river. The ship was so close above the CNR observation post that the drone of the six great engines drowned out the

pandemonium below, which rose again in a deafening roar as this voyager of the air passed slowly overhead, then out of sight over the great Quebec Bridge a little after 7:00 P.M. This was the first real contact with the ship, and by far the most vivid and colourful part of the entire broadcast. Far away in Montreal, it gave me a tremendous thrill, never to be exceeded by any of the many broadcasts in which I had a part.

The tie-up at St. Hubert was scheduled for the early morning. Attachments were easier and more successful in the morning calm. Soon it began to get dark. A thunder-storm was imminent, and before long one struck with wholly unaccustomed violence. The ship was suddenly caught in a vertical gust and began to rise rapidly. In spite of efforts to keep it down, the dirigible rose from twelve hundred feet to forty-five hundred feet, the last thousand feet being covered in fifteen seconds. Two twelve-foot tears were made in the lower fabric of the starboard fin. The lights went out, and the ship was in almost complete darkness for ten minutes. The rain was terrific. The novelist Nevil Shute, a supervising engineer on the ship's test flights, who later related the story of this flight in his book *Slide Rule*, described how, when the car plunged nose down, this same motion that put out the lights also upset a five-gallon can of sticky red mending dope that was used for repairs to the fins. It had been left open in the crew's quarters immediately above the control car. Though the ship apparently was plunging nose down, straight toward the ground, the altimeter was going madly the wrong way, quite out of control. Despite the fact that the main lights were extinguished, the small orange bulbs over the essential instruments kept going. At the very worst moment, in the faint orange light, a torrent of sticky red fluid more like blood than anything else poured into the control car. Three more severe storms were encountered in the 180 miles between Quebec and Montreal.

About two in the morning, the lights of the city blazed ahead of them; in the black sky above them, suspended in the night, there was an enormous fiery cross. They stared transfixed at this lighted cross, until someone voiced his secret thoughts by saying (according to Nevil Shute): "That's not Montreal. That's the New Jerusalem! This is it, boys."

At 3:43 A.M., E.D.S.T., on August 1, with lights full on, "R 100" passed directly over the Sun Life Building, Montreal, heading west. It seemed as though we could almost reach out and touch the ship from our observation post, a little more than two hundred yards to the north. It was thrilling to watch the dirigible circle the city before heading

back southeast to St. Hubert. Once more we were able to broadcast a first-hand account of the progress before it came near the mooring mast.

At 4:40 A.M., the pick-up was switched to the observation post at St. Hubert to catch the tie-up. At 5:57 A.M., it was switched to the mooring mast for the speeches of welcome by Canadian officials and replies by the builder and director of flying operations. At 6:00 A.M., CNRM signed off, after fourteen hours of broadcasting.

AN EXHIBITION FLIGHT

The "R 100" made an exhibition flight of approximately twenty-six hours over Ottawa, Toronto, Niagara Falls, and Rochester, on August 11. The ship carried Canadian officials under General A. G. L. McNaughton. Two-way conversations were established between CNRO and the ship as it passed over Ottawa. Prime Minister Bennett, elected a few days earlier, Mayor Plant of Ottawa, and technical experts conversed with the officers and passengers on the dirigible. This was said to have been the first time a two-way conversation was broadcast over a Canadian network.

For several days more than a hundred thousand people visited St. Hubert daily to see the ship. "R 100" left at 9:30 P.M. on August 13, with eleven Canadians, mostly journalists, aboard; it reached Cardington at 10:35 A.M., G.M.T., on August 16, and never flew again.

All efforts of the Air Ministry were now concentrated on a flight to India by the "R 101." The success of the "R 100" 's Canadian flight spurred them to the greater venture. The second ship left Cardington at 6:30 P.M. on Saturday, October 4, 1930, under adverse conditions, carrying twelve passengers, mostly important officials, including Lord Thomson, Head of the Air Ministry, and a crew of forty-two. After some seven hours of bad weather, while flying at an elevation of about one thousand feet, the dirigible dived, was temporarily righted, then dived again, this time into the ground, not far from Beauvais, about half-way between the Channel and Paris. The ship immediately burst into flames and was completely destroyed in a few seconds. Of the fifty-four on board, only six survived; all the officers and officials perished. A public inquiry disclosed that the immediate cause of the disaster was a huge rent in one of the forward gas bags.

Thus ended for all time Britain's experiment with airships. The depression, together with the deadening effect of the disaster, dampened

any further effort until the performance of the airplane made airships seem antediluvian.

THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S ARRIVAL

Of national significance and considerable technical interest, but very different in nature from the arrival of "R 100," was the broadcast of the arrival of the new Governor-General. At the instance of the Government, the arrival in Halifax on April 4, 1931, of Earl Bessborough and Lady Bessborough would be carried across Canada. It was the first time a Governor-General's arrival was broadcast and it was also the first time both CBS and NBC in the United States tied in with an all-Canadian broadcast.

The swearing-in ceremony took place in Halifax's historic Province House. This was to be the first time condenser microphones, which had been recently acquired, were used on remote control. The new microphones picked up a noticeable sixty-cycle hum, and it took two nights and one day before Gordon Olive and his staff overcame the hum. The mikes were finally shielded by standing them in zinc trays, and by 6:00 A.M. on the day of the broadcast, the last of the technical difficulties was solved. Twelve microphones were used at various points. Three were at the pier, five in the Legislative Council Chamber, another in an impromptu studio established in the Succession Duties office, with others at the Nova Scotia Hotel and along the route. Duplicate lines from Halifax to Montreal provided insurance against any breakdown in transmission.

The first greeting of His Excellency, as he stepped from the ship, "I am pleased at last to be on Canadian soil and to make the acquaintance of Canadians," was picked up, as well as the friendly greeting of Lady Bessborough in French: "J'ai enfin l'honneur de faire la connaissance du peuple canadien." as the oath of office was administered, every word was heard with the utmost clarity. The room was so still that, as His Excellency wrote his name in the Oaths' Book, and as the Judges of the Supreme Court signed the Jurat, the scratching of the pens, slightly accentuated by the parchment, could be heard distinctly from one extremity of the network to the other. Moreover, during the pauses, the ticking of the large clock in the old chamber was broadcast as clearly as the scratching of the pens, though the clock was some distance away from the microphones. As the installation commenced, all comment

save the essentials ceased, and the ceremony was allowed to carry itself, thereby enhancing its dramatic effectiveness.

At the luncheon that followed the ceremony in the Nova Scotia Hotel, telegrams were read by Prime Minister Bennett, from passengers on CNR trains in Quebec and Vermont, Alberta, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, many parts of Ontario, and from many other widely separated places. The Prime Minister added: "Thanks to the Canadian National Railways' broadcasting system, the ceremony of swearing-in the new Governor-General has been heard in all parts of Canada, and his Excellency is probably already known to many thousands of the people of the Dominion."

IMPERIAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE OF 1932

The Imperial Economic Conference of 1932 was covered by the CNR in a series of five special broadcasts. There was the plenary session from the House of Commons; a dinner honouring the delegates; a concert in their honour at the Capital Theatre; the opening of the new Welland Canal; and finally, the opening of the National Research Building. The first broadcast was on July 21, the last on August 10.

National prestige demanded that no effort be spared to make the broadcast of the opening ceremony as nearly perfect as possible. It had more extensive coverage than any other broadcast in Canada to that time. It was fed to forty stations in Canada. Carried by Marconi beam to Great Britain and rebroadcast by the BBC, it was also heard throughout England and Scotland, and clearly in Ireland. It was relayed by beam to India, and was picked up in South Africa. Interest taken by the listeners in Denmark led to the Conference being broadcast by the state radio in Copenhagen. In the United States, both NBC and CBC carried the ceremony to well over one hundred stations.

The quality of transmission over the transatlantic beam could scarcely be surpassed. BBC technicians, always exacting in their standards, pronounced it excellent and commended highly the details of the arrangements. Press reporters gathered at Broadcasting House in London and had no difficulty taking verbatim reports of the speeches. An unexpected but interesting moment occurred at exactly 6:30 P.M., G.M.T., when the BBC superimposed its time signal of six pips. On the second pip, listeners in London heard the clock in the Peace Tower at Ottawa strike one-thirty, and immediately after the speech of the

Indian delegate, listeners in London also clearly overheard someone near him in the Commons Chamber in Ottawa making an appointment for 9:45 P.M. The BBC had a Blattnerphone—a steel-tape recording device, one of the earliest forerunners of tape—and made recordings of the announcer's opening description which set the scene, the King's message, and His Excellency's speech. Then the BBC rebroadcast the proceedings once more the same evening.

This was the first time dynamic microphones were used on remote-control pick-up in Canada. This microphone was uninfluenced by atmospheric changes, and it could be used in snow and rain, outside as well as inside. The dynamic microphone was the first to be developed to meet these conditions, and for pick-up it was not essential for the speaker to be close to the mike. Small, neat, it could be set up anywhere, and in the House of Commons these mikes were scarcely noticed. But to pick-up the chimes and clock in the Peace Tower, a dynamic microphone mounted in a box shaped like a bird-cage had to be suspended on a wire stretching from the Peace Tower to the roof of the Parliamentary Library. This allowed the mike to be moved at will to whatever distance from the Tower the results were best.

The modern "intercom" was not in use in 1932, and the timing of every item—from the playing of "Pomp and Circumstance" at the opening to the very moment His Excellency began to read His Majesty's message after he was seated in the Commons Chamber—had to be timed to the split second since much of what was going on was not visible to the commentator. The broadcast of the plenary session was expected to last slightly more than one hour. But it continued for two hours and twenty minutes before it was interrupted by a temporary breakdown in the control room at Ottawa due to a transformer burning out in the rectifier in the control room thirty seconds before the conclusion of the Irish delegate's speech. At considerable risk and with great dexterity, Chief Engineer Gordon Olive made the necessary repairs, and we were on the air again, within fifteen minutes, with the same clarity of reception.

The Empire Concert from the Capital Theatre, on July 29, consisted of solos by distinguished Canadian artists. We had hoped this concert would be peculiarly Canadian, rather than being composed of music delegates could hear equally well in London or any other large city—and that it would be more colourful than classical. But other influences prevailed. The only item distinctly Canadian was the singing of French-Canadian folk songs in the lobby of the theatre and during the

intermission by Charles Marchand and his group. A problem faced by the technical staff was the aversion of Eva Gauthier, a Canadian *prima donna*, towards facing a microphone. She was adamant: she would *not* broadcast. Finally, microphones were secreted in the foot-lights, and Miss Gauthier did not learn the difference until the broadcast was over.

The opening of the new Welland Canal took place on August 6, at the foot of Lock Number Six near Thorold, Ontario. Four pick-up points with nine microphones were provided. The lead-lines to the microphones, used by the band and the special broadcasting circuits that carried the program to Toronto, where it was split to the various networks, passed under the canal. These were dropped ninety feet though the floor of the control house, which stood directly over one of the wells, passed through a duct full of water, up ninety feet on the other side, and from there to their terminals.

The broadcast was carried by both NBC and CBS. Distribution to the maximum audience in Canada was made possible through the generous co-operation of the Canadian Pacific Telegraph and two telephone companies in British Columbia and the Maritimes. On August 13, 1932, *The Ottawa Citizen* said, as part of its lead editorial:

With the broadcast of the opening ceremonies at the National Research Laboratories in Ottawa last Wednesday night, the contribution of the Canadian National broadcasting agency to Conference publicity is completed. On five important occasions during this period of the Conference, the outside world has been brought into touch with the assembled statesmen in Canada through the medium of the microphone. The officers responsible for Canada's part in the broadcasting of eventful occasions during the period of the Imperial Economic Conference are to be congratulated. With comparatively limited means, the Conference broadcasting has demonstrated what can be done in drawing the nation closer together.

CHAPTER 7

CANADIAN PACIFIC BROADCASTS

Unlike the Canadian National, the Canadian Pacific Railways eschewed broadcasting until the national carrier-current system of the privately owned company was completed in 1930. By then problems associated with both the future of broadcasting and the future of its expanded communications system began to be apparent. With orchestras in several of its hotels, the CPR could now feed concert and dance programs daily across Canada at little additional cost. This helped many radio stations (both American and Canadian) fill their time with acceptable programs. Indeed, for several years, the Concert Orchestra of the Royal York Hotel was a regular sustaining feature on the NBC network.

From February 21 to May 8, 1930, the CPR sponsored a national-network program under the direction of the talented musician Rex Battle who had charge of all musical activities at the Hotel. Battle was later to play an important role for thirteen years with the CBC network as conductor and director of "Singing Stars of Tomorrow," one of the most significant sponsored programs in Canadian history. His first CPR program used an orchestra of thirty-five and featured twenty-five singers. In the autumn of 1930, a more pretentious and sponsored campaign was launched. Battle conducted a large orchestra with distinguished soloists in the sponsored "Canadian Pacific Hour of Music" for thirty weeks, from 9:00 to 10:00 P.M. on Fridays. These programs were usually succeeded by "Fred Culley's Dance Band" from the Royal York over the same network, the latter on a sustaining basis, which meant stations were not paid for carrying the program.

A second sponsored program, known as the "Musical Crusaders,"

which used an orchestra of thirty pieces and a mixed choir of from eight to twelve voices, broadcast the more tuneful music of the countries that would be visited during a world cruise on one of the Railway's finest ocean liners. The "Crusaders" commenced on October 12, 1930, and ran for thirty-nine weeks from 4:15 to 4:45 P.M., E.S.T., on Sunday afternoons. It was carried over twenty Canadian stations, and on a network of fourteen stations in the United States from Baltimore, Maryland, to Lincoln, Nebraska. "Musical Crusaders" was the first sponsored series of network programs originating in Canada to be broadcast over an American network. A third program of a lighter type, "Melody Mike's Music Shop," a pot-pourri of popular music with Irish characterizations designed for a mass audience, was added during the summer season for twenty-six Monday evenings from 9:00 to 9:30 P.M. Although the CPR started late, its efforts were on a substantial scale and were generally of first-rate quality.

In 1930 and 1931, the CPR network also carried a number of public-service programs, including sporting events. Ten symphonic broadcasts by the Montreal Symphony under Douglas Clarke, and ten programs by the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry Band, were sponsored, promotion being limited to the name of the sponsor. Requests for illustrated programs were invited, but the response was disappointing.

Although CPR network programs carried much more direct sales appeal than those of the CNR, both the length and the sales appeal of the commercials were restrained and confined mainly to exploiting the railway's tourist resorts and services. During 1931, the only complete year of CPR broadcasting, 108 sponsored programs were presented costing \$272,219. Of this, \$213,529 was spent on Canadian programs, of which \$100,204 was for talent. During the same year, the CNR's comparable expenditure on broadcasting was \$221,348.

With its vast system of services—including rail, steamship, and hotel—the CPR was able to make very effective use of broadcasting for its promotional value. But the CPR had other—and even more important—interests to serve by becoming actively interested in radio at this time. These will be referred to later.

The most pretentious series of network programs outside those of the CNR and the CPR—indeed, in some respects, surpassing both of them—was the series sponsored by Imperial Oil. Its debut was made in January of 1929 with a series of weekly symphonies linking London, Toronto, and Montreal, using an orchestra of thirty-five musicians. Road maps were distributed in answer to the inquiries. In October of

that year, Imperial Oil launched a far more imposing series of twenty-six programs, using eleven stations from Montreal to Vancouver. These originated in the penthouse studio of the Royal York Hotel at 10:00 P.M. on Sundays. The orchestra exceeded fifty musicians and was conducted by Reginald Stewart, one of Canada's most gifted pianists and conductors. However, it was the group of truly great—indeed, world-famous—artists heard on these programs that set the series apart as something unique, never equalled before or since in Canada and possibly anywhere else on this continent, except by the Metropolitan Opera. The artists included: Josef Lhevinne and Harold Bauer, pianists; Hans Kindler, cellist; Lea Luboshutz and Albert Spalding, world-famous violinists. Among the vocalists were: the famous Kedroff Quartet which the great Chaliapin called a “miracle”; Milan Petrovitch, basso; Richard Crooks, tenor; Richard Bonelli, baritone; Florence Austral, dramatic soprano; Luella Melius, among the greatest coloraturas; Sophie Breslau, contralto, chosen by Toscanini in March of 1928 as a soloist for the concerts of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra; Merle Alcock, contralto; and Hulda Lashanska, soprano. Instrumental groups included the Malkin Trio, the London String Quartet, and the Amida Trio. Twenty-seven world-famous artists and groups appeared that season. On October 5, 1930, Imperial Oil renewed its Symphonies, again under Reginald Stewart, and this time the network was truly national, embracing twenty-one stations from coast to coast. With the exception of the Kedroff Quartet, the talent was entirely new but as famous as that of the previous year.

At the time, Imperial Oil's public relations was under the direction of Frank Prendergast, who had a keen appreciation of the arts and a rare sense of humour. The announcer was Charles Jennings, who would become a leading program executive with the CBC. In Jennings, mischief vied with humour, and the barest suggestion put him into action. Programs frequently ran overtime, and there were few commercial programs to interfere with the schedule. One evening, with the orchestra still playing, it became imperative to sign off promptly, and Jennings had to leave his stand near the conductor and make the announcement from the booth nearby. The conductor was unaware that his orchestra was no longer on the air. Prendergast suddenly suggested to Jennings that here was an opportunity to pull the conductor's leg. Jennings stepped out, and when the orchestra finished a few moments later, the announcer proceeded to apologize at length over a “dead” mike for the lousy program to which listeners had just been subjected. Stewart was

livid. The following week, anticipating a repetition, or some variation of this horseplay, the conductor was prepared. When Jennings was about to sign off in the usual way, he grasped him about the waist and hauled him, mike and all, off the podium. This was barely accomplished when the conductor realized his mistake, but it was too late. The commercial was lost, and the sponsor was more than a little miffed, to the chagrin of all. Recalling this incident, Jennings said: "Broadcasting was fun then—a hell of a lot more than now."

FIRST COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION AGENCY

Significant among early network sponsors was the William Nielson Company of Toronto, which in October of 1929 commenced a series of light musical programs featuring many fine singers, including a most promising young coloratura Marguerita Nuttall, Jimmy Shields, and others. George Metcalfe directed the advertising of the Nielson Company, and he demanded high standards. The orchestra of thirty-five was conducted by Geoffrey Waddington. The Nielson series, like many sponsored series on the networks, originated at CKNC, owned by the Canadian National Carbon Company on Davenport Road in Toronto. The management of the station, and the network-production unit, were under the direction of Ernest L. Bushnell who had been a partner with Charles Shearer in establishing what was the first radio commercial sales and production organization in Canada. Bushnell held the post of Director of Programs for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for twenty-five years; he is now President of CJOH-TV in Ottawa.

Both Shearer and Bushnell had been members of the Adanac Male Quartet which toured Canada and the United States. It broadcast over CNRT in March of 1925 and over KDKA in 1926. For some reason they did not collect their fees at KDKA in advance, as was invariably their rule. When they tried to collect later, they were told it was a sustaining program, and that talent was not paid for on sustaining programs. The artist had the advertising and the station had the program. There was no money in broadcasting on sustaining programs, so when they returned to Toronto they teamed up to form Broadcast Services Limited.

Their first client was the Maple Leaf Milling Company. Reginald Stewart conducted the twelve-piece orchestra; Ernest Seitz, the distinguished Canadian pianist and composer of "The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise," was their first artist. Seitz' father was the President of

Underwood Typewriter Limited, and this fact brought that company in as their second client. Their third sponsor was Toronto Wet Wash Laundry. This was the first Canadian program to use singing commercials; the lyrics were written by Shearer to well-known tunes in the spring of 1927. Their fourth client was Leland Trucks, for which they imported talent from New York and cleared up to \$250 on each concert. Things were looking up, but not for long. They signed Fred Emny, a noted English comic, satirist, and pianist, on a thirteen-week contract for Maple Leaf Company at \$50 a program. Emny treated commercials lightly, so lightly indeed that the very first program finished him. Though he had a thirteen-week contract, he tore it up rather than embarrass them. Fred Emny became one of England's leading comedians and starred with the great Jack Buchanan.

Contracts were very short then—thirteen weeks at the most—and soon they had plenty of free time on their hands. They offered dance programs, with a six-piece orchestra including announcer and continuity, for \$55 an hour, and \$40 for half an hour. An eight-piece dance orchestra was \$75 and \$50 respectively. A concert program with a popular male or mixed quartet was \$65 and \$45, and a choir of forty voices cost \$75 and \$50. Such were the rates taken from their first talent-rate card.

On February 17, 1927, CFRB began operations, and on March 8 there was a grand three-hour sponsored broadcast from the Uptown Theatre, with Jack Arthur conducting. The station had eight different managers up to June of that year, when the late Edward S. Rogers, the inventor of the "Rogers Batteryless" radio and founder of CFRB, hired both Bushnell and Shearer. They were paid \$45 a week, not each, but for the two of them, plus a 15 per cent commission on time sales. By the next spring they had worked up to \$45 a week each, but by May of 1928 they were both fired. Bushnell recalled that they had a budget of \$50 a week for non-sponsored programs. One day George Wade came in wearing a postman's cap and told them all about his very popular "Corn Huskers" barn-dance group. When asked the price, he said \$7.50 for each of his three men and \$9.00 for himself. Finally they pared him down to \$20 for the four men for one hour.

OPENING UP DAYTIME RADIO

About this time, CKNC in Toronto had a weekly radio program for Wrigley's broadcast from Casa Loma. The manager of the station asked Bushnell to audition for it. He was hired at \$125 a month to both sing and announce. At the end of the third week, he contracted laryngitis and in the end was fired for pronouncing "gigolo" as "gig-o-lo." Subsequently he became manager of CKNC and produced network programs for Wrigley's, Buckingham Cigarettes, and other sponsors. One day a big pleasant fellow, whom no one suspected of being a salesman, arrived at the studios and asked for a job. He had driven all the way from Texas. But there was no job. He asked, "All right, what is the toughest prospect on your list?" Bushnell replied, "Shirriff's, the marmalade people, but you can't sell them." Armed with a rate card, Big Bill Campbell set out and within an hour inquired if the station could be opened at 8:00 A.M. on the following Monday morning instead of at 12:00 noon. He had sold Mr. Shirriff a recorded program. When the sales manager heard this, he blew his top. He would have no recorded program, nor any other radio program. He demanded that Bushnell send his salesman back at once so he could explain. Bill went down immediately and came away with a year's contract for a live show commencing at once at 8:00 A.M.

That daily broadcast, carried over a network of CNR circuits to stations in London, Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal, made radio history. It opened up morning time and put Shirriff's on the map, particularly in Quebec, where the company's products were hardly known before. "That Jar of Golden Sunshine—Shirriff's own Marmalade," as Campbell described it, soon decorated the shelves of grocery stores everywhere. The audience was phenomenal. The music, the songs, the banter, the good humour of it all appealed to both young and old. It ran for five years and there were no gimmicks. If radio history can boast any sounder and more successful commercial show, I have yet to hear of it. The impetus it gave Shirriff's carried the company a long way.

Bill Campbell was one of the most unusual and talented men ever to work with radio. His earnings were huge, but his hospitality knew no bounds. He kept his account in the King Street branch of the Bank of Nova Scotia where Donald Gordon, now President of the CNR, was manager. Mrs. Gordon was a competent script writer and wrote fifteen-minute dramas for radio; Bill and the Gordons were actors in these plays. One day Bill was \$800 overdrawn, and Gordon called

"Bush" to see if Bill had money coming in; his overdraft was paid. When Bill was flush, he would throw an enormous garden party at his place in Cooksville. Guests were numerous and refreshments were lavish. Ultimately he went to England. Though he was the least likely person one would expect to hear on the dignified BBC, he was an immediate success. His opening announcement began, "This is the BBC - Big Bill Campbell." He also became president of Equity, the British entertainment union, and then died at an early age of a heart attack.

In those days, Roy Thomson had yet to emerge on the radio scene. He had an agency for receiving sets at North Bay, but no Canadian programs could be heard there. In 1931, Bushnell sold him an old discarded CKNC 50-watt transmitter for \$500 on a three-month promissory note. When the transmitter arrived in North Bay, there were no tubes in it. He phoned "Bush," who said: "What the hell do you expect for \$500." Could he get the tubes on credit? He did, and \$160 was added to the note. But it was not long before he had a profitable station. He bought a new transmitter and then built stations at Kirkland Lake and Timmins. Thus began a career unparalleled in the annals of broadcasting and journalism. Later, when his stations were members of the Trans-Canada Network, I had many personal contacts with Roy Thomson. He was always very frank about his radio affairs, and more than once he revealed to me detailed statements of the earnings of all his stations.

In November of 1931, General Motors started its sponsorship of the National Hockey League's games from the new Maple Leaf Gardens, with the famous Foster Hewitt as the commentator. The games were first offered for sponsorship to the CNR. Though their potential was appreciated, the railway was in no position to take up the offer at that time. They were also offered to Bushnell at CKNC for sponsorship at \$500 a game. Bushnell bet Hewitt he would never receive that much for the radio rights. He did, and the bet was paid the night Hewitt opened his own station CKFH. When the five-year contract with General Motors expired in 1936, Imperial Oil continued with the series without interruption to this day. Foster Hewitt made his first hockey broadcast in March of 1923, at a game between the Kitchener and Parkdale Canoe Clubs at the old Mutual Street Arena. He was a reporter on *The Toronto Star*, which owned CFCB. The *Star* wanted the game broadcast and assigned the announcing to Hewitt after a couple of other reporters turned it down. The first Stanley Cup broadcast on a network was in March of 1924, between the Canadiens of Montreal

and the Ottawa Senators playing the final game at Ottawa. It was broadcast by the CNR, and the commentator was Gordon W. Olive.

BROADCASTING GRAIN PRICES

In Western Canada, commercial networks began with *daily* broadcasts of prices from the Winnipeg Grain Exchange. The man who played the most significant part in this was Dawson Richardson who, in 1922, was a member of the Exchange and the publisher of *The Grain Trade News*, then the unofficial organ of the Exchange. Up to 1922, the Northwest Grain Dealers' Association, an organization of owners and operators of some thirty-five hundred country grain-elevators in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, had sent a telegram at the close of each day's market to elevator agents, advising them how much to advance or reduce prices on various grades of grain to be paid to farmers. Occasionally a special wire went out during the session, when the market swing was three cents or more. Prices were confirmed daily by circular letters giving complete resumes, but this was expensive and slow.

The Exchange asked Richardson to investigate the possibilities of improving the service. His first step was devising a code by which they were able, in the great majority of cases, to keep the wordage down to a bare minimum. Branch offices were opened in Regina and Saskatoon to reduce the cost of wires and expedite the delivery of cards which succeeded the circular letters. His next step was to study methods at the Minneapolis and Chicago Exchanges. He found at both cities that board prices were being broadcast, and at Minneapolis some elevator companies were already using radio. He recommended that prices on the Winnipeg Exchange be broadcast, but the secretary of the Exchange did not favour the suggestion. Not to be thwarted, Richardson reached an arrangement with cky, which had recently opened in 1923¹ to

¹ The first radio-station licence in Manitoba was granted to *The Winnipeg Free Press* on April 1, 1922. On April 20, the same year, *The Winnipeg Tribune* also took out a licence. Four licences to private operators in Winnipeg were granted in that year. One year later, in March of 1923, the first *publicly owned commercial station in Canada* began when the Province of Manitoba obtained a licence for cky. It was operated by the Government Telephone System under John E. Lowry, an exceptionally able and astute administrator. He persuaded all the existing private licence-holders to forgo renewing their licences, and until 1928 the Province held a monopoly in broadcasting. In 1948, the CBC took over cky and renamed it cbw. In 1950, a new private station was licensed at Winnipeg using the old call letters cky.

broadcast a fifteen-minute report each day at the close of the market, in the name of *The Grain Trade News*, for thirty-five dollars a month. Shortly after, the *News* absorbed the well-known Sanford Evans Statistical Service as a department of Dawson Richardson Publications Limited, and Evans became its editor.

THE PRAIRIE CONTROVERSY

Meanwhile the tremendous drop in grain prices which followed World War I provoked vigorous agitation among farmers for changes in grain-marketing methods. Though a running battle had been fought for nearly twenty years between the organized farmers and the Exchange, the fight now took on an even more militant form with the organization of Wheat Pools, which built and controlled elevators, and even sought another selling agency. Competition between the Pools and the established elevator trade became intense, and ultimately war broke out between them. *The Grain Trade News* espoused the cause of the Exchange. Editorials by Sanford Evans were broadcast frequently during the market period over CKY, until the Pools retaliated with a broadcast in the very next time-period on the same station. This was controversy in earnest, and it rose to such a pitch that, according to Dawson Richardson, the Honourable John Bracken, Premier of Manitoba, who headed the first "Farmers' Government" in that province, ordered that the broadcasts by the Exchange must be dropped from the schedules of CKY. However, the station manager, John Lowry, took the precaution of asking the listeners of CKY if they wanted the Exchange quotations discontinued. Within a few days a drawer-full of letters and cards came in, only one of which wanted the Grain Exchange prices discontinued. Nevertheless the broadcasting of the controversial editorials ceased.

Richardson next went to Saskatoon, which was a Pool centre, and booked time on one of the two stations there for a fifteen-minute daily broadcast at \$100 a month. After two broadcasts, the owner, who ran an electrical shop, phoned in desperation to say that his wires had been cut and his business boycotted, so the contract though drawn up for a year was abandoned.

The Exchange then determined to build a station of its own and invited Richardson to undertake it. But he had difficulty obtaining a licence until a delegation from the Exchange called on the Deputy Minister of Marine and was allotted the 630-kc. channel that same

afternoon. Their station, CJGX, was opened at Yorkton on August 17, 1927. An arrangement was reached with the Manitoba Telephones for a line to Yorkton to carry the closing prices each day, but soon the telephone bill was thought too high. Richardson opened negotiations with the CPR for three hours daily on a yearly basis. A price of \$8,000 a year was confirmed by Montreal and, armed with this, Richardson again visited CKY. He announced to Lowry that, much as he regretted it, he feared they would have to part company. "If I offer the CPR \$5,000 for the three hours I want, I'll bet I can get it." Lowry fired back, "I'll give you the line for that." Richardson said, "Sold," and obtained a confirmation in writing, which satisfied the Grain Exchange and meant that the market prices could be broadcast twice daily, following the opening of the market and again after the close.

The next step was to link CKY and three Saskatoon stations with CJGX and CKY. In the fall of 1928, this network went into operation, and it has continued for many years. It gave instantaneous service to all elevators in the two provinces. The cards were discontinued, and the cost was reduced to approximately one-fourth of that under the old system. Shortly after this, Deb Murphy, owner of CFQC Saskatoon, inquired from Richardson why some sponsored network programs might not be secured for his station from Winnipeg. Making inquiries among western stations, Richardson found within a few days that he had in his hands the Winnipeg representation of several stations. Thus began his "Western Broadcasting Bureau."

When he had the time, Richardson solicited business, but it was slow going until one day a stock company at a Winnipeg theatre went broke. Four of the members, then on the rocks, were booked for three programs on CJGX for a total of \$150. They were a hit, and soon after a program director and a bright young saleslady were engaged. Richardson said, "I scoured the city for talent, and picked up Bert Pearl for a fifteen-minute program for Maytag Washers at five dollars." Though network commercials developed slowly, from CKY by January of 1931, "there were thirty-eight commercial network programs weekly, not including hockey, carried over the telephone facilities of the three provinces for a period of twenty-seven hours" (PCB 1936, pp. 444-57).

GRAIN PRICES IN ALBERTA

While this was happening in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, the need for disseminating grain prices to elevator operators and farmers in Alberta was no less intense than it was in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The first such broadcasts in Alberta began on CKLC at Red Deer on July 1, 1927, and following that, over its successor, the Foothills Network. In the spring of 1926, James Stewart, Chairman of the first Canada Wheat Board, bought control of the Alberta Pacific Grain Company from Spillers Company of England. An enterprising young man, Cecil Lamont, director of publicity for the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company and editor of *The Saskatchewan Co-operative News*, became its secretary. It was immediately decided to establish a radio station, primarily to broadcast grain prices. On investigating costs of standard equipment, they were quoted \$50,000, which was out of the question. Lamont, who ultimately became President of the North-West Line Elevators Association of Winnipeg, found he could buy the old equipment of CJCG of the *Winnipeg Free Press* for \$2,000. He paid W. W. Grant, who had radio experience in the Royal Canadian Navy and was little short of a wizard in coaxing maximum efficiency out of any radio equipment he touched, \$2,000 to rebuild the station. Subsequently he built CFCN Calgary, for which he originally held the licence, and CKUA of the University of Alberta in 1927. All these stations had good coverage.

Located at Red Deer, CKLC's reception was clear in almost every part of Alberta east of the mountains, including much of the Peace River area. The studios were located in both Edmonton and Calgary, with prices coming through the Calgary Exchange. It is doubtful that Alberta has since had a station with coverage equal to that of CKLC. In the financial crisis of the early 'thirties, the Alberta Pacific Grain Company suffered heavy losses, and when the CRBC began in 1933, Lamont sold CKLC to the Commission, which promptly closed it down in spite of its coverage. Its technical equipment did not measure up to Commission requirements.

In the meantime, the Foothills Network, connected by the lines of the Alberta Government Telephones, had been formed in Alberta. It was made up of stations in Lethbridge, Calgary, and CKUA, and it broadcast sports, debates, various events, and classical recordings supplied to CKUA by the Carnegie Foundation. CJCA in Edmonton soon replaced CKUA, and over this network in 1934 the North-West Line

Elevators Association sponsored the grain prices. Subsequently CFGP at Grande Prairie in the Peace River area was added.

The stations comprising the Foothills Network were operated by Taylor, Pearson, and Carson Limited, automotive and electrical dealers for Alberta. Later they took over the operation of CKCK, Regina, CHRC Winnipeg, and CKOC Hamilton. They found that by better organization of a group of stations, as well as intensive sales effort and the use of transcriptions, real money could be made. The late Harold Carson was among the first to realize the money-making possibilities inherent in good transcriptions, both for station programming and developing sponsors. In the meantime, Dawson Richardson's All-Canada Broadcasting System established itself in the transcription as well as the network business. The newness of Eastern Canada to both of them, and the keenness of competition, resulted in a merger under the name of All-Canada Radio Facilities Limited, which has been an important factor, particularly in the spot or selective-commercial field, ever since. Later, when the Trans-Canada Network got under way in 1938, All-Canada Radio Facilities sought the privilege of acting as commercial representatives for the CBC, but there were very obvious problems involved in this procedure, and it came to nothing.

NATIONAL COMMERCIAL NETWORKS DWINDLE

Despite the apparent activity of commercial networks outside of Toronto, Winnipeg, and Montreal, the total business conducted was very small, and most of it was during evening hours and weekends. The splurge of sponsored national programs late in 1929 and during 1930 and 1931 soon petered out. Distances were too great, population was too small,² industry was too undeveloped, and wire-line costs were too high. The transmission companies considered the volume of business too small to warrant making worthwhile concessions. And yet it was the lack of such concessions that retarded network expansion. They were also chary about making any worthwhile reductions in view of the active campaign for nationalization. They began

² Licensed receivers in Canada (about 20 per cent less than actual) at March, 1932, were less than 600,000. Over 55 per cent of all listeners could be reached through stations in Ontario and Quebec. If French-speaking listeners are excluded, the same stations could reach 64 per cent of all other listeners in the entire country (PCB 1932, p. 30).

to see on the horizon the prospect of a substantial bulk contract if nationalization came about and public subsidies became available. They had little or nothing to lose by waiting, for even the bitterest opponents of nationalization advocated vigorously the subsidization of wire-lines, claiming that if the government's transmission circuits were subsidized, little else was needed.

Up to 1933, network rates for sponsored programs were twenty-four cents per mile (one way) per hour, ten cents for the second hour, and eight cents for the third. Prior to December, 1930, the rate was thirty cents per mile hour. Since few if any sponsors could use more than one hour consecutively, the single-hour rate almost invariably prevailed. At these rates, substantial expansion was impossible.

The railways owning their own facilities—particularly the Canadian Pacific—could continue on a limited scale, but if others were to be induced to use the railways' circuits, a reconsideration of rates was essential. But a far more effective spur to reconsideration was the prospect of real competition from the telephone interests, hurrying to complete the Trans-Canada Telephone System. As a result, early in 1932, a committee of four from the telegraph and radio departments of the two railways was appointed. The committee was to consider both the problem of rates and the problem of closer co-ordination of the entire radio operations of both railways in view of the almost certain prospect of some form of centralized control of broadcasting.

The committee (of which I was privileged to be a member) recommended the continuance of broadcasting by both roads to protect their interests until the future of radio, then in the balance, was finally determined; the continued use of radio as part of general advertising and publicity; the co-ordination of the transmission facilities of both companies in order to assure greater flexibility of stand-by circuits, as well as to provide a set-up capable of competing with anything the telephone interests could provide; finally, the pooling of all broadcasting revenues. The last recommendation came about in October of 1933. The Committee also proposed that a Broadcasting Bureau should be formed to systematize on a better basis the distribution of available sustaining programs and to increase the number of national public-service features, to develop programs for sale to sponsors, and to make the studios of both, in Montreal and Toronto, available to sponsors and agencies at reasonable rates.

No immediate reduction in line rates was put into effect, but a great deal of effort was spent during March and April of 1932 establishing

rates for various time combinations: two hours on a national network for 12.75 cents per mile-hour; three hours for 10.5 cents; four hours, 9.9 cents. A sixteen-hour continuous daily service was set at \$100 per basic railway mile, plus \$23 per mile for control circuits, plus a station connection charge of \$4,000 per station annually. By comparison, the basic rate in the United States was \$84 per mile. Both railways were preparing for the inevitable struggle for business revenue that they saw coming.

NATIONAL TELEPHONE CIRCUITS ESTABLISHED

Meanwhile, telephone interests from coast to coast, led by Bell, were pushing ahead with all possible speed the completion and co-ordination of the Trans-Canada Telephone System, which would make available additional broadcasting circuits. The first direct-voice contact over telephone circuits in Canada, between Montreal and Winnipeg, did not take place until July 4, 1931. Even then, many of the wires necessary for even this were through Northern Ontario and dependent on CPR pole-lines. Before July, 1931, telephone calls from Eastern Canada had to pass under the Detroit River and follow the lines of the Michigan and Illinois Bell Telephone Companies to Chicago, then to Winnipeg. If the call was for Calgary, it continued in the United States to Helena, Montana, where it was diverted; if to Vancouver, it continued from Detroit to Seattle in the United States before entering Canada. The Eastern link, between Montreal and Halifax, had been completed earlier in January of 1929.

Three years later, a co-ordinated service of all the main telephone systems, privately and publicly owned, was established, thereby furnishing a trans-Canada service entirely within Canadian territory. Shortly thereafter, these circuits became available for national programs. Broadcasting had already been going on for several years over regional telephone networks; in Eastern Canada mainly over Bell circuits, and in the west over the three provincial telephone-line transmission systems now linked together. Thus the stage was set for the battle between railway and telephone interests, when the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission appeared on the scene at the end of 1932—a struggle that has not abated to this day.

CHAPTER 8

CNR FACES DARKENING DAYS

The radio operations of the CNR came under the scrutiny of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Railways in June of 1931. This was the first such committee after the elections of the year before. In the depressed economy and intense political bias of the time, every last cent of expenditure by the railway was closely screened. Radio was one of the activities that could probably be sacrificed, irrespective of how valuable it had become, for its advantages were intangible, beyond the range of accountants. After two days of discussion, the Railway Committee—most of whom were anything but friendly to the road and its management—heard only commendation of railroad broadcasting activities. A. B. Hanson, Minister of Trade and Commerce, and one of the Canadian National Railways' severest critics, said: "Sir Henry, in my humble opinion the use of radio is perfectly legitimate, that is, the use you make of it." Later, following a discussion of programs, he added: "Your programs are good," an opinion that found not a single dissenting voice.

Discussion turned to capital expenditures. When it was revealed that the total cost on the three stations, studios, and train equipment for over eight years was only \$170,000, the statement was received with such incredulity as to be raised again the following day, when it was confirmed. A relentless pursuit of talent costs revealed nothing to which exception could be taken.

The Committee's single criticism was with respect to train operations, and this was mainly implied. Sir Henry was asked if the CPR had radio on its trains, and he replied that it had not. He added that, under the

existing conditions and the need for economy, he was marking time. There, for the time being, the discussion on radio ended.

During the ten years from 1923 to 1933 the total expenditures of the Canadian National Railways on radio were \$2,461,323. Of this total, 57 per cent was for broadcasting and 43 per cent for train operations. During the three years of most intense activity and greatest expenditure on radio, *i.e.*, during 1929, 1930, and 1931, radio (broadcasting and train operation combined) accounted for 17.75 per cent of all advertising and publicity expenditures of the company. More than twenty years later (1954) the Dominion Bureau of Statistics reported that, during the years 1948 to 1953 inclusive, radio (television was still virtually nil) averaged over 17 per cent of the commissionable billings of advertising agencies in Canada. Sir Henry Thornton was merely anticipating by a quarter century a condition that later became established practice.

When the Railway Committee next met in April of 1932, the CNR was scrutinized by two dogged and persistent members acting as interrogators. Dr. Peter McGibbon asked for a list of all amounts paid to talent in 1930 and 1931. The Chairman observed: "Now, to my surprise, the list for 1931 covered some twelve hundred names and it is available. The list for 1930 is still larger. It would cost a good deal of money and a great deal of time to prepare it, and I was wondering if you would be satisfied with the list for 1931, as presented." But the demand for every detail of both years was pressed. Though nothing was found that opened the way to any direct criticism of the company's broadcasting activities, another purpose and a sinister one had been served—that of starting rumours of expenditures that at the time seemed large to many people.

This calculated disparagement of the railway and its management was systematically and relentlessly pursued by that Committee. Though it was largely ineffective as far as radio was concerned, certain other operations of the road were less fortunate, and a highly prejudiced political press repeatedly twisted suggestion and rumour into the most violently distorted headlines and stories.

Following the retirement of Vice-President Robb on June 30, 1931, the CNR Radio Department was merged with the Publicity Department, a move basically sound and actually overdue. Salaries throughout the company had already been cut 10 per cent as an economy move. Now orders went out for drastic cuts in staff. In Publicity, the axe fell first, and mainly on the radio side. Including train operators, the staff which

had totalled 105 by January of 1931 was cut to seventy-five in June, to sixty in November, and to thirty-three in December. To the great satisfaction of many Conservative politicians, as well as to the Canadian Pacific, an order went out on November 5 that radio reception on CNR trains would be discontinued from that day on as a further move in the rigid economy campaign being carried on throughout the system.

CNR BRIDGES A GAP

After March of 1932, it was difficult to do more than mark time. The radio budget for 1931, reduced by 25 per cent of that for 1930, was cut for 1932 to one-third of that for 1931. The staff was further reduced from thirty-three to twenty-two, who had to man three stations, run the Montreal studios, and operate the network—barely more than a maintenance crew. It meant dispensing with the services of some brilliant and talented people whose contributions to Canadian broadcasting had been inestimable. At no time more than a skeleton for the demands made upon it, the Department was squeezed still further. CNR programming always sought to symbolize the high standard of service set for the railway. Though it might be inexpensive, it could never be cheap. In some respects, little or nothing would have been lost had CNR's radio been abandoned then, for it had been almost reduced to ineptitude, in so far as creative work was concerned.

There is little doubt that it would have suffered extinction in 1931, along with train radio, had not past policy and performance lifted much of CNR broadcasting far above the level of mere company promotion. Long before 1932, it had become supreme in Canadian radio. "It did for Canada what she was too apathetic to do for herself," wrote Darcy Marsh in his book *The Tragedy of Henry Thornton*. Its programming had become synonymous with national service, and it was needed to answer various national demands until government policy, perilously in the balance all through 1931, had been finally decided. It was still the only organization with the facilities, the experience, and enough national perspective to answer the demands that had been made upon it and would be made again. That this was recognized was clearly illustrated by a request from the British Broadcasting Corporation in November of 1931 that the CNR assume the responsibility for Canadian participation in the Inter-Empire Broadcast proposed for that year, a project frustrated at the last moment by pressure from interested

parties. When that broadcast had to be cancelled it was to the CNR that the BBC renewed its request in September of 1932.

But the shift from a mere department of the Railway to broader national purposes was perhaps even better illustrated by public-service broadcasting which was essentially national in character in November of 1931. On Armistice Day, the CNR broadcast nationally three memorial services: in the morning, the Remembrance Day ceremonies before the Cenotaph in Ottawa; in the afternoon, the ceremonies from Albert Hall in London; and in the evening three talks by the Right Honourable Sir Robert Borden, the Honourable Ernest Lapointe, and General Sir Arthur Currie, under the auspices of the League of Nations Society. It was the first broadcast ever made by Sir Robert. Indeed, for several years the CNR presented over the national network many distinguished personalities, more than a few of them world famous.

During the same month, a National Service Loan was floated. I was asked to be the radio representative on the National Publicity Committee appointed to promote the loan. I proposed that the nine provincial premiers should be asked to endorse the loan in a two-and-one-half minute chat from each of their respective capitals. Many objections were raised but finally, after some urging, a wire was sent to each premier with details, and all accepted. The CNR made the arrangements, including the nine pick-ups, and the Canadian Pacific co-operated in the distribution to the forty-two stations that carried the broadcast, the largest number used up to 1931. It was carried off without a hitch, an accomplishment for the time, and was considered a significant demonstration of national unity.

Two other circumstances of great significance helped to extend the life and determine the fate of the CNR's broadcasting service. The first was the Imperial Economic Conference for which preparations were in full swing early in 1932. Overshadowing everything else on the political horizon, the Conference was planned to fulfil the dreams of the Prime Minister, who regarded it as nothing short of the reinforcing cement of the British Empire. It was imperative that the ceremonies associated with the Conference should be broadcast far and wide, and the responsibility was placed on the shoulders of the CNR.

The second and vastly more important circumstance was the nationalization of broadcasting. By September of 1929, the Aird Commission had recommended the nationalization of all stations, networks, and programming. As a result, throughout 1930 and particularly during 1931, agitation for and against blazed across Canada. It reached a climax in the early months of 1932, when a Parliamentary Committee

was named to hear evidence and make specific recommendations. Experience clearly demonstrated that nothing short of a very substantial measure of nationalization could ever provide Canada with an adequate national service. If this could be brought about without delay, what remained of the CNR organization, stations, and staff might become the nucleus of the nationalized network. This was our hope, and unsatisfactory broadcasting conditions throughout Canada definitely favoured it.

CHAOTIC RADIO CONDITIONS

What were these conditions? They were as unsettled as the national economy following the 1929 crash. Contributing to a feeling of frustration were: confusion concerning the basic purposes of broadcasting; inadequate revenue to sustain even the few small stations then in existence; increasing dominance by neighbouring American stations; the lack of any clear governmental policy; and a bitter religious controversy. The international radio-channel situation in the 'twenties could scarcely have been more unsatisfactory.

As early as 1919, the Canadian Government had established control of the licensing of both radio stations and receiving sets, but conditions in the United States were still chaotic. In 1921, when commercial broadcasting began, only six clear channels were available to Canadian stations. One year later, the United States appropriated every channel, including those being used by Canada, although in 1924 the American government agreed to vacate six clear channels and restrict the power of a few others. They maintained that the allocation of channels should be on the basis of population irrespective of geography. In 1925, Canada complained that six channels were inadequate, but at that time American efforts to bring about effective controlling legislation broke down, and American operators again appropriated all the channels. The resulting chaos led Canada, in 1926, to notify its neighbour that a treaty should be concluded that would be respected by both countries. In 1927, a delegation was appointed to negotiate such a treaty. Canada insisted on a minimum of twelve clear channels, but the United States demanded seventy-seven exclusive channels leaving only six to Canada. Negotiations were broken off, both countries asserting their rights to any and all channels. Neither country paid any attention to the needs of either Mexico or Cuba.

On June 30, 1927, which was Canada's Jubilee year, three stations

in Calgary shared time, all using the same channel. A similar situation existed in Vancouver, Edmonton, Regina, and Montreal. Four stations in Toronto shared 840 kc., while two others used 1,030 kc. Two in Saskatoon shared 910 kc. To have three or four different stations in the same city using the same channel at different times during the same week did not make for operational economy, effective promotion, or uniform programming. Clearly it was a situation that could not continue. Moreover, there was a real battle going on, half under cover, as to which stations would permanently occupy these channels. Most Canadian stations had 500 watts of power or less; only two exceeded 500 watts; one had 1,800 watts.

At the same time, both American high-power stations, many of them 50 kilowatts, and the American networks began to dominate the scene. The National Broadcasting Company was formed on November 15, 1926, and the Columbia Broadcasting System on September 18, 1927. By 1932, of forty cleared channels available in the United States for high power, twenty-seven were occupied by stations on the NBC network. Indeed, there had already developed in the United States a corporate consolidation of radio manufacturing, transmission, and broadcasting interests, mostly under or allied with the Radio Corporation of America. The chief agencies of public-service programming, entertainment, communication, and manufacturing involving radio were rapidly passing into the hands of a very small but very powerful group.

Meantime, the total power of Canadian stations, even up to 1932, totalled less than one 50-kw. station, as against the 680,000 watts of American stations, which could be heard clearly in many parts of Canada. More than a third of the very limited power of all Canadian stations was centred in Toronto and Montreal, leaving great isolated areas served only or mainly from the United States. And the shadow cast by the United States was not lessened by the affiliation, by 1932, of four leading Canadian stations as part-time outlets of American networks, two in Toronto and two in Montreal. Almost forty per cent of the total time of the three English-language stations so affiliated was filled with imported programs. One Toronto station exceeded 50 per cent. Though many of these programs were excellent, their increasing dominance bolstered the conviction that Canada was fast becoming a mere satellite of American broadcasting.

American stations were obliged to be on the air twelve hours a day, and the air lanes of that country were congested. Canadian stations,

on the other hand, were on the air little more than half that time. Between December 1, 1931, and January 31, 1932, the earliest dates for which dependable information is available, fifty-six private commercial Canadian stations averaged 6.15 hours per day. Many were on the air much less. Of the 6.15 hours, 1.45 hours were sponsored, 1.15 hours were non-commercial live talent, and 3.15 hours were phonograph records (PCB 1932, pp. 35-9).

How so many Canadian stations managed to stay on the air during the depression is still a mystery. Fourteen stations out of forty-eight at the end of 1931 somehow managed to subsist on not more than half-an-hour of sponsored programs daily, while twenty-four others did not exceed one-and-one-quarter hours of sponsored time. They were literally starving. Only a few, such as those owned by newspapers, were reasonably well subsidized.

The fact is that in North America most of the radio stations were developed by men who had a "bug" on electronics. Few bothered or were able to assess the potential of radio. For many, it was more or less a happy-go-lucky experience, financed largely by selling time to itinerant "Bible thumpers" and patent-medicine dealers who employed everything from fortune tellers to fake Indian medicine men to dispense their wares. Then someone conceived the idea of broadcasting local sports and church services. The amateur show came into being, then a deluge of adenoidal singers with guitars, the hillbilly band, the request program, with the deluge of mail from people wanting to hear their names read over the air. Broadcasting on private stations just grew up.

Not only were radio stations losing money, but artists were in a bad way. It was more than just a matter of not encouraging artistic expression, it was the artist's livelihood that was at stake. An analysis of the schedules of the four leading stations in Toronto and Montreal, which imported American programs, shows that during the week of February 21-7, 1932, local commercials accounted for 24 per cent of their broadcast time, and that station-sustained programs, for which talent was paid, constituted 3.38 per cent. On Sundays, live talent was used on an average of thirty-five minutes for each station (PCB 1932, p. 549). Local commercial programs used some talent, but mainly the kind that required the very least expenditure on staff outside the station. This talent was either amateur, or it consisted of artists who worked without remuneration or for minimum fees. The best artists were often reluctant to be heard under local auspices. Such poor support of local talent was not always of the station's own choosing. But it

demonstrated completely that advertising as a permanent basis for Canadian broadcasting was utterly inadequate.

It may seem strange today to note the fact that in the early 'thirties there was a rapidly mounting sensitivity to commercials. There were even agitations against them, though in length and number commercials were shorter and much less frequent than those cluttering the air-waves today. The best evidence for this is to be found in a wire, dated February 11, 1931, to the Minister of Marine:

At the annual meeting of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters held in Toronto today, at which all the leading stations were represented, steps were taken to debar all advertising on Sunday from Canadian programs except mention of the sponsor, his address, and nature of business and product. Also to limit on all weekly programs after 7:00 P.M. the amount of advertising so as not to exceed 5 per cent of the time on the air of any one program. Further to eliminate entirely after 7:00 P.M. individual [spot] commercial announcements.

The Canadian Association of Broadcasters was tempering its actions to the rising storm demanding nationalization of broadcasting.

In the meantime, commercial programs on the national network after 1930 also declined rapidly. Population density was far too low, line costs far too high. By 1932, these costs, coupled with a depressed economy, reduced network commercials to a total of less than two hours weekly, and much of this was put on by the railways, although even this was petering out. National network broadcasting had ground almost to a halt.

RELIGIOUS AGITATION SPARKS SHOWDOWN

But the factor that unwittingly sparked action—and ultimately turned out to be the decisive one—was religious controversy. This flared across Canada by radio during late 1927 and early 1928, and reached the House of Commons where it was debated at length. This controversy was not the first such disturbance. Three years earlier, the Orange Order had asked CNRO to broadcast the proceedings of its banquet held in Ottawa. Unfortunately, as the speeches proceeded, religious prejudice supplanted tolerance, with the result that Sir Henry Thornton promptly issued instructions “that under no circumstances will any

religious organization be allowed to use our broadcasting for any purpose whatsoever. When I say 'religious,' I mean either religious or indirectly connected with religious bodies. It is a sad commentary on the state of Christianity that we have to debar Christians from our radio to keep them from fighting with each other."

The first broadcasting licence granted to a religious organization was to Jarvis Street Baptist Church in Toronto on June 23, 1924. Other churches followed quickly. The International Bible Students, also known as the Rutherfordites, sometimes as the Russellites, and later as Jehovah's Witnesses, tried as early as 1922 to secure a licence at Toronto. Though the application received serious consideration, it was not granted; the Department of Marine up to then had no policy with respect to religious broadcasts. A similar application at Saskatoon was rejected, until the local radio inspector of the Department pointed out the paucity of churches and the great distances in the west as compared with the east. Westerners had even greater need for radio to satisfy their spiritual needs. The Department saw the point and granted the licence. In quick succession, licences—all phantoms—were granted to the International Bible Students at Edmonton and Vancouver. In Toronto, a group of International Bible Students—not the Association itself—secured a licence to build a commercial station CJYC in nearby Scarborough at a reported cost of \$50,000. Shortly after, the Department granted phantom licence CKCX to the Bible Students' Association, which authorized them to use the physical plant of their incorporated associates.

This rare opportunity to spread the Gospel was apparently considered a fulfilment of prophecy. Attacks were launched on other sects and denominations, and complaints accumulated in the Department of Marine. The Minister, the Honourable P. J. A. Cardin, said:

The matter being broadcast is generally described as having become intolerable and the propaganda carried on under the name of the Bible talks is said to be unpatriotic and abusive to all our churches. Evidence would appear to show that the tone of the preaching seems to be that all organized churches are corrupt and in alliance with unrighteous forces, that the entire system of society is wrong, and that all governments are to be condemned. The Department is persuaded that in the general public interest the licences of the Bible Students should not be renewed.

Cardin's statement included this important announcement: "The Government is giving consideration to the question of whether or not it would be generally advantageous to adopt a policy of national broadcasting along the lines adopted in this respect by the British government."

Hundreds of letters, petitions, and resolutions were received by the Department from individuals and organizations in Toronto, Saskatoon, Edmonton, and Vancouver, all objecting to the renewal of licences to any and all International Bible Students' stations. The government finally decided not to renew these licences after March 31, 1928. Since licences were only granted from year to year, the Minister maintained that this was not a cancellation but merely a non-renewal. The case that smacked most of unfairness was that of the physical plant at Scarborough, in which a large sum of money had been invested—not by the Association as such, but by individuals—which was primarily engaged in commercial business. Its owners considered that the granting of a phantom licence to CKCX by the Department, permitting the Bible Students' Association to broadcast religious lectures over that station, met the requirements. Nevertheless, neither licence was renewed.

Protest meetings were formed all across Canada, and petitions were circulated demanding the renewal of the licences. The question asked on most of these petitions was: "Are you in favour of freedom of speech on the air?" Since no one was against freedom of speech, a master petition, said to total some 458,000 signatures, was gathered and presented to the government. In the House of Commons a sustained debate followed, in which charges of unfairness were levelled against the government, based mainly on the assumption that, in the absence of regulations to govern religious broadcasts, the Bible Students were within their rights. Particular objection was taken to the cancellation of the CJYC licence. A founder of the CCF, J. S. Woodsworth, in a pointed speech, included this comment:

Now I am not a member of the Bible Students' Association. It does seem to me that a great deal of their theology is positively grotesque. But I should like to ask, when did we appoint a Minister of this Government as censor of religious opinion? All down through history religious bodies have criticized other religious bodies. I think the great Roman Catholic Church has sometimes spoken very harshly concerning heretics; I think the Anglican Church in its Athanasian Creed utters some very strong

things against those who do not believe in that creed; and I have heard evangelists telling the people generally where they would go unless they believed the doctrines then being preached to them. It is stated that the Bible Students condemn other religious bodies. Why should we penalize the Bible Students simply because they follow the footsteps of other religious bodies? If the Bible Students are to be put out of business because they condemn alike Catholics and Protestants, I do not see why the [Orange] *Sentinel* and the *Catholic Register* should not be suppressed. I would urge that since this matter has come so prominently before the public it is high time that we adopt what the Minister himself has suggested to the House, that is, some scheme whereby the government itself should own and operate broadcasting stations in this country. The present difficulty would not be without value if it would lead to public ownership and control of this new industry.

One member of the House claimed that twenty thousand letters of protest had been sent to the Department. This was denied by the Minister, who stated that the total of such letters received was 5,005, of which 4,506 were from citizens of the United States. An examination of the 458,000 signatures on the petitions demonstrated that only 82,468 were owners of radio sets. Many who had signed in the name of "freedom" wrote later to say they were sorry they had.

This turmoil, which touched the religious sensibilities of so many, combined with the growing feeling of the inferiority and frustration of Canadian radio, made it absolutely clear that something must be done. Canadian radio channels demanded conservation; isolated areas demanded service; and above all, if radio was ever to become the instrument of national unity, which the Jubilee broadcast had shown it might become, the policy of drift could continue no longer. It was with this background that the government, on December 6, 1928, appointed the first Royal Commission, later known as the Aird Commission, "to enquire into the broadcasting situation in the Dominion of Canada and to make recommendations to the government as to the future administration, management, control, and financing thereof."

PART II)))))))))))))))))))))))) NATIONAL BROADCASTING

CHAPTER 9

THE AIRD COMMISSION

The Royal Commission on Broadcasting was appointed on December 6, 1928. It consisted of three men: the Chairman, Sir John Aird, President of the Canadian Bank of Commerce; Dr. Augustin Frigon, Director-General of Technical Education for the Province of Quebec, Chairman of the Electrical Commission of the City of Montreal, and a member of the National Research Council; and Charles Bowman, Editor of *The Ottawa Citizen*. Donald Manson of the Department of Marine was named Secretary, and no better choice for this position could have been found. Associated with the great Guglielmo Marconi in the very first transatlantic messages, and with the first Marconi station at Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, Manson had been Chief Radio Inspector of the Department for years. He had a thorough knowledge of governmental regulations and conditions in the whole field of broadcasting.

After visiting New York, London, Berlin, Paris, Lille, The Hague, Brussels, Geneva, Dublin, and Belfast, the Aird Commission reported: "Everywhere in Europe we found inquiries being conducted under government auspices for the purpose of organizing broadcasting on a nation-wide basis in the public interest."

When the Commission was ready to commence its hearings in Canada, Sir Henry Thornton placed at its disposal a private railway car to facilitate its operations with greater comfort and dispatch. Twenty-five Canadian cities were visited, including all nine provincial capitals. Verbal submissions were made by 164 persons; in addition, 124 written statements were presented. Conferences were held with

authorities of all the provinces, and with many delegations and representative bodies, the great majority of which favoured the placing of broadcasting on a public-service basis.

Though there was considerable diversity of opinion, evidence from place to place was repetitious. The Commission was able to report, "There was unanimity on one fundamental question—Canadian radio listeners want Canadian broadcasting." Private enterprise was commended for providing entertainment with no direct return of revenue; but it was contended that this lack of revenue unloaded more and more advertising on the listener, and crowded the private stations into urban centres, with consequent duplication of service, while many rural areas with large populations remained inadequately served.

The Commission was impressed with broadcasting as a potential instrument of education—education in the broad sense. Radio could become a great force in fostering a national consciousness and unity. The Report noted that a large and increasing proportion of programming originated outside Canada, and that this tended to mould the minds of the young in ideals and opinions not specifically Canadian. The Commission recommended that broadcasting be placed on a public-service basis, and that all stations should be owned and operated by one national company. The company should be vested with all the powers of private enterprise, while its status and duties should correspond to those of a public utility. Each provincial authority would have full control of the programs broadcast by stations within each province. There would be a provincial advisory committee. (The question of federal-provincial jurisdiction had still to be decided. Strong representations had been made by some provinces on this contentious subject.)

The board of the company should consist of twelve directors, one from each province, three representing the Dominion. High-power stations should be erected to give clear reception over the entire settled area of Canada. The nucleus of the system should be seven 50-kw. stations, with supplementary stations in local areas as indicated by necessity and experience. All facilities should be constructed to permit network broadcasting, national and regional. Pending the inauguration of the new system, the most suitable stations in the existing arrangement would be continued. The remainder would be closed down, subject to fair compensation. The primary purpose should be the production of programs of high standards from Canadian sources, though programs of similar calibre from other sources would also be welcomed. Specified times would be made available for educational work. There would be regulations to prevent attacks by one religious sect on other religious

sects. Broadcasting of a political nature would be carefully regulated under arrangements mutually agreed upon by all the political parties. Two further points were emphasized by the Commission.

It is hoped that the system will eventually cover effectively and consistently that vast northern territory which at present has comparatively few inhabitants but which may come to be as densely populated as some European countries in the same latitude. Also, in our survey the *inadequacy of wave-lengths* at present available for broadcasting in this country, namely six "exclusive" and eleven "shared" channels, has been persistently pointed out to us. Many have expressed the feeling, with which we fully concur, that Canada's insistence upon a more equitable division of the broadcast band with the United States should not be relinquished.

All expenditures necessary for the operation and maintenance of the system would be met by revenues from three sources: licence fees; rental of time on stations for sponsored programs carrying indirect advertising; and subsidy from the national government. It was estimated that commercial revenue from network programs at the beginning would total \$700,000—approximately one-quarter of the anticipated total revenues of the company. It was curious how many interested parties (and more particularly publications) misread the part of the report that dealt with advertising. They took the proposed scheme as the death knell of radio advertising. There was nothing whatsoever in the report to warrant this assumption, rather the opposite. The suggestion that only indirect advertising should be accepted no doubt buttressed this hope. But to confine the source of advertising revenue solely to indirect advertising was simply not practicable.

FEDERAL OR PROVINCIAL CONTROL

The Aird Report became one of the most controversial and misquoted reports in Canadian history. Some of its recommendations were impracticable, others were interpreted too factually. Others, such as the seven 50-kw. stations, were adhered to with a fidelity that bordered on stubbornness, and resulted in serious inadequacies in CBC coverage to this day.

When Parliament met in February 1930, the Aird report was referred

to a Committee chaired by J. L. Ilsley. But preoccupation with such pressing problems as unemployment and the tariff precluded action. An election was not far off and Mackenzie King was not bent on creating more controversial issues at that moment. When the election was called for July 28, 1930, it was announced that the Committee would not meet, since the matter could not be dealt with during that session.

Moreover, the issue of provincial versus federal control over radio had begun seriously to raise its head. Premier Taschereau of Quebec saw this as one means of furthering his differences with Ottawa, for a major battle was shaping up between the two governments over the development of St. Lawrence power. Program control and its relation to education had made the Aird Commission step so very warily as to recommend that "provincial authorities should have full control over the programs of the stations in their respective areas." On January 18, 1931, supported by Ontario, New Brunswick, and Manitoba, Quebec brought the question of jurisdiction before the Supreme Court. The decision was that the regulation and control of radio communication rested with the Parliament of Canada, but this decision was appealed to the Privy Council which, on February 9, 1932, said that it "had no hesitation in holding that the judgment of the majority of the Supreme Court was right, and would humbly advise His Majesty that the appeal should be dismissed." The arguments of the Attorney General of Canada before the Privy Council were seconded by the Radio League, represented by Brooke Claxton, one of the ablest and strongest of its supporters, who subsequently became Minister of National Defence.

On March 2, 1932, with this matter finally decided, Prime Minister R. B. Bennett moved for the appointment of a Committee of the House to deal with the situation. On this occasion, he said:

It must be agreed that the present system of broadcasting is unsatisfactory. Canadians have the right to a system of broadcasting from Canadian sources equal in all respects to that of any other country. The enormous benefits of an adequate scheme of radio broadcasting controlled and operated by Canadians are abundantly plain. Properly employed radio can be a most effective instrument in nation-building, with an educational value difficult to estimate.

The main terms of reference of the Parliamentary Committee were: first, to consider the report of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting dated September 11, 1929; second, to advise and recommend a complete technical scheme of radio broadcasting for Canada, so designed to ensure from Canadian sources as complete and satisfactory a service as the present development of radio will permit; and third, to investigate and report on the most satisfactory agency for carrying out such a scheme.

The Committee was outstanding. Indeed, in my opinion it was unsurpassed in ability and earnestness by any subsequent committee. It was chaired by the Honourable Dr. R. D. Morand of Windsor and all three Aird Commissioners appeared before it.

Dr. Augustin Frigon of the Aird Commission was a greatly underestimated man; he was remarkably well-informed, fearless, a bit stolid, but extremely resourceful in putting his case forward and completely sincere. He had a good sense of humour, when the occasion required, and inexhaustible patience. For fourteen years I served under him and helped prepare material for many Parliamentary Committees, and I can attest how thorough he was. When he was asked to divulge information that he felt was improper to reveal, and might only be misused, he could drive the most brilliant legal minds in the opposition to complete frustration without the slightest change in his inscrutable countenance. Nationalized broadcasting never had a more devoted, staunch, and loyal advocate. Nor was the basic issue put more succinctly than in these brief excerpts from Frigon's testimony:

If you ask me with what system you would get the best out of radio, I will tell you that it must be public service, because you cannot mix up the interests of the man who wants to make money out of the equipment and the man who wants to render service to his country. You cannot blame the broadcasters for doing as they do. It is their business, and they are quite right in what they are doing. But that is not the question. The question is, should you use that medium for better purposes in the interests of the country at large? If you decide that you should, after having studied what can be done with radio, then you cannot leave it in the hands of profit-making organizations. That is the fundamental of the whole case—whether broadcasting is a business for profit-making or an instrument to be used for the benefit of the public at large. . . . We did not recommend state or government ownership of radio

broadcasting—we came to this conclusion, that if you want to accept the point of view of broadcasting in the interests of the nation, it cannot be left to private enterprise. We have tried to devise something which will not be run for the purpose of making money and, on the other hand, will not be a department of the Federal Government. (PCB 1932, pp. 67-97.)

Mr. Charles Bowman endorsed all Dr. Frigon's remarks, and added:

I would say that we have had enough experience in Canada of what happens when you have duplication of competitive building. We have had it with railways, and, at the present moment, we have a transportation commission going around trying to eliminate this waste of duplication. It could be just as extravagant to build duplicate [private] stations as it would be to duplicate telephone stations or duplicate waterworks.

Bowman put on record a statement made by Arthur Meighen before the National Council of Education in Vancouver in 1929. With respect to broadcasting, he quoted Meighen as saying:

If left to private enterprise, like the magazines and the moving pictures, it is bound to cater to the patronage that will reflect in dividends for the shareholders. That is sound commercially but it will never achieve the best educational ends. Nobody who is the father of a family like myself will disagree with the statement that the educational features of radio are open to vast improvement. The amount of fodder that is the antithesis of intellectual that comes over the radio is appalling while the selection of material for broadcasting remains in commercial hands. (PCB 1932, p. 66.)

Mr. Bowman contended that there was no desire to eliminate private enterprise in programming but rather the desire to encourage it. "We would still retain private enterprise and diversity in program-building. We would not eliminate that." And he added:

When we think of the development that is coming with television, let us imagine the day when we will have television, or a television service, as well as a broadcasting service in this country, when our children will be able to walk into school, say, in Yorkton, and see

a liner coming into Halifax, or a liner sailing from Vancouver, hear the whistle blow, see the ropes cast off; or, on the other hand, be able to see the factories in the East manufacturing farm implements, or be able to make a trip through the large motor plants helping to bring Canada closer together. That is what we should keep in mind. (PCB 1932, p. 6.)

Sir John Aird said before the Committee:

However one might feel toward private enterprise in the operation of broadcasting stations—and I am sure, Mr. Chairman, my own views of the benefits of private enterprise are sufficiently well known—one could not close one's eyes to the apparent impossibility of Canadian broadcasting being adequately financed by revenue from private sources such as radio advertising—I have nowhere seen any statement of estimated revenue from private Canadian sources that would warrant the belief that the operation of broadcasting stations can be left in private hands. . . . Under private ownership the enjoyment of an exclusive wave-length is a special privilege. It would surely be a very special privilege to be subsidized from the Dominion Treasury as well as to be granted a wave-length monopoly. It would be a serious error to burden radio broadcasting in Canada with subsidies, whether for land lines or any other form of broadcasting equipment, under private ownership.

A Committee member not keen on public ownership, wondering where there was capital to start the project, inquired whether Sir John would regard the future of broadcasting in Canada as such a good investment that he would be willing, as a banker, to advance the initial capital. Sir John's reply was: "If you establish national broadcasting, I, as a banker, would lend you the initial capital. And I would bank on the revenue from the operation to repay me within a reasonable time—and I would not require a government guarantee either."

The capital cost of establishing the seven high-power units with corollary facilities was estimated at approximately \$3,225,000, and the annual cost of operation at \$2,500,000. Of this roughly \$1,000,000 (or about 45 per cent) would be devoted to programming, and 55 per cent to operating costs. The value of stations to be taken over was estimated by the Department at \$988,000, exclusive of goodwill. This

was approximately half the estimated cost of replacing with new equipment all the radio facilities that existed at the time in the country.

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS

At this point it is necessary to return in time three years to 1926, to the birth of an organization that was to become one of the most powerful and influential factors on the Canadian broadcasting scene, the Canadian Association of Broadcasters. The CAB was a trade association and ultimately the protagonist of the organized private radio and television operators across Canada. The CNR acted as midwife at the birth of CAB. From its beginning, the main ingredient of radio programming was music. At first radio stations throughout North America used what music they needed, wherever or however they could obtain it. Few questions were asked with respect to ownership of rights or payment of royalties. Some felt—or said they felt—that the announcement of the name of a selection or a recording, and sometimes the mention of where it could be obtained, was adequate compensation to the author or composer. Others brazenly pretended they were within their rights in using music, recorded or otherwise, without payment. For a time there was wide and flagrant abuse of music that was the rightful property of others. On the other hand, some broadcasters were genuinely confused. What were their privileges? What were their responsibilities? Clearly, they needed organization and guidance.

Very soon the American Society of Composers and Publishers (ASCAP) and its Canadian counterpart, the Canadian Performing Rights Society (CPRS), began demanding that all broadcasters make compensation for the use of their property. The CPRS proposed to license stations, thereby entitling them to use the entire repertoire of the Society, although the amount used might be less than the merest fraction of that contained in the catalogues. So a small group was formed by the stations in 1926 to deal collectively with the demands of the Performing Rights Society. This was the Canadian Association of Broadcasters. The objects enunciated in the Letters of Incorporation were: "To foster and promote development of the art of aural and visual broadcasting in all its forms, to protect the members of the Association in every lawful and proper manner from injustice and unjust exactions, and to do all things necessary and proper to encourage and promote customs and practices which will strengthen and maintain the broadcasting industry to the end

that it may best serve the public." At the time the prime objective was protection against CPRS and what stations felt might become unjust exactions.

The first CAB directors were: Jacques Cartier of CKAC, Montreal; Main Johnston of CFCA owned by *The Toronto Star*; A. R. McEwan of the CNR; R. H. Coombs of CKNC, Toronto; and G. W. Bell of CKCK in Regina. The guiding legal spirit behind the group was Gerard Ruel, Vice-President of the CNR, formerly General Counsel of the Canadian Northern Railway, and one of Canada's ablest lawyers, well-informed on copyright matters, and a man of integrity.

Though many broadcasters took a dim view of both ASCAP and CPRS, Ruel immediately recognized their claims to compensation at fair rates. But he pointed out that a considerable part of the Society's catalogue was composed of compositions already in the public domain, and another section was composed of music for which the performing rights were in question. Moreover, the rights to a very substantial group of compositions listed in the Society's catalogue were not controlled by the Society—most of Gilbert and Sullivan, various operettas, oratorios over twenty minutes, and grand opera rights. For the use of these, special permission had to be obtained and special payment had to be made. Ruel also suggested that the catalogues of the Society were confusing, and that such a partial licence as CPRS offered was inadequate, since it left stations in an inconclusive position. Nevertheless, as far as the CNR was concerned, if the Society would bill regularly for those compositions that had been used and to which the Society actually held rights, these royalties would be paid immediately.

This the Society was not prepared to do. It insisted on an over-all licensing system, since the task of checking the music that every radio station in the country played would have been colossal—indeed, impossible. Ultimately the system of licensing prevailed. Gradually the Society increased its rates, and when the CRBC and the CBC emerged on the scene years later, their very nature as public-service institutions made imperative the recognition of the rights of copyright owners with proper payment. The Canadian Association of Broadcasters, with the support of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, petitioned the Secretary of State for an inquiry into the CPRS tariff. This resulted in a Royal Commission in 1935, under Mr. Justice Parker, which brought copyright fees under the purview of the Exchequer Court, to which either party could appeal. There it remains to this day.

In the meantime, the increases put into effect by ASCAP met growing

resistance from broadcasters in the United States, and in 1938 this broke into open warfare. A demand for a 50 per cent increase in the rates then being paid provoked a national protest-gathering of broadcasters in Philadelphia. Leading officers of ASCAP were asked to attend but failed to do so. When it was found that the ASCAP executives, who had been expected to attend the meeting, had gone to Hollywood instead, the Broadcasters were livid with indignation and decided to fight the near-monopoly of ASCAP. Then and there they decided to form their own company, Broadcast Music Inc.,¹ to expand the availability of music outside the control of ASCAP. The story of the ensuing war in the United States between ASCAP and Broadcast Music Inc. is one of the most intriguing stories of radio days.

Soon after the Aird Commission's Report in 1929—and the resulting agitation for public ownership of broadcasting—the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (all of whose members, except the CNR, were private owners) came out strongly against nationalization, for they feared the loss of their licences and possible expropriation of their property. They mobilized to fight the recommendations before the Parliamentary Committee of 1932. As a publicly owned Corporation, which recognized the inevitability of some form of nationalization, the CNR could no longer continue as a member of the Association and resigned. This was but the beginning of a long-drawn-out and continuing conflict between the organized proponents of public and private broadcasting which has continued for more than thirty years and is still far from being settled.

¹ In June of 1940, a branch of BMI was formed in Canada. There are six directors, three from the CBC and three from CAB—the presidency and the deciding vote being held by the parent organization in the United States.

CHAPTER 10

THE RADIO LEAGUE

In the area of Canadian broadcasting, conditions were increasingly chaotic during the early 'thirties. The problem of jurisdiction and the defeat of Mackenzie King's government in 1930 meant further confusion and indefinite delay. The views of the new Conservative regime on the issue of broadcasting were unknown. The sweeping nature of the Aird Report, with its insistence on the nationalization of radio, had alerted private interests, radio stations, equipment manufacturers, and other far more powerful interests. These were combining and were rapidly organizing against the Aird Report. How practical some of the recommendations in the Report were was also in doubt. It became increasingly apparent that if there was to be action, even on modifications of the Report, wide public interest would have to be mobilized and focused on the issue of nationalization which had been aroused by the Report.

Fortunately, at that critical moment, there were two young Canadians in Ottawa, both of mixed English and French origin, and both recently returned from Oxford, who had followed the Aird Report and the subsequent developments with intense interest. The young men were Graham Spry and Alan Plaunt. Those now engaged in broadcasting in Canada, and particularly those in the CBC, owe a debt that has never been adequately acknowledged, much less paid, to Spry and Plaunt. Both wanted an opportunity to render signal service to Canada. They were soon to join forces in mobilizing the diffused but mounting public opinion in support of public ownership of radio in Canada.

Spry had been interested in broadcasting since 1910, when a wireless

message from London to the CPR liner *Montrose* led to the arrest of the murderer Crippen while *en route* to Canada. From 1922 to 1925, as a Rhodes scholar at Oxford, he was attracted to the British Broadcasting Company which had recently been organized. In 1926, he became National Secretary of the Association of Canadian Clubs in Ottawa. One of his first duties, under instructions from C. G. Cowan, the Chairman, was to prepare, for presentation to the Prime Minister, a suggested program to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of Confederation. Spry proposed a three-day celebration, and in particular the formation of a radio hook-up of Canadian stations from coast to coast on July 1, 1927. This is said to have been the first formal proposal for the national Jubilee broadcast.

Following the publication of the Aird Report in September of 1929, Spry crossed Canada several times in the interests of the Canadian Clubs. He was struck with the growing volume of commendation of the Report among business men and newspaper editors of all shades of opinion, even though Canada was beginning to feel the effects of the depression. As a result, during the summer of 1930, he began to discuss with friends in Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg, and Edmonton the formation of a league or association to place before the people and the government a national broadcasting policy. The Constitution of Canadian Clubs precluded their taking action, but members of the Executive Committee as individuals supported the idea—particularly Chairman C. G. Cowan, K. A. Greene of Ottawa, Brooke Claxton of Montreal, and E. J. Tarr and R. K. Finlayson of Winnipeg.

At that time Spry was closely associated with Alan Plaunt in the newly formed Canadian Institute of International Affairs. Plaunt had a three-fold boon—ability, public spirit, and adequate private means. It was not difficult to infect him with the idea of a “Radio League.” On October 23, 1930, a sub-committee of the CIIA met at Plaunt’s home at 1 Clemow Avenue in Ottawa. Following that meeting, a few members remained behind, and to these Spry outlined the plan for the League.¹

¹ Among Alan Plaunt’s papers in the Archives of the University of British Columbia, there is a small book in which is set down in his own handwriting a brief description of the League’s beginnings. He said: “The history of the League can but be told in a series of ‘coups’ or master strokes of strategy and execution. For the conception of most of these, Graham is largely responsible, their carrying out was shared between us, and my part additionally was that of securing the support of individuals, organizations, newspapers and of acting as Secretary-General.

“Its first coup was a *coup de vin* at Henri’s Cafe in Hull. I had just

Among the small group was Tom Moore, President of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada. The League was formed with Spry as Chairman and Plaunt as Honorary Secretary to advocate a revised radio system based on a modified version of the Aird Report. During the next two months, friends of the idea were contacted across Canada in the Canadian Clubs. Study groups were established, a constitution was prepared, a pamphlet was outlined, several statements and press releases were written. On December 8, 1930, The Radio League was formally constituted at a public meeting in the Chateau Laurier. Plaunt's home became an assembly point for the advocates of nationalization, and I had the privilege of attending several meetings there.

Henceforth the entire time and energy of these two men—to say nothing of a considerable portion of their financial resources—would be focussed not for a few months but for several years on the enormous task of bringing about public ownership of radio in this country. Despite efforts of opponents and jealous critics to belittle their efforts, these men were unquestionably the leading personalities of the day, the most effective force in promoting the nationalization of broadcasting, and they finally brought into effect the legislation that created the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. I helped in the preparation of a considerable amount of material that was used by both Spry and Plaunt. A perusal of the 1932 *Proceedings of the Radio Committee* of the House of Commons will convince any unbiased observer of the scope and thoroughness of the League's presentation before that Committee, to say nothing of the still more important work of both of these men in a personal way behind the scenes.

Spry was the front man—writing, speaking, persuading, continually assembling information and, above all, building up his already numerous friendships and contacts in all levels of the government and across Canada. In this respect he was undoubtedly one of the ablest and most persuasive non-party advocates ever associated with an important popular movement in this country. It was not only a crusade with him and Plaunt; it was also a great contest to be enjoyed with almost boyish exuberance.

Though somewhat less in the forefront during the first years, Alan Plaunt was much more so when he subsequently became the Chairman of the League. He made its representation to the Parliamentary Com-

returned from round the world. Spry was National Secretary of Canadian Clubs and had been interested in the subject for quite a time. The sequel was a meeting the following Sunday evening at 1 Clemow."

mittee of 1936 and later, for four years, became an unpaid member of the first Board of Governors of the CBC, and one of the chief driving forces behind the new Corporation. Indeed, it is not too much to say that from late 1935 to 1939, during an extremely critical period in the future of national broadcasting, he was the chief strategist in the numerous and involved entanglements of the day. He took second place to no one in his ardent advocacy of national radio, and he never relaxed his guidance and devotion to the medium until he died in 1941 at the age of thirty-seven.

Early in 1931, an office was opened in Ottawa where Lois Wheeler was installed as secretary and general assistant. There were few secretaries equal to her in all-round competence. Later she became General Secretary of the Association of Canadian Clubs, in which capacity she rendered signal service for several years.

POLICY, STRUCTURE, AND FINANCES

The League organizers first drew up their policy and only then sought support for it. Although based on the Aird Report, the League's policy differed considerably in detail but not in principle. The League's policy was laid before a cross-section of groups and individuals for consideration and approval at executive and annual meetings (preferably the latter, when feasible) to widen the basis of support. The ways in which the policies of the Radio League differed from those of the Aird Report were significant, and undoubtedly these differences, together with the precise suggestions of the League, went far to win the acceptance of the plan (PCB 1932, p. 571). The League, in fact, was much more adept at assessing public opinion and adjusting its policies to what was practicable than were the private broadcasters.

The Aird Commission had urged complete public ownership of all broadcasting stations; the Radio League recommended a combination of high-power publicly owned stations with privately owned community stations in each locality, the latter to be affiliated with the national network. Sustaining programs to be produced by the public system would be available free of charge to the local private stations, and this was the League's proposal for their subsidization. The Aird Report recommended the elimination of all "direct" advertising, a very nebulous term; the League took a more liberal view of sponsorship, and it endorsed an advertising content up to 5 per cent of program time, for

both private and public owners, which accorded with the virtually unanimous recommendations of all the various witnesses before the 1932 Committee. The League also advocated the encouragement of creative programming among sponsors on private stations. Whereas the Aird Report recommended the sharing of federal and provincial powers (in, for example, the appointment of provincial program directors), the League strongly urged federal control of all broadcasting. According to the Radio League, the most significant broadcasting of Canadian programs had come from agencies under public control, in particular from the efforts of the Canadian National Railways and some universities, notably the University of Alberta.

The League met with an instant public response. Its structure was threefold. First, there was an active working group, Ottawa-based, with others forming the executive. Second, there were active key individuals in each of the main cities and organizations across Canada. Among the executives and key individuals were: Brooke Claxton of Montreal; Father Henri St. Denis, O.M.I., Ottawa; E. A. Corbett of CKUA, University of Alberta; R. K. Finlayson, Winnipeg (who resigned when he joined the Prime Minister's staff); K. A. Greene, later High Commissioner in Australia; Charlotte Whitton, later Mayor of Ottawa; and J. A. McIsaac, Canadian Legion. Others included: A. E. Grauer, later President of B.C. Electric, Vancouver; George Pelletier, *Le Devoir*, Montreal; Norman Smith, UFA, Calgary; Professor R. McQueen, Professor George Britnell, and Professor J. A. Corry (later Principal of Queen's) of Saskatoon; E. Hume Blake; the Reverend D. N. McLachlan, United Church; Eugene l'Heureux, Chicoutimi. Others were Margaret Southam, and Diana Kingsmill of Ottawa, Marguerite Lafleur of Montreal, and Mary Rowell of Toronto. Most were thirty or younger. Spry, the Chairman, was thirty, and Alan Plaunt was twenty-six. Third, there was a National Council formed of individuals and organizations. The campaign began early in 1931 by contacting organizations throughout the country, together with leaders of thought among the press, churches, universities, superintendents of education, industrialists, financiers, and provincial leaders.

When Spry and Plaunt went before the Parliamentary Committee of 1932, they were able to show documentary support from the National Council of Women, the Federated Women's Institute of Canada, the Catholic Women's League, the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, the Young Women's Christian Association, the YMCA, Hadassah, the United Farm Women of Alberta, the Trades and Labour

Congress of Canada, the Canadian Congress of Labour, the Canadian Legion, the Native Sons of Canada, Boards of Trade (in Ottawa, Vancouver, and Victoria), the Civil Service Institute, Universities' Conferences, the United Farmers of Alberta, the United Farmers of Manitoba, etc. These represented a combined membership of 1,055,000. There was some duplication in memberships, but the overlap was small. To the above should be added the support of sixteen university presidents and eight provincial superintendents of education, as well as heads and leaders of the Roman Catholic, Anglican, United, Baptist, and Presbyterian Churches. Among those who became members of the National Council, or otherwise lent support, were: Sir Robert Borden and Arthur Meighen, both former Prime Ministers; Louis St. Laurent, later Prime Minister; the Honourable N. W. Rowell, member of the former Union Government; Senator Cairine Wilson, Charlotte Whitton, Sir Ernest MacMillan, General Sir Arthur Currie, F. N. Southam, Sir George Garneau, Sir Robert Falconer, Colonel O. M. Biggar, Russell Smart, W. C. Woodward, John W. Dafoe, and Colonel J. H. Woods, together with several other past presidents of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce; General Victor Odlum, Leon J. Ladner, J. A. Wilson, Harry Sifton, and some twenty general managers or directors of banks, insurance, and trust companies, including S. J. Moore and Hector MacInnes, President and Vice-President, the Bank of Nova Scotia; F. A. Rolph, President, Imperial Bank; Major General S. C. Mewburn, Vice-President, Bank of Montreal; M. W. Wilson, General Manager, Royal Bank; A. F. White, Vice-President, Canadian Bank of Commerce; and E. J. Tarr, k.c., President, Monarch Life. For once Canadians in every walk of national life held a virtually unanimous opinion.

A great array of business leaders, industrialists, bankers, and important citizens from one end of Canada to the other also endorsed the League. It had the active support of some forty-five dailies and a large number of weeklies. Indeed, press opposition was confined almost entirely to a few newspapers already holding radio licences. It was charged that the strong press support was based on the expectation that advertising would be rigidly controlled and perhaps even excluded altogether under the new system, thus eliminating a potential competitor. There undoubtedly was some misunderstanding among the members of the press over the meaning of the Aird Report in this respect. This became evident later, but it was not due to the League's representations, for these were set out clearly both before and during the hearings.

All initial financing of the League was done by Plaunt and Spry. It

was suggested that the League was largely financed by Canadian newspapers. This was sheer misrepresentation, for the League was entirely financed by its supporters. An early list of contributors is now in the Archives of the University of British Columbia among Alan Plaunt's papers. Of some \$4,903.50 received up to April 12, 1931, Plaunt contributed \$1,256.69 and Spry \$935.00. The total cost of the League's activities from 1930 to 1932 was approximately \$7,500. By themselves, Plaunt, Spry, and voluntary organizations each contributed more than all the newspapers of Canada; the balance came from about seventy-five individual contributors in all branches of Canadian affairs and all shades of politics, business, and finance. When the issue of jurisdiction was argued before the Privy Council in London in 1931, the League was represented by Brooke Claxton who received no fees, and his travelling expenses of nearly a thousand dollars were borne by Spry alone. In later years, Alan Plaunt is known to have made further substantial contributions out of his own pocket.

ORGANIZED OPPOSITION

Despite the weight of informed public opinion favouring nationalization, powerful influences raged against it. The sudden decision of the Canadian Pacific Railways in 1930 to occupy a dominant place in the radio picture was not born entirely from a sudden conviction that radio was valuable for promotion and public relations. Such sweeping measures in communications as were recommended by the Aird Commission or supported by the Radio League were scarcely to be contemplated with complacency by the largest privately owned enterprise in Canada. There were more than a few who thought that it was possible to so reorganize broadcasting so that it would provide reasonably satisfactory national program service without resorting to nationalization. The two railways, with all they had contributed and might still contribute, would obviously become the core of the new organization. Then the CPR, despite its late start, might very well become the dominant partner—particularly in the rigorous economic and peculiar political circumstances of 1930. The possibilities were intriguing.

During 1931, the CPR began to take an active part in the campaign against nationalization. A proposal from R. W. Ashcroft, Manager of CKGW in Toronto, said that two national networks should be set up,

one under private auspices, which would be devoted basically to serving advertisers, to be launched by the CPR. Upon the second network, fathered by the CNR, would fall the main obligation of public-service programming. The public system would carry a certain number of commercials, mainly those that could not find suitable accommodation on the other network; the CNR's system might also have some support from public funds.

This scheme had considerable appeal in some quarters, due to the prestige the railways had attained with their programs, but more appeal on account of the very real fear of nationalization among many radio stations. It was endorsed by the late John Murray Gibbon, chief public-relations officers of the CPR, in an article in *The Canadian Forum* in March of 1931. A dual-network system was advocated for Canada, and the British Broadcasting Corporation was attacked. So incensed was the BBC in London that, following a controversy in the British press—and unsuccessful efforts behind the scenes to secure a retraction—it took a very rare step and issued a public statement. It was alleged to have been the most outspoken statement to have emanated from Savoy Hill up to that time. It characterized the article in question as “a unique combination of malevolence and inaccuracy.” The *Forum* article was replied to in the next issue by Graham Spry, who contended that the Ashcroft-Gibbon proposal was nothing less than a bare-faced plan for the closing down of other stations, and for turning over the advertising network—including American network commercials—to the CPR, leaving the second network to be supported out of public funds.

The CPR and other private broadcasters shared in the distribution of a pamphlet, prepared by R. W. Ashcroft, in which the BBC, the Aird Report, and the Radio League were attacked. Distribution of the pamphlet was promoted by free announcements over the CPR network (PCB 1932, 563-64; a copy of this pamphlet will be found among the Plaunt papers). “If the Royal Commission's plan is put into effect,” the pamphlet read, “the government subsidy will have to be over \$15 million a year. . . . The only other way to raise the money would be to increase the licence fee from \$1 to approximately \$30 a year and to put an excise tax on tube receivers of ten or more dollars a tube.”¹

¹ Finding his propaganda ineffective in 1932, Ashcroft formed in January of 1934 the Dominion Broadcasters Association, consisting of a few small stations that did not belong to the Canadian Broadcasters Association. He appeared before the Parliamentary Committee of 1934, but a large group

Among the most vociferous opponents of nationalization were *La Presse* of Montreal and the archly patriotic *Toronto Telegram*. The former owned the most powerful station in Quebec and was already looking forward to a power increase, hoping for 50 kilowatts. The *Telegram* had already teamed up with Gooderham and Worts, distillers, in assisting their station CKGW to obtain affiliation with the National Broadcasting Company.

On January 24, 1930, NBC broadcast an international program, part of which originated in CKGW. Several Toronto artists appeared on the program and the guest speaker was Irving E. Robertson, Editor-in-Chief of the *Telegram*. He said:

For the sake of better broadcasting in Canada, *The Toronto Evening Telegram* entered into an alliance with the National Broadcasting Company which (having its headquarters in the Mecca of musicians of a whole continent) is able to put programs on the air that would bankrupt any Canadian station to provide. Of its part in sponsoring the entry of NBC into Canada through such a powerful and modern station as CKGW, *The Toronto Evening Telegram* is very proud.

At the present time the Canadian Cabinet is considering the government operation of broadcasting. Here and now, I wish as its editor to place *The Toronto Evening Telegram* on record as entirely opposed to a proposal which may be delightful in theory but would be disastrous in results.

By 1932, the ever-deepening depression had so reduced the revenues of both railways as to leave them groggy, particularly the Canadian National. Between 1928, the best year, and 1933, which saw the bottom of the depression, operating revenues of the CNR dropped 46 per cent. During the same five years, CPR operating revenues dropped 50 per cent. CNR operating expenses during that period were scaled down to 65.5 per cent of what they had been in 1928. Though thousands of employees were dismissed and wholesale economies were effected, there was a limit to the reductions that could be made. On the other hand, CPR operating expenses in 1933 were reduced to only 53 per cent of those of 1926. Its mileage was far more compact, its road-bed and

of important stations wired the Chairman that Ashcroft had no authority to speak for them. The Dominion Association lasted only until the hearings of that year were over.

equipment in better condition, and it was less subject to community and national pressures during emergencies. Even the most drastic curtailment could not keep pace with the swiftly declining earnings. Radio on CNR trains succumbed to pressures, political and otherwise, for economy, and was finally scrapped in 1931, while broadcasting staff and operations were cut to the point of near extinction. What survived was permitted to survive for national and not railway purposes. Mounting deficits gave critics of the road—and particularly critics of the President—an unexpected opportunity. Suddenly most of the economic ills of Canada were laid directly on the doorstep of the CNR and Thornton. Even in Canada such a campaign of suggestion and innuendo has seldom been seen. The shrinkage in business, which affected every branch of trade and industry throughout every corner of America and every railway line, affected the CNR far more than most. This was because of its immense mileage and the imperative national necessity, during a time of dire need, to maintain service to the numerous communities along its lines.

CPR'S NEW PROPOSAL

In July of 1930, a Liberal government pledged to no political interference with the CNR, was replaced by a Conservative administration and a Prime Minister who had spent much of his life as a CPR solicitor. Prime Minister Bennett and CPR President E. W. Beatty were close personal friends.¹ The new government was definitely antagonistic to Sir Henry's policies and was politically committed to the task of discrediting both him and them. At the first session after the 1930 election, the onslaught commenced, the main purpose of which appeared to provide a hostile press with libel-free headlines. Under persistent pressures in and out of the House of Commons for more money-conscious measures, Sir Henry finally recommended in 1931 that a Royal Commission be appointed to investigate thoroughly the whole Canadian

¹ An interesting confirmation of the closeness of that friendship was revealed in March, 1964, during a sale at the Ward-Price Auction gallery in Toronto, when all the personal effects of the late Miss Mary Haney Beatty, Sir Edward's sister, were sold. They included three magnificent antique hall-marked silver pieces engraved as Christmas gifts from Bennett in 1930, 1931, and 1933. They sold for more than \$300 each. Sir Edward's knighthood, conferred in 1933, was also on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

railway situation. The result was a Commission of seven under the Chairmanship of Sir Lyman Duff of the Supreme Court of Canada.

Seldom has any Commission found itself in an atmosphere less conducive to impersonal and unprejudiced study than the Duff Commission. The press and public—and especially the former—were divided into hostile camps regarding the intentions of the government. The Liberal press had convinced a large section of the public—and this was not difficult—that the Bennett Government would stop at nothing in its drive against Sir Henry and the CNR. Liberals leapt on the Commission with great vehemence and were replied to in kind by the traditional Tory press. Public opinion itself was subject to great waves of pessimism, at times not too far removed from panic, finding its roots in the distressing economic conditions. A strong body of opinion favoured a railway merger. Before the Commission, E. W. Beatty (afterward Sir Edward), as President of the CPR, presented an elaborate scheme for amalgamation. He emphasized that the Canadian Pacific had the organization to assume direction and control with the most efficiency. Sir Henry opposed amalgamation, and the Duff Commission reported against it, favouring co-operation. The move to co-operation between the broadcasting facilities of the railways assumed concrete form during 1932.

In this uncertain atmosphere, Graham Spry appeared before the Duff Commission, on behalf of the Radio League on January 14, 1932. to forestall the possibility of an uninformed move regarding the radio activities of both railways. He wanted to clarify the important place they then occupied in the broadcasting scene, and to pin-point the inherent earning possibilities in their telegraph systems through radio. Spry said:

The railways are the principal program-builders in the Dominion and their programs represent one-half of all the coast to coast broadcasts. While the wire services of the railways represent but a minor part of the total transportation problem, these same wire services are of first importance to Canadian broadcasting. The Canadian Radio League feels justified, therefore, in drawing the attention of the Commission to their importance from the point of view of these public services and to defend the railways in this regard against the charge of "luxury services." The railways have recognized their national character and have attempted to provide service [radio] not for a limited area, but for the whole country.

The value to the railways is twofold: first the programs, though containing a minimum of advertising, are of definite publicity value. The second value of broadcasting to the railways is the revenue to be derived from the use of wires for broadcasting.

Spry's appearance before this Commission was also timed to knock down any scheme such as the one proposed by Ashcroft and the CPR. He outlined two proposals, both of which promised improved broadcasting. First, "A company formed by the two railways, and by the telephone and Canadian Marconi interests, with some directors appointed by the federal government, a compromise of public and private ownership, to have a monopoly of *network* broadcasting." This proposal he made as a temporary measure and because of economic conditions. Second, "A company formed by the government, with the whole directorate appointed by the government, as proposed by the Aird Commission, with a monopoly of all broadcasting." Spry added:

To either of these companies, the revenue derived from licence fees could be granted. Both of these alternatives would be hastened by co-operation of the railways, at least so far as broadcasting is concerned. While this proposal embraces only the co-operation of the railway telegraph companies, it may be broadened to include Bell and other companies with transmission lines, and the Canadian Marconi Company with its "beam" and shortwave sending and receiving stations for broadcasting to and from Europe.

Spry's presentation before the Duff Commission took place one month prior to the decision of the Privy Council with respect to jurisdiction over broadcasting. As soon as that decision was handed down, the Radio League threw its unqualified support behind the proposal for a semi-governmental organization on the lines of what later developed into the CBC.

Three months later, Beatty appeared before the Parliamentary Committee of 1932 to advocate the establishment of: first, a Radio Commission to exercise general control over broadcasting, advertising, controversy, etc.; second, a Canadian Broadcasting Company, in which the railways would participate with other interests in stock ownership. The company would acquire all existing stations necessary to form a network by agreement or on terms fixed by the Commission. Others



Woodhouse and Hawkins, among the first of the
CBC's network comedians.
(CBC)



1919. Canada's first radio studio, XWA (now CFCF) Montreal. Jack Dempsey in front of the horn microphone.

George Hall and his friends during a broadcast of "Let's All Go to the Music Hall."
(CBC)



1935. Broadcast from the studios in the Nova Scotian
Hotel, Halifax.
(CBC)



A CBC mobile unit in
World War II.
(CBC)



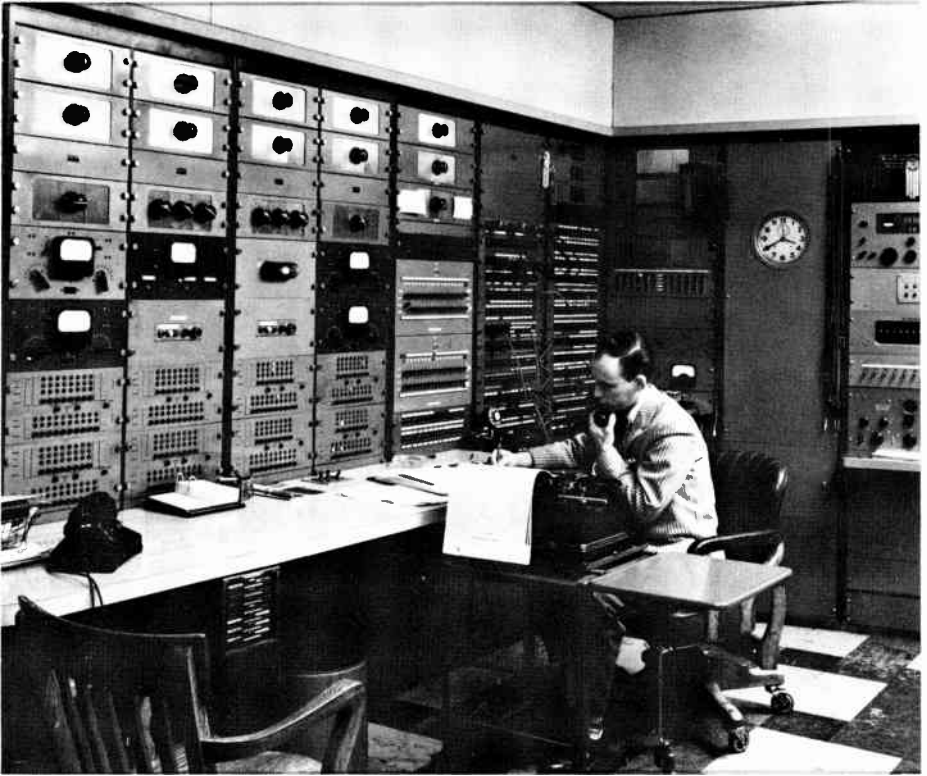
War correspondent
Matthew Halton, reports
from the battle area.
(CBC)



1936. J. Frank Willis
reports from the pithead at
the Moose River Mine.
(CBC)

Winston Churchill ◊
addressing the
Canadian Parliament,
December 30, 1941.
(CBC)





A modern radio control room.
(CBC)

would be built by the company to complete national coverage. A minimum of ten hours daily of sustaining programs of good quality would be assured. How much of this would be Canadian in origin was not stated. It would be a monopoly under private operation, and it would have the benefit of at least a portion of the licence fees until it got on its feet. Beatty pleaded for the retention of advertising as a not-improper help to commerce, but added:

I have no sympathy with the crude and direct methods of emphasizing the value of ordinary products by radio. I have, however, every sympathy with a limited use, indeed a very limited use, of radio by commercial concerns which are willing to provide interesting programs for direct or indirect advertising. In that field it has a place and for its use in that way substantial returns can be attained and a variety of programs can be received.

I have been advised by those whose opinion I respect that there exists in Canada ample talent to enable us to produce Canadian broadcasts of a very high grade; indeed, the experience of the Canadian Pacific Railway in utilizing local talent in their broadcasts would seem to indicate that this is true beyond the shadow of a doubt. (PCB 1932, p. 655.)

Beatty was sufficiently optimistic about the adoption of his plan, and about the part the CPR would play in it, to offer the General Managership to Graham Spry. Though a well-conceived and well-presented effort to conserve for private ownership this important phase of communications, Beatty's proposal did not appreciably influence the Parliamentary Committee.

During the more intense and final phases of the battle in 1932, American interests watched the action closely. Several highly competent lawyers were retained at Ottawa. It is said that at one point an American network, apparently the National Broadcasting Company, offered to purchase all or most Canadian stations and incorporate them into a national network.

THE CONVERSION OF MR. BENNETT

In 1931, Prime Minister Bennett, after long consideration of the principle of public-service broadcasting, was finally convinced that the

Radio League proposal had merit and also wide public support. That the League had a great deal to do with convincing the Prime Minister of the desirability of nationalization is beyond doubt.

In the spring of 1931, I was living in Westmount. One evening Graham Spry came to see me. He was elated, and could hardly wait to tell me that he had just ridden from Ottawa to Montreal with the Honourable W. D. Herridge, who was on his way to Washington, having been appointed Canadian Ambassador a short time before. They had discussed the League and nationalization of radio all the way from Ottawa. Herridge was fully convinced of the soundness of the League's policy, and he said he would help sell the idea to the Prime Minister. He became a firm though silent supporter, and on his frequent visits to Ottawa, he was one of the League's willing channels to Bennett.

Spry came to have a substantial measure of the Prime Minister's confidence, and met him and his close advisers on many occasions. In April of 1932, while giving a dinner at the Rideau Club, he was called to the telephone by the Prime Minister, who said that at a Cabinet meeting during the week concern was expressed that more evidence of public support had not been received from Western Canada. What could he do about it? Spry left the dinner, telegraphed League representatives in Winnipeg, Regina, and Edmonton, and that night, at his own expense, went west to see the Honourable John Bracken, Premier of Manitoba, and the Honourable J. E. Brownlee, Premier of Alberta. Both legislatures unanimously passed resolutions in support of public ownership of broadcasting. The Premier of Saskatchewan, the Honourable J. T. M. Anderson, was away, but the Attorney-General, the Honourable M. A. MacPherson, was there. It was too late for the legislature to pass a resolution, but Mr. MacPherson arranged for the Conservative Cabinet of Saskatchewan to telegraph Bennett their support.

A solid front of opposition to the Radio League's proposals was mobilized by the Canadian Association of Broadcasters. It included the Canadian Manufacturers Association, private stations, and advertising agencies, supplemented by expert technical and legal talent. Though elaborately prepared, their proposals were inadequate when it came to presenting a practical alternative to the proposals for nationalization, and their presentations were far from well co-ordinated. Their main argument was a plea for government subsidies for transmission facilities and a limited number of national programs. Expenditures on high-power publicly owned transmitters were decried, and departmental or commission supervision of program control was advocated.

It was seriously contended by private operators appearing before the Commission that radio facilities needed improvement only in the West and in the Maritimes. Also that "the class of programs broadcast today in Ontario and Quebec is of a very high order and requires no great expenditure of money to improve them at this time." It was urged by the private operators that all licences should continue under private ownership, but that each licence should "have a clause in it reserving to the government 15 per cent of the operating time of each and every station, such time to be used by the federal government or allocated by it to provincial governments for such purposes as they might see fit." It was estimated that these hours (about sixteen per week) could be dedicated to the best that Canada could produce in the way of music at an annual cost to the federal government of approximately \$838,550 (\$302,950 for transmission lines and \$535,600 for talent). Moreover, it was seriously suggested that if the licence fee of two dollars was continued on the one million sets then in existence, a surplus fund of some \$576,420 could be turned back annually to the Receiver General. Incredible as these figures may seem now, they were submitted to the Parliamentary Committee as a serious proposal to ensure sixteen hours of weekly programs of a class or kind "that the public of Canada is most desirous of hearing and of a type which is best suited to develop a truly Canadian musical consciousness." There was little or no recognition of the need to go beyond this.

The Radio League was the only organization to present, in even greater detail than the Aird Report, a carefully thought-out and integrated plan, covering from three to five years of operation, with detailed costs, stage by stage, leading to nationalization. It showed how, apart from limited capital assistance in the initial stage, a national system could be financed with a listener's licence fee of three dollars, without further subsidy from the taxpayer. All the schemes put forward by private broadcasters necessitated substantial subsidies both for transmission circuits and for coverage in sparsely populated areas.

Before the Committee on April 18, 1932, Spry with the assistance of Plaunt presented a searching analysis of the existing radio situation. The impressiveness of their presentation, and the array of facts to substantiate the document, were undoubtedly decisive factors in the Committee's final report. They examined in detail the schedules of the leading stations in Toronto and Montreal, exposing the lack of encouragement for live talent as well as the same situation in the United States. They showed that there was no guarantee of time for educational

broadcasting that would be free from the probability of commercial acquisition. They were also instrumental in arranging for the appearance of Gladstone Murray of the BBC before the Committee, where he was a most impressive witness. Subsequently, largely through Plaunt's influence, Murray became the first General Manager of the CBC.

The League's platform was: public ownership of high-power outlets; private ownership of low-powered, local community stations; competition in program production; leasing and exclusive control of transmission circuits by the national organization. Spry said:

Radio broadcasting is not to be considered or dismissed as a business only. It is no more a business than the public school system, the religious organizations, or the varied literary, musical, and scientific endeavours of the Canadian people. It is a public service. It is a national service. As a public and national service it should be controlled.

The interests of Canada will not be served by dividing our broadcasting strength among relatively poorly financed and competing systems, but by concentration. The Canadian problem requires selection. It makes unrestricted competition impossible. If the government were to decide today that radio in Canada were to be operated by private enterprise, there would still remain unsolved: what private enterprise? If every application cannot be granted because of the physical aspects, whose application should be granted? Unrestricted competition is impossible for physical reasons, dangerous because of the resources of the American chains, inefficient because of the need for a maximum of revenue to be applied, not to carrying overheads, but for programs.

Twenty-one meetings of the Parliamentary Committee were held, with briefs and submissions from fifty-three sources. The main recommendations of the Committee were: one, a chain of high-power stations on clear channels; two, local stations for community purposes; three, the cost of broadcasting to be self-sustaining, supported by income from licence fees and advertising revenue, but that the question of receiver licence fees (their amount, collection, etc.) be left in the hands of the Governor-in-Council; and, four, that a *non-partisan* salaried Commission of three be appointed to administer the plan. The proposed Commission would be empowered to regulate and control all broadcasting, lease, purchase, or expropriate any or all existing stations;

build and operate stations; originate or secure programs from outside sources and arrange for their transmission; control the issuing or cancellation of licences; shift channel allocations; prohibit privately operated networks and, subject to the approval of Parliament, take over all broadcasting in Canada.

MR. BENNETT DECLARES HIMSELF

The bill to implement these recommendations was sponsored by the Prime Minister himself, and his speech on the Second Reading is one of the most notable documents in the history of national broadcasting. It most definitely committed the government and the Conservative Party to the principle of nationalization. Here is what he said: (*Hansard*, May 18, pp. 3035-36):

First of all, this country must be assured of complete control of broadcasting from Canadian sources, free from foreign interference or influence. Without such control radio broadcasting can never become a great agency for the communication of matters of national concern and for the diffusion of national thought and ideals, and without such control it can never be the agency by which national consciousness may be fostered and sustained and national unity still further strengthened. It seems to me clear that in Canada the system we can most profitably employ is one which, in operation and control, responds most directly to the popular will and the national need. In this stage of our national development we have problems peculiar to ourselves and we must reach a solution of them through the employment of all available means. The radio has a place in the solution of all those problems. It becomes, then, the duty of Parliament to safeguard it in such a way that its fullest benefits may be assured to the people as a whole. No other system of radio broadcasting can meet these national requirements and empire obligations.

Secondly, no other scheme than that of public ownership can ensure to the people of this country, without regard to class or place, equal enjoyment of the benefits and pleasures of radio broadcasting. Private ownership must necessarily discriminate between densely and sparsely populated areas. This is not a correctable fault in private ownership; it is an inescapable and

inherent demerit of that system. It does not seem right that in Canada the towns should be preferred to the countryside or the prosperous communities to those less fortunate. In fact, if no other course were possible, it might be fair to suggest that it should be the other way about. Happily, however, under this system, there is no need for discrimination; all may be served alike. Equality of service is assured by the plan which calls for a chain of high-power stations throughout Canada. And furthermore, the particular requirements of any community may be met by the installation of low-power stations by means of which local broadcasting service may be obtained. The use of the air, or the air itself, whatever you may please to call it, that lies over the soil or land of Canada is a natural resource over which we have complete jurisdiction under the recent decision of the Privy Council; I believe that there is no government in Canada that does not reflect the principle under which the Crown holds the natural resources in trust for all the people. In view of these circumstances and of the further fact that broadcasting is a science that is only yet in its infancy and about which we know little yet, I cannot think that any government would be warranted in leaving the air to private exploitation and not reserving it for the use of the people.

For the Liberals, the Right Honourable Ernest Lapointe endorsed the proposed Act in these words:

I am in full accord with the principle embodied in this bill. I have been supporting this principle from the first, more particularly after the work of the Aird Commission, but I knew the difficulties in the way and the strength of the propaganda carried on to prevent the work of that great Commission from having the results which we witness today. I congratulate the members of the Committee on the excellent work which they did.

J. S. Woodsworth, the leader of the CCF, expressed his approval of the Act: "I should like to associate myself with the last speaker [Mr. Lapointe] in congratulating the Prime Minister on his promptness in bringing down this bill. May I further express my own very great appreciation of the admirable statement which the Prime Minister has made."

The League expected the bill to pass with a large majority, but scarcely with the unanimity that was shown. Only one vote was cast against it, and that was by E. J. Young from Weyburn, Saskatchewan, a simon-pure free trader opposed to both tariffs and government subsidies in any form.

The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Act became law on May 26, 1932. It was easily the most significant and far-reaching accomplishment of Bennett's five years in office, though he may not have thought so at the time. More than once in succeeding years his endorsement of nationalized radio has been an embarrassment to reactionary members of his party. One of the favourite bits of amusement of M. J. Coldwell, leader of the CCF, a man to whom national radio owes a tremendous debt, was to remind certain Tory members of Parliamentary Committees on Broadcasting periodically that the legislation giving effect to nationalization had been instituted by a Conservative government under Bennett. This not infrequently brought half-suppressed exclamations that sounded very much like "Damn Mr. Bennett." Not dissimilar sounds are still heard today, and there is ample evidence that a not-inconsiderable section of the party would like to join more openly in the chorus.

THREE-DOLLAR LICENCE FEE

With the legislation adopted, the League's work for the moment was done. It had gained its main objectives—a *commitment* to create a nation-wide network of high-powered publicly owned stations, to create and distribute Canadian programs from coast to coast, financed by a listener's licence fee. But it had not secured either an independent representative Board of Governors or acceptance of the three-dollar licence fee, two guarantees necessary in the League's view to free the broadcasting authority from political suspicions, the ordinary machinery of government, and dependence for revenue upon the taxpayer.

Though the League endorsed the Act of 1932, Plaunt, Brooke Claxton, E. W. Corbett, Spry, Father St. Denis, and others on the executive predicted difficulties, both political and financial, arising in two areas: diluted authority, and the licence fee of only two dollars. They kept in touch as a group, and bided their time; in 1935, with other League supporters, among them John W. Dafoe, they attended a conference on Canadian-American Affairs at Canton, New York.

There Spry attacked the structure of the newly created Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission and the others supported him. This proved to be the signal for the League's second effort for an independent board and a larger licence fee. This second effort was prior to the Liberals succeeding the Conservatives in office, and in this next stage Alan Plaunt, now Chairman of the League, became the leader and chief strategist of its activities.

Early in April of 1932, during the radio hearings, a detailed five-year plan for national network coverage was prepared by a small group in the CNR that hoped it might be presented before the Parliamentary Committee. It was entirely a night job, covering several weeks of desperately hard work. Most of the technical part was prepared by Gordon Olive. It was typed by A. J. Black, and covered some sixteen double pages of tabulations. It was a complete plan for new construction, retirement of the various private stations involved, and future financing. Unfortunately, its production coincided with the hearings of the Railway Committee of 1932, when the concentrated political persecution of Sir Henry Thornton had reached its most destructive phase. The plan was never presented; indeed, the President never even knew of its existence.

However, in order that all the effort put into it would not be lost, a copy was placed at the disposal of the Radio League. A second copy was given to the Honourable W. D. Herridge, who was occasionally spoken of as a possible future leader of the Conservative Party. On May 26, 1932, the day the Act was finally acceded to, I discussed the recommendations with him at length, particularly the central importance of an adequate three-dollar licence fee. Every effort was made to have Herridge endorse the proposed fee, for this revenue was vital to any scheme of high-power development. I was unsuccessful. Though he spoke favourably about the clarity and thoroughness of the plan, he was frank in saying that in his opinion the three-dollar licence would not be good politics at the time.

CHAPTER 11

CANADIAN RADIO BROADCASTING COMMISSION

Though the Canadian Broadcasting Act was assented to on May 26, 1932, the Commissioners were not appointed until well into October. The Chairman was Hector Charlesworth, successively music critic, dramatic critic, and editor-in-chief of *Saturday Night* which, at that time, was perhaps the most important weekly, both editorially and pictorially, Canada ever had. He was an engaging raconteur and had already written two volumes of his "Candid Chronicles,"¹ reminiscences of many of the picturesque and pungent personalities, mostly stage and press celebrities and politicians, who had either pervaded or flitted across the Canadian scene.

The delay in making the appointments, though largely due to the Prime Minister's preoccupation with the Imperial Economic Conference, was also due in part to the inability of Quebec Conservatives, who were consulted, to agree on who should be Vice-Chairman. Finally, and because it could be put off no longer, the choice fell on Thomas Maher of Quebec City. Lieutenant-Colonel A. W. Steel, the third member, was in Madrid at the International Radio Conference and did not return until January 17, so that the first official Board meeting of

¹ After the institution of the CBC, and his retirement from broadcasting, Charlesworth was to write a third edition of his "Candid Chronicles" under the title *I'm Telling You* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1937). It was replete with descriptions of difficulties during his regime at Ottawa with civil servants, the Departments of Justice and Marine, the Treasury Board, and members of the House. This catalogue of problems was unwittingly an all-too-accurate reflection of the tormented and conflicting conditions that haunted the Commission throughout its brief and heroic existence.

the three Commissioners was not held until some three weeks after the Inter-Empire Christmas broadcast.

They were an odd trio. The Chairman had a wide acquaintance among members of the press and the artistic world, but he knew nothing about broadcasting and little about administration. The Vice-Chairman was a successful forestry engineer. Tired of the confines of business, Maher had sought wider interests in politics. He had been very active as a Conservative organizer, and was an unsuccessful candidate in Quebec City during the 1930 election. He had started and edited *Le Journal*, a highly partisan Conservative paper. Lieutenant-Colonel Steel had been associated with the Signals Corps in the Department of National Defence and was technical adviser to the Parliamentary Committee on Broadcasting of 1932. He had ample experience as a radio engineer, though his experience in other fields remained to be proven. He was the only one of the three who had exhibited any previous interest in the nationalization of radio, and there is no doubt that to Steel it meant a good deal more than a job.

To pick three individuals with more contrasting characters less likely to mesh in a smooth functioning organization would be impossible. This was soon demonstrated. Though Steel was an able technician, he was in many ways his own worst enemy. He had an amazing capacity for alienating the good will of many people who only wanted to be helpful. The complicated and somewhat delicate international situation with respect to the securing and the allocation of channels required deft and firm handling. He was emphatic, but not deft. Maher was shrewd and politically minded. His appointment immediately gave a political complexion to the Commission, and during the heated radio debates between his appointment and his resignation in July 1934, the government was attacked repeatedly by Ernest Lapointe, Leader of the Opposition for Quebec, not because of personal considerations but because there had been an understanding between the parties in 1932 that the Commission should be a strictly non-partisan body. The Opposition considered Maher's appointment a flagrant repudiation of that understanding.

The salary of the Chairman was \$10,000; for each of the others, \$8,000, most moderate even for those days. But it was enough to make them feel that their daily duties should extend beyond administrative into executive functions as well. They felt the irrepressible urge to be active in day-to-day operations and could not, or would not, delegate managerial authority to others. They proceeded to departmentalize

operations under three heads, with each of them in charge of a section. This was a weakness clearly foreseen by the Radio League and others, who strongly disapproved of three-men commissions and preferred a larger board with a general manager. Their fears were soon to be justified.

COMMISSION BUYS CNR RADIO

When the Commission began to function in the last few days of 1932, the Canadian National Railways gave it all possible co-operation, because it had neither staff nor facilities of its own. It was clear from the mandate of the Commission, and from the attitude of the government toward the Railway, that the latter would shortly have no option but to close down its radio operations unless it could dispose of its facilities without delay. The only logical market was the Commission. An agreement was reached whereby the Commission on March 1, 1933, acquired the three stations CNRO, CNRA, and CNRV, together with the studio facilities at Montreal and Halifax. The price was \$50,000, a mere \$14,000 more than the commercial earnings of the stations in 1932. It was a bargain.

Under the Broadcasting Act, the purchase had to be ratified by Parliament, and on April 25, 1933, a measure to provide for this was introduced. No real opposition to the transaction itself arose in the House, for it was recognized as most advantageous to the Commission. But objections did arise from the failure to apply any generally accepted standard of evaluation to the CNR's properties. Though obsolescence was heavy on radio equipment, it was felt by some members of the House that the allowance in this case was excessive. Was there not a proper formula or accounting method to determine proper costs? The real import of this discussion soon dawned on the members. It became evident that, if the Commission could acquire the CNR's facilities at less than forty cents on the dollar, this might set a precedent and pattern for taking over other more up-to-date and valuable privately owned properties, which the Commission was empowered to do. There certainly was no allowance for good will in this arrangement, not even adequate recognition of actual values.

The Minister of Railways came forward with a detailed statement of the total capital costs of the CNR on radio from 1923 to 1933 at each of the locations: Ottawa, \$37,938.44; Moncton, \$25,765.17; Van-

couver, \$37,774.35; Halifax, \$8,930.22; Montreal, \$21,683.88. He then gratuitously proffered, for the information of the House, a statement of the annual operating expenditures of the CNR on radio from 1923 to 1932, which he had specially requested for the occasion, though it had nothing whatever to do with the transaction and had not been asked for. These totalled \$2,461,323 for the ten years from 1923 to 1933. Though the Minister quoted operating expenses for 1932 as \$80,384, he conveniently forgot to mention that the commercial earnings for that year were \$35,664. And then, obviously for political purposes, he added:

I submit that they should never have been in the radio broadcasting business. One of the greatest wastes that the Railway made was that \$400,000 which was spent in 1929 under the management of a group of directors appointed by my honourable friends opposite. I submit that one of the biggest blunders which they made was to put radio transmitters [receivers] on the trains between here and Montreal. They were merely in the road and today they have taken them off because they were of no use.

There could have been no clearer exposition of why the Canadian National offered its radio facilities, lock, stock, and barrel, to the Commission at a sacrifice, aside from the fact that nationalization which had been anticipated, had finally arrived. It would have had no choice, as it had little choice in regard to the abandonment of radio on trains in 1931.

A few minutes later, during the same debate, Colonel Thomas Cantley, the M.P. from Pictou, Nova Scotia, in spite of the precise figures put on the record only minutes before by the Minister, said: "I contend that this is just another illustration of the way in which the CNR was loaded up with extravagances. These installations were never of any value, though they cost a million and a half to begin with and over a million dollars a year to operate." It was completely characteristic of the criticism—imputation by calculated exaggeration—repeatedly thrown at the President and management by Conservative members of the 1932 Parliamentary Committee on Railways, then dubbed "The Hanging Committee."

The sale was approved, and the Commission found itself with three stations, studios in Montreal and Halifax, and an experienced staff of twenty-one. These were the only stations the Commission ever owned

outright, except for one in Quebec City. Through this acquisition it automatically found itself in the commercial business.

FIRST INTER-EMPIRE CHRISTMAS BROADCAST

The Commission had hardly been appointed when it was immediately faced with the task of participation in the first Inter-Empire Christmas Broadcast of 1932. No broadcast up to that time, and very few since, have created such world-wide attention. It was expected that King George V would speak, and millions awaited his voice with intense interest.

The BBC had planned the first Empire Broadcast for Christmas Day, 1931. On November 18, it asked the Canadian National to make all the necessary arrangements for Canada's participation. Transmission was to be by Marconi beam to Yamachiche and back to Britain from Drummondville, while pick-ups and distribution in Canada would be over CNR and CPR wire lines.

Extensive preparations were made in London, in other parts of the Empire, and throughout Canada, but even the most thorough planning is often tripped up by details. The BBC was anxious to include a "live" pick-up of Niagara Falls, always a spot of great interest in Britain. As no railway circuits were available to that point, it was necessary to secure a line from the Bell Telephone. Though the availability of a line was confirmed by Bell engineers, it was necessary to secure approval from Bell's management. This contact was made by telephone on December 12, the nature and scope of the broadcast being fully explained at that time. The request was confirmed by letter the same day.

At this point complications arose. During my conversation with the Vice-President of the Bell system, he suggested that such two-way conversations as envisaged on this proposed Empire broadcast were properly telephone and not railway business. He also expressed surprise that Marconi and the British Post Office (the British authority controlling such line transmission) would engage in the broadcast in view of certain existing contracts. It was even suggested that these contracts might make necessary the cancellation of the program. Nevertheless, the request for the circuit from Niagara Falls to Toronto would be given consideration.

The availability of the circuit from Niagara was finally confirmed

four days later on December 16. Meantime, conversations had been taking place between Bell, Marconi, and the British Post Office covering the possibility of poor transatlantic transmission at the hour chosen, and other matters related to their contracts. These conversations finally resulted in the British Post Office booking a stand-by transatlantic circuit from the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. This should have ended the difficulty but it did not. On Saturday, December 19, the British Post Office notified the BBC that the AT&T had finally advised that they "were unable to connect with Canadian National [telegraph] lines." Actually, there was no physical problem associated with this connection any more than there is now, but it was AT&T policy that any program routed over its circuits, on entering Canada, must by contract be routed over the lines of its subsidiary, The Bell Telephone Company. The BBC was fully aware that under the circumstances this AT&T requirement would nullify the broadcast, and that any difficulty in making the connection arose entirely from policy problems and not physical reasons. Consequently, when advised by the Post Office that AT&T stated that they were unable to connect with CNR lines, the BBC decided to cancel the broadcast in its entirety, because they felt that Canada must be an integral part of it.

The press immediately demanded an explanation, and the reaction was swift and emphatic. Both Bell and AT&T received vigorous protests, and at once sought to have the broadcast reinstated, but it was now too late. The Prime Minister of Canada telephoned the Canadian High Commissioner, the Honourable Howard C. Ferguson, in London, who phoned the BBC. Both Bell and AT&T would carry the program and waive any charges. However, since the cancellation to all parts of the Empire had been made, the BBC could not and would not reinstate it. Could it be done on New Year's Day? That, too, was impossible. The affair passed, until the appearance of Gladstone Murray before the Parliamentary Committee on Radio in Ottawa in April of 1932. When Murray was asked about the cancelled broadcast, he gave the explanation, which placed the blame squarely where it belonged (PCB 1932, p. 321).

Though frustrated in 1931, the BBC renewed the effort in 1932. On September 22, it wrote to the London office of the CNR again inviting the co-operation of the Railway by asking it to assume full responsibility for Canadian participation in the proposed broadcast. It set 2:30 P.M., G.M.T. as the most suitable hour, and added: "We should be grateful if you would pass this on to Mr. Weir and tell him that we shall be

glad to receive any suggestions that he may care to make." In acknowledging the BBC's invitation, it was pointed out that while the CNR had always been within its province in assuming such responsibility, the pending appointment of the new Broadcasting Commission now placed it in a different position. Such participation would be regarded as a national effort and properly the function of the Commission, when it was appointed. Subject to a request from the latter, the CNR would be happy either to undertake the assignment or participate in it.

As soon as Hector Charlesworth was named Chairman, he was advised of the BBC's request. On October 25, Gladstone Murray of the BBC cabled him:

Empire Christmas broadcast fiasco last year bracket vide my evidence Special Committee Ottawa April bracket now being actively revived understand Canadian National Radio Services which arranged Canadian portion last year hesitates to do so this year unless with your approval stop recommend indication from you to this effect stop Weir has outline of program.

In the meantime, the Chairman had asked the CNR for my services to carry through Canada's participation in the broadcast as well as to conduct other preliminary operations. Major Murray's reference to the fiasco of 1931 was news to the Chairman, but after some inquiries, he wrote asking me to proceed. From that moment it became my responsibility to complete all the arrangements with those participating.

Though the 1931 incident was unfortunate, it was not without its compensations. At a meeting on November 9, 1932, in Ottawa, when the effort was renewed, all the participating transmission companies immediately pledged their enthusiastic co-operation. That pledge was carried out energetically and in complete harmony. And it should be added that such voluntary and unpaid effort on the part of the transmission companies at the time meant substantial sacrifices in both revenue and effort. Today, with transmission circuits set up with permanent staffs and contracted for on an annual basis, these arrangements are taken as a matter of course to be the responsibility of the broadcast authority. Then it was different, and the co-operation rendered was a gratuitous contribution.

The CNR network picked up the messages from the five cities chosen to broadcast Canada's greetings, and these messages were transmitted to central control at Montreal; from there the Canadian Pacific network

carried them, with the rest of the broadcast, to forty-eight stations, in thirty-five cities, from Sydney to Victoria, in all nine provinces; the largest network up to that time. In a few places, notably the Maritimes and British Columbia, the lines of the local telephone companies supplemented these networks. The broadcasts from London and other parts of the Commonwealth were relayed by the BBC's new short-wave from Daventry, but Canada depended on the Marconi beam to Yama-chiche. Similarly, the Canadian messages travelled by Marconi beam from Drummondville to England, for a further relay by beam-wireless to the many countries participating. Bell Telephone was very effective in securing additional coverage at several points, and in working out central-control arrangements at Montreal.

There were five pick-ups in Canada: Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, and Vancouver, the limit fortunately set by the BBC. Many cities in Canada were anxious to participate, but none pressed the matter save one, Saint John, New Brunswick, which, through the Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick, urged that, as the "only city in the Empire founded by United Empire Loyalists whose sacrifices during the American rebellion resulted in fifty thousand persons coming to Canada," it should be heard as well as Halifax. We compromised by pointing out that: the BBC had made the selection; even the nation's capital had to be omitted; in the Halifax script a reference to the United Empire Loyalists and to Saint John as a sister port had been included; and, a promise was made to broadcast in 1933 the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the "Empire's greatest romance." Thus peace prevailed.

The messages from Canada, which, after the King's speech, were the meat of the broadcast for Canada, were meticulously prepared. They had to be brief, a maximum of two and one-half minutes each. They had to be encompassing, vivid vignettes of Canadian conditions and life in their several areas at that Christmas season. There were a few words of history, trade, loyal greetings, and they had to blend smoothly into the whole composite picture. They were prepared by Miss M. B. Williams, with the assistance of Mrs. W. T. Herridge. Between them, they turned out distinctive scripts. Even the exacting BBC considered them excellent, and said so. The Canadian speakers on the Christmas broadcast at the time were Major W. C. Borrett, Manager of CHNS, Halifax; Jacques Desbaillets, of Montreal; Hector Charlesworth, of Toronto (by invitation of the BBC); Herb Roberts, of Winnipeg; and W. E. Powell, Manager of CNRV, Vancouver. It fell to me to preside at

central control in Montreal and give the opening and closing announcements from Canada.

On the first Empire broadcast, two-way conversations were carried on between London and Dublin; from the *Majestic*, in mid-Atlantic; from five points in Canada; from Wellington, New Zealand; Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane, Australia; the *Empress of Britain* in harbour at Port Said; from Cape Town and Gibraltar. The broadcast concluded with His Majesty's message, drafted—it was said—by himself:

Through one of the marvels of modern science, I am enabled this Christmas Day to speak to all my peoples throughout the Empire. I take it as a good omen that wireless should have reached its present perfection at a time when the Empire is linked in closest union, for it offers us immense possibilities to make that union closer still.

It may be that our future will lay upon us more than one stern test. Our past will have taught us to meet it unshaken. For the present, the work to which we are equally bound is to arrive at reasoned tranquillity within our borders, to regain prosperity without self-seeking, and to carry with us those whom the burden of the past years has disheartened.

My life's aim has been to serve as I might toward those ends. Your loyalty, your confidence in me has been my abundant reward.

I speak now from my home and from my heart to you all; to men and women so cut off by snow, by desert and by sea, that only voices out of the air can reach them.

To those cut off from fuller life, by blindness, sickness, or infirmity, and those celebrating this day with their children, or grandchildren, to each and all I wish a Happy Christmas. God bless you.

The reception of the entire broadcast throughout Canada left little to be desired, and the expressions of appreciation were legion from individuals and organizations—the same in Britain and everywhere else pick-ups originated. The BBC commended not only the scripts but also the rapidity and smoothness with which all switching was carried out. Sir John Reith, in writing the Chairman on January 25, 1933, said: "We have had a very great number of letters indeed from all over Canada as well as from other parts of the world and they still continue

to come in. I think I may say that the program on Christmas afternoon has evoked a greater volume of appreciation than any program that we have ever put out."

THE COMMISSION'S EARLIEST PROGRAMMING

The success of the Christmas broadcast gave the Commission an auspicious beginning, and the Chairman was anxious to make the most of it. So in the first few days of January, at his urgent request, I hurried from Montreal to Ottawa. I had been assured by the Chairman that he wanted me to direct the over-all programming of the Commission. He promised a firm appointment to the post as soon as this could be arranged. Though he meant it at the time, he was soon to discover that other influences would intervene.

There was no time to be lost. Within a few days, I arranged with both the Montreal and the Toronto Symphonies for an alternating series, and also for a series of band concerts from several cities. Since some of these were military bands, we ran into our first trouble with the Musicians' Union of Toronto, which immediately sought a promise that no more non-union bands would be used. It was pointed out that the Commissioner could not set up a closed shop at this stage of its existence, that the number of such band engagements must, under any circumstances, be very limited; that musicians were really not going to be deprived of work, for by far the greater part of the budget must inevitably be spent on musical talent. They were not satisfied, and only a few months later there was a collision between the union and the Commission, which developed into a most acrimonious battle between the organized musicians and the national body. Nevertheless, the Commission maintained the open shop (PCB 1934, pp. 204-27).

Another series arranged was "George Wade and His Corn Huskers," an enormously successful group. It provided the chief entertainment for many Saturday-night barn dances which relieved the monotony and drabness of those difficult times. At the end of the first ten programs, we received more than six thousand unsolicited letters of appreciation. One woman wrote:

We roll up the carpet and pile up the chairs,
Then pick out our partners, get set for the squares;
When the music commences and George starts to call,

We dance to the tune of "Old Lannigan's Ball."
 The Music's a tonic to hearts that are sair;
 Your broadcast's the best that comes over the air.

And so on for several verses.

The year 1934 marked the founding of the Dominion Drama Festival, and we broadcast the two amateur productions most suitable for radio. One of these, "Jim Barber's Spite Fence" by Lillian Beynon Thomas, was repeated by the CBC on "Summerfallow" in 1960. Perhaps the most satisfying experience of the few months I spent with the Commission was the first broadcast of the massed High School Orchestras from Winnipeg. In 1930, the efforts of P. Graham Padwick, Latin teacher at the Kelvin High School, resulted in a movement to encourage music appreciation and build an orchestra among the high-school students of Manitoba. It developed with great rapidity and spread into the other Prairie provinces. Listening groups were formed throughout Manitoba, and a regular series of instructional broadcasts commenced over CKY on Saturday mornings under Padwick's tutorship.

During Easter week it became customary to assemble as many of these students as possible for a week's competitive festival, culminating in a broadcast from the stage of the Walker Theatre. In 1933, over three hundred students gathered in Winnipeg. Children were so interested that they came from many far-away points in Manitoba. While they were in the city, accommodation and often meals were taken care of mainly through the generosity of citizens who opened their homes to these young people in response to CKY's requests for billets. One little boy who wanted to play the cello in this orchestra found the studio chairs too high and a cello too large. He had a violin with a wooden peg in it—to act as cello. With a modicum of difficulty he took his place in the orchestra. That little boy grew up to be the famous cellist, Lorne Munro. The broadcast was an astonishing success. More than two hundred boys and girls filled the stage, overflowed into the wings, and jostled one another until they finally settled down and gave a truly remarkable performance.

The Commission secured from this one broadcast such an enormous amount of goodwill in letters, news reports, and personal and official commendation that when the Chairman went west in June, he was accorded a great welcome at Winnipeg. Unfortunately, later developments in 1933, attributable to the Commission itself, went far to dissipate much of this goodwill. The following year the Commission

again broadcast the performance and cited it before the Parliamentary Committee of 1934 as one of its most satisfactory accomplishments. Padwick was an enthusiastic dreamer who started out to do thirty years ago what Walter Susskind so brilliantly brought off in 1963 when he formed and toured with the National Youth Orchestra.

One day in April of 1933, a distinguished artist who was hard up approached CNRO. Walter Powell, the Manager, felt his budget resources too lean and uncertain and phoned me. I immediately said: "Yes, if we can afford it." She was the famous Mrs. Patrick Campbell, who had enjoyed triumphs on both sides of the Atlantic. She had been the storm centre of bitter arguments, and the friend of the most famous men and women of letters of her day. I hurried to the Chateau Laurier. For two hours, Powell and I basked in the company of this fascinating woman, with her enthusiasm, her exotic personality, and that indestructible fire which had flared within her throughout a remarkable career. In 1912, Shaw wrote *Pygmalion* especially for her, and it was she who first made "Eliza" a memorable stage figure and blazed the way for the many "Fair Ladies" of today. For all her years, she had managed to retain much of the spirit of youth.

Stella Campbell was capable of illustrating, perhaps better than any other living person, the possibilities of the human voice. She had long cultivated an intensely individual style of utterance, and her voice, still of remarkable timbre, held an audience with much of its old power and charm. We put her on the network in "Beautiful Speech and the Art of Acting." She gave a wonderful performance.

I proposed a series of four additional broadcasts on the same subject which broke down into comic and dramatic sketches, lyric poetry, and anecdotes of which she had an inexhaustible repertoire. The cost would have been very little. However, I found the Chairman did not share my enthusiasm. Some acute differences of opinion regarding his ability as a dramatic critic had arisen long before between them, of which I was quite unaware, and the series had to be abandoned. I still have a much-prized letter from Mrs. Campbell thanking me for my efforts on her behalf.

CHAPTER 12

THE RUMPUS OVER PROGRAMMING IN FRENCH

Shortly before the end of 1932, the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission engaged the services of Arthur Dupont, the former manager of CKAC in Montreal, to organize and carry on its operations in the French language. Early in 1933, he was appointed to supervise not only French but all Eastern-Canada network operations. He was an aggressive and competent organizer, and during the winter developed a varied schedule of French programs.

Early in May, a situation arose which brought sharp and prolonged press and public criticism to the Commission. With the signing of a contract for transmission circuits for four hours each evening, it was possible for the Commission to route programs for *one* hour nightly from 9:00 to 10:00 P.M., E.S.T., across the entire country. The remaining three hours were devoted to regional programming. Thomas Maher took over the responsibility for all programming early in May. He at once proceeded to fill three and sometimes four of the seven national hours available weekly with French-language programs. Though these programs were good productions, their sudden appearance so many times a week on the national network at peak hours provoked a veritable flood of protests from press and public, from the Maritimes, and particularly from Ontario and Western Canada. It was not that the French language in itself was objected to. Indeed, it was highly acceptable, as shown by the fact that at the University of Alberta, within a few weeks of starting a course in French phonetics in 1931, more than two thousand, including many business men, were studying French two afternoons a week (PBR 1932, p. 259). And in Saskatchewan,

where courses in French were being given at that time, a similar condition existed with respect to the acceptance of academic French.

The trouble was the French language was associated with Roman Catholicism. Without knowing the depth of religious bigotry in Canada thirty or forty years ago, no one could appreciate the extraordinary reaction to these French-language broadcasts. The Orange Order was dominant in much of Canada, and it was terrifyingly vocal in New Brunswick, Ontario, and some areas of the west. The Ku Klux Klan, with adherents in Saskatchewan (including it was said, at least one M.P. on the government's side),¹ was no less violent in its denunciation.² The change that has taken place in public sentiment in the last quarter century is almost inconceivable.

In the spring of 1933, after the programs in French were heard on the national network, several Protestant denominations co-operated in a mass protest rally at Massey Hall, with overflow meetings in other locations. The Protestant Vigilance Committee, formed largely of Orange groups, sent a resolution to Ottawa in the summer of 1933, urging the abolition of the Commission because its policy had been the cause of discord throughout the country. At the Derry Day Walk on August 12, 1933, over ten thousand Royal Black Knights of Ireland gathered at Guelph. They attacked Communism, separate schools, and bilingualism on the radio. Other groups, too, were upset by this sudden and unexpected national distribution of French programs. The Sons of England of Prince Albert went on record as considering it a concerted effort to make Canada a bilingual country, and insisted that the French language had no official standing outside the Province of Quebec.

So it will not be thought that this picture is overdrawn, here are the words of the Honourable C. H. Cahan, Minister of Justice, who was considered by many to be the most influential members of the Bennett Cabinet:

As a matter of fact, during the past four years, in my capacity as a Minister of the Crown, I have listened to reports coming in from the communities between the Atlantic and the Pacific, and the chief cause of complaint that came in that way to the government, or a committee of the government, was the dual use of the

¹ *The Winnipeg Free Press*, September 9, 1933; Hector Charlesworth, *I'm Telling You*, p. 99.

² *Queen's Quarterly*, Autumn, 1928.

two languages, English and French. Protests from Western Canada against French programs through transcontinental networks were continuous. On the other hand, I just happened to be spending some time in the Maritime Provinces on a holiday, where the French language is well understood. I think there is more complete sympathy between the Maritime Provinces and Quebec than between any other parts of Canada. Yet even there I heard nothing but continued protests against Quebec programs in French taking up the air to the exclusion of English (PCB 1936, p. 357).

They were far from unanimous, but those who objected to the French fact making itself heard outside the Province of Quebec were vociferous. There was a queer mixture of prejudice, bigotry and fear—but not necessarily antagonism—to French as a language.

On May 26, in the absence of Maher, the Chairman issued instructions that the French program scheduled on the national network for Sunday, May 28, must not go west of Ontario, since protests from western members of Parliament made this imperative. When Maher returned a few days later and learned that the French hour was once more scheduled for eastern distribution only, he gave instructions that it must go national. When told that this had been done on the Chairman's explicit instructions, his reply was that he—and not the Chairman—was running the programming. The result was that when the Chairman went west in June of 1933, he was bitterly assailed by the public and press alike.

This whole affair constituted perhaps the single most unfortunate incident in national broadcasting, and its effects were felt for decades to come. Tactfully handled, the occasional routing of French programs over the national network held real possibilities for the greater appreciation of French talent and the French way of life. Later, as understanding grew and prejudice lessened, such broadcasts might have been judiciously increased without arousing any serious agitation. But Maher was in a hurry; the CRBC was inadequately equipped, and the staff inexperienced. What was of potential value was ruined through ambition and sheer awkwardness.

A most regrettable failure of all national broadcasting—even up to the present day—has been its failure to create mutual understanding of the French and English viewpoints, and appreciation of the problems of the racial elements in this country. Far too little consideration has

been given over the years to bridging the chasm with casually informative entertainment reflecting the ways of life, ambitions, and social forces governing the main minorities. Both English and French are to blame, for neither welcomed this.

But the Commission in 1933, instead of promptly recognizing the error in judgment and correcting it, as ultimately had to be done, began searching for a scapegoat. They claimed that it was not that too many French programs were being broadcast but too few English. It was suggested that this was my fault, but the contention was absurd. At the time, there was only one hour (from 9:00 to 10:00 P.M.) available daily on the full national network, and it was completely filled. Many more English programs than French were arranged for network use or suggested and approved by the Chairman, including a wide variety of entertaining features.

BENNETT RECRUITS SPECIAL ADVISER

Early in 1933, the Prime Minister, sensing weaknesses in the legislation and trouble ahead, asked Gladstone Murray of the BBC, who had given impressive evidence before the 1932 Committee on Radio, to come to Canada again for a few months as his personal adviser. Murray was to survey the situation, consider organization and policy, make recommendations on matters of immediate urgency, and follow his comments with a more detailed report at a later date.

Originally the Broadcasting Act required all officers, clerks, and employees to be approved by the Civil Service Commission, an impracticable requirement for a broadcasting organization. It also made a gesture toward the provinces by providing for the appointment of unsalaried assistant provincial commissioners, and provincial advisory committees, none of which were ever appointed. Also, the Commission could not borrow for capital or other purposes. It was clearly not an Act calculated to facilitate any swift change or appreciable building program.

Murray quickly made an interim report which became the basis of Bill 99 (1933) Amending the Act of 1932. This enabled the Commission to appoint its own officers, relying on the Civil Service Commission only for clerical help. Receiver licence fees were no longer regarded as part of consolidated revenues. Leases or purchases of stations now

could be undertaken with the approval of the Governor-in-Council instead of Parliament.

The preoccupation of the Commissioners with executive as well as administrative functions was dealt with explicitly in his later report at the end of July, which said:

Under the present system executive work at Ottawa has so far prevented the Commissioners travelling to any extent. This was the cause of dissatisfaction in Western Canada. . . . The Executive organization should be simple. . . . There should be a Chief Executive, preferably described as General Manager or Director-General, responsible to the Commission. He should be demonstrably free from political partisan association. He should have an Assistant General Manager senior to the rest of the staff.

In his comments, Gladstone Murray also dealt at length with matters of staff, advisory committees, programs, engineering, finance, public relations, international relations, copyright, and programming. His observations on programming were of particular significance:

The commission, in the next year or so, would be well advised not to originate many chain [network] programs, being careful that those so originated under its auspices are of exceptional quality and variety. Programs which private stations could originate more economically than the Commission, and which are eligible for chain relay, should be sponsored by the Commission.

Private stations operating under the Rules and Regulations of the Commission should be encouraged to develop auxiliary program services, financed by advertisers. . . . Having determined the cost of organization, central and regional programs, engineering and land-line costs, the Commission should work out a five-year plan of modest capital development. It will be possible then to estimate the amount of money which must be derived from sponsored programs. . . . To provide a sufficient number of advertisers to bring in the necessary auxiliary revenue, some latitude should be allowed in the building of sponsored programs.

These recommendations were a far cry from the policy that the Commission continued to pursue. As will be noted later, on April 1, 1933, the Commission made a contract with the line companies that

precluded the use of its leased circuits for any network commercial programs at all and, shortly after, it took over a plethora of programs that, with a few exceptions, were certainly not of exceptional quality, many of them quite the contrary. Its members had already buried themselves in day-to-day executive as well as administrative functions. In short, it paid little attention to Murray's recommendations. It was jealous of his influence with the Prime Minister.

CRITICISM OVER COMMISSION INTENSIFIES

Criticism of the Commission, aggravated by the French programs, continued unabated. The extent and intensity of this criticism can best be illustrated by quotes from a few of the best-informed magazines and newspapers. On September 23, 1933, in *Saturday Night*—Charlesworth's own publication—columnist Raymond Mullins wrote: "After innumerable conversations with all sorts of people, and a careful consideration of letters I have received from listeners in all parts of the Dominion, I feel tempted to make some appraisal of the work of the Radio Commission. From no one have I succeeded in procuring the statement that the Commission has done a really good job."

S. Morgan-Powell of *The Montreal Star*, the dean of Canadian music and dramatic critics, was even more critical. He directed a number of highly pertinent inquiries to the Commission, which faithfully reflected the public attitude across Canada. Perhaps the most complete summation was made in 1933 in two articles on September 7 and September 9 in *The Winnipeg Free Press* (a strong supporter of nationalization) by Grant Dexter, its Ottawa correspondent. Occupying nearly two columns each, the articles examined in detail the Commission's efforts. Dexter said: "The Commission has become one of the Bennett Government's most serious political liabilities. It seems incredible that the Commissioners could have forfeited public esteem in so short a time." There followed a detailed calendar of the Commission's aims, which ended with this:

The administrative record of the Commission has been anything but commendable and, indirectly, it has been damned by Major Gladstone Murray who was brought to Canada to inquire into radio operation and control.

After causing the maximum of damage to themselves, the

Commission capitulated. The number of English programs was rapidly increased and the French programs were restricted. Unfortunately, the Commission's about-face came too late. Had they started with two hours of French per week, their chances of success would have been much better.

The Commission is past the point where confidence in its worth can ever be restored. The Commissioners may be able to hang on until the investigation next year, but the final outcome is believed to be certain.

Similar criticism appeared in many other papers and periodicals. Indeed, the Prime Minister himself said: "No one knows better than I the unpopularity for the moment of this Commission" (*Hansard*, May 11, 1933). *The Financial Post* on July 22 reported that the Prime Minister had said that throughout the opposition attacks he had heard nothing that he might not have uttered himself, had he been sitting to the left of Mr. Speaker. At this time also E. J. Garland, M.P., one of the staunchest supporters of nationalization in and out of the House—and one of the ablest members of the 1932 and 1935 Committees—said: "As a result of the castigation the Commission has been getting tonight, a castigation, which very frankly, I think was coming to it—I trust it will have developed some tact" (*Hansard*, May 11, 1933).

The ineptitude of the Commissioners in matters of public relations and particularly in press relations was responsible for much of the Commission's troubles and can be well illustrated. Here is what the Chairman said on October 2, opening the Montreal Radio Show: "There has been no muddle in anything that the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission has done, the only muddle being muddle-brained comments in the Canadian newspapers."

For some time it was evident that my days with the Commission were numbered, though such was my interest in the work that I did not fully realize this. Rifts in thought and approach deepened and widened. On November 24, 1932, the Chairman forwarded to the Civil Service Commission a recommendation covering my appointment as Director of Programs. Though prepared to approve it, the Civil Service Commission could not do so because the three Commissions had not yet formally met and would not do so until late in January. Though the recommendation was again put forward by the Chairman, it was sidetracked, for other influences had intervened. Soon after, my

responsibilities were divided, and my authority, never clearly defined—this was characteristic of the Commission—was further restricted. The Commissioners really wanted no chief executives, preferring to divide administrative responsibilities among themselves, with Maher assuming all programming responsibility in May.

On May 11, the Commission was subjected to a prolonged and bitter attack in the House of Commons from both friends and foes. It was replied to by the Honourable Alfred Duranleau. Four-fifths of his defence of the Commission consisted of a recital of Commission activities, for which I had been directly and almost entirely responsible. The balance consisted mainly of an apology for technical difficulties which had arisen in connection with channel allocations, and of a promise that high-power stations were about to be built in the west.

On June 14, I was summarily told that my position was to be abolished. I was offered a post as English Secretary, at a salary less than two-thirds of what I had been receiving. There never was need for such a position, and the Civil Service Commission quite properly refused to ratify the proposal. At no time had there ever been any suggestion of inefficiency or incompatibility. Nor could I secure any statement from the Commission, save that my position was to be abolished. A curt letter of dismissal from Vice-Chairman Maher and one month's salary were given me. The charge, subsequent to my removal from the Program Department, was that without authority I had promised to broadcast the arrival of the "Balboa Flying Squadron"—sent by Mussolini to represent Italy at the Chicago World's Fair—to the Columbia Broadcasting System. No such promise had ever been made. CBS, as a result of our previous association with the "R 100," the Imperial Conference, and other broadcasts before the Commission existed, had contacted me about the matter. I advised them that, though I had no authority to promise anything, I would pass their request on to the proper person. This was done promptly, but the Commission either lost the request or neglected to do anything about it until the flyers, who had been expected at Montreal, suddenly changed their destination to Shediac, New Brunswick. In the end, the broadcast was carried only by CBS in the United States, and the attempt to blame me was merely a pretext for my removal.

The Chairman was on a trip west. Before he left in June, I had discussed with him the increasing difficulties of my position, and he strongly urged me to remain with the Commission, and after further consideration I wrote to him that I would. On July 6, the very day

the Vice-Chairman dictated my dismissal, the Chairman wrote to me from Vancouver expressing his pleasure that I had decided to remain. He was unaware of the actions of his colleagues. This was a faithful illustration of how well they kept him informed of their intentions. My removal was characterized by the late John W. Dafoe, of *The Winnipeg Free Press*, as a shocking illustration of the kind of politics that often goes on within government departments and commissions.

The truth was that my views on programming were fundamentally at variance with those of the Commission, and a break was ultimately inevitable. My aim was to build a creative organization to give effect to a variety of ideas, to feature more special events and on-the-spot reporting, not forgetting at the same time the need for distinguished musical programs. The Commission at that time was mainly interested in filling evenings with the maximum number of programs carrying its own tag, to impress with quantity rather than distinction.

Following my departure from the Commission, I followed closely its activities, and in the dying days of the Parliamentary Committee of 1934, I asked to be heard. A deliberate attempt was made by the Chairman of the Credentials Sub-Committee to prevent my appearance, but a hint to the press quickly remedied that. Following my presentation, the Commission was given two weeks to reply; these statements are all to be found in the printed record (PCB 1934, pp. 434, 537, 570).

The Chairman, Dr. Morand, generously accorded me the final word in a highly contentious discussion that occasionally reached extremes on both sides. The press response across Canada to my presentation was immediate and sympathetic. On May 19, *The Montreal Gazette*, always alert to the Commission's activities, gave my statement almost four columns on pages one and two, together with a lead editorial. In a memorandum reviewing radio developments, prepared two years later by Alan Plaunt at the request of C. D. Howe, the new Minister, my presentation and reply were characterized as "a devastating, unanswerable, and unanswered arraignment."

I mention these unhappy events not because of any remaining rancour—for I have none—but because they illustrate the cruel practicalities of Canadian politics during a grim period. Drastic as my treatment was, it was but a pale reflection of that accorded to Sir Henry Thornton, who was literally forced out of the CNR in July of 1932 and had no alternative but to seek asylum in his native country. There, a few months later, on March 14, 1933, he lay dead on the

very day he was to have been tendered a testimonial dinner by the railway unions of the CNR and the American Federation of Labour. The bronze plaques that adorn the main CNR stations across Canada are mute evidence of the regard in which he was held.

COMMISSION'S LIFE EXTENDED ONE YEAR

So persistently did the complaints continue regarding the Commission that, on February 16, 1934, a Parliamentary Committee was appointed to report upon its operations. Five of the nine members had been on the 1932 Committee, and Dr. Morand again was Chairman, so there was continuity of personnel. Thirty-seven witnesses appeared, including five Members of Parliament.

Among the more important testimonies were those of Tom Moore, President of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada, and Alan Plaunt, President of the Radio League. Moore strongly urged that the Commission should be enlarged, "should be more in the nature of an advisory and administrative body, and that the actual management should be placed under a responsible general manager." A manager could carry out the general policies set down by the Commission, while the Commission itself would be a buffer between management and the government, rather than being responsible for the day-to-day mistakes management might make. He did not agree with the appointment of advisory councils from each province, the Trades and Labour Council leaning more to centralization. Plaunt said:

Another fundamental defect is that the Commission has been charged with the double function of direction and operation involving both formulation and execution of policy—a situation fatal to the success of any enterprise which requires direction in the evident interest of the public, together with efficient unified management. The Canadian Radio League may properly claim to have brought about recognition by the Prime Minister and all parties, of the need for public ownership of broadcasting in Canada as a matter of urgent national necessity. Today after seeing that principle progressively imperilled for almost two years through a faulty constitution, it proposes to urge on the government recognition along the lines originally laid down.

The Committee recommended that "the government should, during the recess, consider the advisability of amending the Act, with a view to securing better broadcasting facilities throughout the Dominion. In the opinion of your Committee, radio broadcasting could best be conducted by a General Manager." It also recommended a more liberal interpretation of the Act with respect to advertising content, a greater use of electrical transcriptions, and a greater degree of co-operation between the Commission and private stations. These were all matters that already lay within the powers of the Commission, so that the legislation enacted in 1934 was actually confined to nothing more than the extension of the life of the Commission for another year.

On March 23, 1934, the Murray Report of 1933 was mentioned before the Committee, the Chairman suggesting that Colonel Steel should be questioned regarding it. However, at the request of the latter, its consideration was deferred until he had an opportunity to refresh his memory. Though the hearing continued until June, the Murray Report was never brought up for discussion.

Two years later it was disclosed, during the hearings of 1936, that two members of the Commission, Charlesworth and Steel, had made certain majority recommendations to the government early in May of 1934 regarding further amendments to the Act. The most interesting of these was the suggestion that the regulatory and operational functions of the Commission should be separated, and that a Corporation should be formed, *owned by the Commission*, which would be responsible for the preparation and distribution of its programs throughout the country. More than twenty years later the Fowler Commission would make a very similar recommendation. But the proposal was not unanimous. Thomas Maher did not agree and submitted a statement of his own directly to the Prime Minister. No attention was paid by the government to either suggestion, nor did they come before the Committee of 1934. Indeed, nothing would ever have been heard of them, had not the majority Commission issued a statement to the press regarding this on June 28, the day the report of the Parliamentary Committee of 1936 was announced.

With an election in the offing, there was no Parliamentary inquiry in 1935. When the last Parliamentary Committee on Radio prior to the demise of the CRBC met on March 24, 1936, its first act was to inquire from the Chairman of the Radio Commission what action, if any, had been taken with respect to the recommendations of the 1934 Committee, particularly with respect to the appointment of a general

manager. His reply was: "I have been general manager and Colonel Steel has been assistant general manager, with Mr. Maher. We carry on all branches of the work in the absence of any business manager." He added: "The suggestion as to a general manager came as a surprise to us." This in spite of the fact that, on at least ten pages of the Proceedings of 1934, the subject of a general manager was discussed, and was the definite recommendation of the Trades and Labour Congress, the Radio League, and the Murray Report.

To further questioning on the same subject by a member of the Committee, Charlesworth said:

We were having a hard time scratching through and carrying on our work, and to add to the forces a general manager, whom I would have to start in and teach—and, at a considerable salary—I would have considered it an uneconomical action.

Question: "It just occurs to me to suggest this, many large corporations, I think most of them, have general managers; does anybody on your commission, or any employee, do the work that a general manager if appointed, would be expected to do?"

Answer: "Our machine does that."

Question: "I never heard of a machine being a general manager."

Answer: "I mean by that our office organization." (PCB 1936, p.10.)

He later conceded that some time in the future a general manager might be desirable.

CHAPTER 13

STRANGE TRANSMISSION CONTRACTS

To understand the source of some of the major difficulties of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, it is only necessary to examine its negotiations and contracts with the transmission companies in 1933 and 1935. The importance of these is indicated by the fact that discussion of the subject occupied no less than 140 pages in the Proceedings of the Parliamentary Committee of 1936.

On April 1, 1933, one month after the CNR facilities and staff were taken over, the Commission signed an agreement with the joint services of the Canadian Pacific and Canadian National Telegraphs. This was for transmission circuits to broadcast over national and regional networks their sustaining (or non-commercial) programs for four hours daily between 6:00 P.M. and midnight, plus half an hour prior to 6:00 P.M., the latter exclusively for educational purposes, this service to be available to thirty-nine stations at thirty-four different points. The agreement was the culmination of nearly four months of negotiations which commenced with an exploratory meeting in Montreal on December 8, 1932, attended by both railway and telephone interests. The Chairman asked me to conduct these early negotiations because of my familiarity with network operations, rates, and probable needs of the Commission. Also, the technical member of the Commission, Colonel Steel, was absent in Europe until well into January.

The move of the railways to unify their broadcasting-transmission operations has already been told, as well as the story of the tie-up of several telephone companies early in 1932 under the Trans-Canada Telephone System. Both groups were now keen to lease their lines

for broadcasting. Rates for varying time periods had been worked out by both parties, with little or no variation between them.

The Commission's first request was for rates nationally and regionally on a sixteen-hour-a-day basis, the same basis on which the American networks operated. Though the programs of the Commission could not, for a considerable period, occupy more than a mere fraction of the time, it was important to place rates for such a basic period on record. The sixteen-hour bulk rate was by far the most economical, but the funds available were inadequate. Rates were then requested for five evening hours daily, between 6:00 P.M. and midnight, varying slightly in the several times zones. It was suggested to the line companies that since the time needed was mainly during their least busy evening hours, they might consider making the rate for five hours reasonably proportionate with the sixteen-hour rate. Rates on variations of these periods, and on various station groupings, were also requested and complied with. This was an involved exploratory process that took time, especially as the CRBC had almost no staff. The first Inter-Empire Christmas Broadcast had to be arranged, and the long holiday season intervened, but by the middle of February the necessary information was virtually complete (PCB 1936, pp. 503, 749).

Up to this point, no notable concession or appreciable difference in rates had appeared among the tentative submissions from the two groups. But now an unexpected event occurred. The three Prairie government-owned telephone systems, which for several years had been broadcasting commercial programs over a Prairie network of their own lines, submitted, on February 17, a firm offer of rates for service covering Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. It was approximately 25 per cent lower for their section of the national network than had so far been quoted (PCR 1936, p. 451). The condition attached was that they should be given the business in that area exclusively. The limitations of the Prairie telephones to one region was a handicap, but their offer held out the hope of securing a worthwhile concession in the over-all rates, something the Commission badly needed. This offer of the Prairie telephones was acknowledged by the Chairman to the Minister of Telephones for Manitoba on the day it was received:

I have received this morning the submission on behalf of the Western Telephone Systems, and wish to thank you for the clearness and detail in which it is presented.

The whole question of our land-wire arrangements will be

taken up between now and March 31, when we hope to strike an arrangement equitable to all interests concerned. While of course it is impossible for the Commission at the present time to give exclusive business in coverage to the prairie systems, it is the opinion of myself and also of the Prime Minister that your organization should share in any agreement that we may in future arrive at. (Signed) Hector Charlesworth. (PCB 1936, p. 446.)

Obviously the Chairman had immediately acquainted the Prime Minister with this important offer.

PROPOSAL TO POOL WIRE LINES

At that time there were two opinions as to how this business should be handled. One was to award the contract outright on a best-price and best-service basis. The other was, after preliminary negotiations for the best price and best service, to bring all groups into a common pool to obtain the maximum availability and flexibility of facilities. After all, broadcasting was then but a very small part of the business of any one of them. This would have meant their setting up of a central bureau to service the needs of the Commission, to allocate facilities, and share revenues. It would have provided the maximum of stand-by circuits.

The idea of pooling was by no means new. It had been urged first by Gordon Olive, then Technical Adviser on the Commission staff, later Chief Engineer of the CBC, long before the Commission existed and again after it commenced. He had an emphatic belief in the desirability of having all the transmission interests join in a broadcasting pool, pointing out the importance of maximum availability and flexibility of circuits. There were many points at which the use of telephone lines was essential to reach stations, and in virtually all places local loops were in the hands of the telephone companies. Olive had played an important part in the centralized effort in connection with the Confederation Jubilee Broadcast of 1927, and again for the Christmas Broadcast of 1932. In these efforts, he had close practical associations with the transmission personnel of both railways and telephones, and a comprehensive grasp of the strength and weaknesses of all the transmission systems in so far as they related to broadcasting. He was cognizant of the lack of co-ordination in Canada's communications systems and tremendously interested in seeing them improved. He even

hoped someday to see a Ministry of Communications. I shared many of Olive's views and during the Parliamentary Committee hearings of 1936 said: "My idea was to effect a combination of service from all the wire systems so that the business would be pooled, because the most effective service could only be reached by such an arrangement."

The railways did not share this view, although the telephone interests did. The CNR and the CPR had made signal contributions to the development of national broadcasting. They contended that their circuits were superior, that business was not bulky enough to be split three ways, that they needed money badly in those depressed times, and that the telephone interests did not. I knew for a fact that this last contention had been impressed on the Minister of Railways, who was by no means unsympathetic. Whether he had in turn impressed it on the Commission was never certain. The telephone interests hinted that he had, but the technical member of the Commission said that so far as he knew he had not.

Late in February, all negotiations were taken over by Colonel Steel, and I had no further part in them or knowledge of details through consultation or otherwise. Moreover, from that moment neither the western nor the Trans-Canada Telephone interests were given any further serious consideration, nor were they even advised after a contract had been signed with the railways one month later.

When the western provincially owned telephone companies found themselves ignored in the Commission's wire-line set-up, after seeing their submission used to beat down the rates, they were very incensed. The Honourable W. J. Major, Minister of Telephones for Manitoba, speaking on behalf of all three Prairie provinces, said: "It is difficult to conceive of anything more detrimental to the ideal of public ownership than the action of the Canadian Radio Commission in its treatment of the publicly owned telephone systems. It is hard to believe that the Commission was entirely a free agent in contracting for land-wire services." (PCB 1936, p. 457.)

AN IMPRACTICAL CONTRACT

The first line contract of the CRBC with the railways was for an annual amount of \$275,000. For any time in excess of the four evening hours provided for in the contract, an additional rental pro-rated on the above rate was to be paid. It included the following extraordinary clause:

The Commission undertakes and agrees not to employ the said transmission lines for commercial broadcasting purposes and agrees not to compete with the railways in the commercial broadcasting field. If, however, the Commission at any time hereafter determines to undertake commercial broadcasting, it shall give to the railways and to each of them reasonable notice of its intention so to do and in such event the Commission shall not undertake such commercial broadcasting unless and until the amounts to be paid by the Commission to the railways for the use of the said transmission lines for such purposes shall have been mutually agreed upon.

It was a strange and absurd restriction to place upon its own operations, when there was nothing whatever in the Act to forbid it from engaging in commercial network operations. Indeed, the Act contemplated such action. It went much further than even the most restrictive advocates of non-commercialism had ever expected. Whatever justification there might have been for caution about undertaking a monetary obligation, which it might conceivably have found difficulty in meeting, there was no sound reason whatever for shutting itself off from potential income which would have helped meet that obligation, especially from programs that would have helped balance its schedules and save production costs. It was one of the least excusable of the many inexcusable acts of the Commission, and it was not long before the practicalities of network broadcasting compelled its revision.

Line facilities leased by the Commission should have been available for either sustaining or commercial network programs, and before the Parliamentary Committee of 1936, I said: "The leasing of time on a continuous basis over the entire evening period was urged on the Commission in the earliest months of its operation—the idea being to not only carry the Commission's own productions but to supplement them with programs from various other sources, including *sponsored commercial network programs*." (PCB 1936, p. 509.)

On September 1, 1933, the two railways pooled, on a fifty-fifty basis, both their broadcasting-line facilities and their revenues from commercials, as well as from the contract they had concluded with the Commission. Three months later, all the transmission companies agreed to a reduction of 25 per cent in line rates for commercials. The Commission claimed credit for this, but it was competition and not the CRBC that brought it about. The reduction applied to network commer-

cials only, and the Commission had none of these for nearly two years. The Chairman also claimed credit for a reduction of 75 per cent in the cost of carrying sustaining programs.¹ This was even more erroneous because at no time, up to the advent of the Commission, had any charge been made by either railway for carrying sustainers. They had carried their own sustainers at no charge to stations, and the CNR Telegraphs provided circuits in Eastern Canada entirely free of charges for two years during the evening hours for the interchange of sustainers.

Within five months of signing its first line contract, the Commission had second thoughts about the practicality of its commercial policy, for the Chairman in September said to the Canadian Press in Montreal: "Proposals are now being discussed which will lead to a new policy altogether. I am anxious to see national broadcasting restored on terms reasonable to the advertisers which will be beneficial also to the newspapers." Shortly after, on September 16, Colonel Steel sent the following telegram to a number of commercial broadcasting stations across Canada:

Commission considering entering commercial field in effort to increase number of first-class programs now available listeners across Canada. This involves making combined rates attractive to advertisers. Propose offering this service in form of number of chains covering various parts of Canada. Wire collect lowest net costs you can offer Commission for half-hour and hour periods during day and also during night hours. Please co-operate by forwarding information promptly as season now well advanced.

This was a strange wire from an organization that only a few months earlier had contracted itself out of the commercial field for three years. A copy of the wire was handed to the press by an Eastern radio station and appeared in *The Ottawa Journal* on September 20, with this comment: "The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission is contemplating an extensive campaign for the sale of time for advertising broadcasts." It added that CKNC in Toronto had been approached officially to organize the Commission's campaign in that city. An announcement ten days later indicated that, far from originating with the Commission, the idea had been sold to the Commission by CKNC.

Though the Commission lived from crisis to crisis—in true radio

¹ *I'm Telling You*, p. 96.

tradition—it lived for a few days in a highly accentuated one. Within ten days it beat a hasty retreat, by issuing this statement on September 30:

For some time the Canadian Radio Commission has been considering a proposition laid before it with regard to sponsored advertising programs on its networks. Today the Commission considered the information it had collected from all sources and after discussing the question from every angle decided that at the present time it would not be advisable to go ahead with the plan. For the present at least network advertising will be left in private hands.

This was carried in *The Toronto Star* on September 30, 1933. It took very little change in the atmosphere to cool the ardour of the Commission toward developing network commercial programs.

POOLING FINALLY ADOPTED

For a few months in late 1933, the railway and telephone interests competed openly for commercial business. But in January of 1934, at the request of the Commission, representatives of both groups met to discuss the pooling of all facilities for and revenue from commercial networks. With the Commission controlling four evening hours each day, most of the desirable evening periods were pre-empted, and network sponsors found it virtually impossible to secure suitable time. With few exceptions, both the CRBC and the sponsors wanted the same stations; if sponsors were given time, it was necessary for the Commission to release time occasionally to them, particularly for special programs and major sporting events. There also was the problem of avoiding discrimination between the two transmission groups in the release of time for commercial programs, unless a pool was arranged.

At a meeting of the Commission and wire companies on January 10, 1934, a proposal was made to establish two networks, one for Commission-sustaining programs, and a second for sponsored programs. Whatever might have been said for this in theory, it was obviously impracticable at that time, with so few stations available. Listeners were still far too few for one network, let alone two (PCB 1936, pp. 480-81).

The Commission then agreed to establish a central bureau for

booking, central accounting, and as a collection agency for commercial networks. Both wire groups—the railways and telephone interests—agreed to pool their facilities and their revenues, the telephone interests taking 40 per cent and the railways each 30 per cent. Facilities were to be contributed in roughly the same proportion. This pool was, in effect, similar to the arrangement suggested by Olive, except that instead of transmission interests setting up their own machinery the Commission now did it for them. The other major exception was that the earnings from the Commission's contract covering sustainers had already been sequestered to the railways. This pool became effective and worked satisfactorily until the fall of 1935, when the Commission's wire contract was rewritten. Its earnings for the year 1935 were \$149,000 net.

Within a few months of the first contract becoming effective, the strait-jacket of only four evening hours of railway wire service each day began to handicap the Commission in its operations. More time and greater flexibility were needed. Though the use of excess time by the Commission did not begin for several months after the contract was signed, by the end of the first fiscal year of March 31, 1934, the expenditures for *additional transmission facilities* to the railways exceeded the contract by \$26,000, and in the next year the excess paid to them was \$56,000. Indeed, so many changes in the Commission's requirements by way of overtime developed that, early in 1935, it realized that something must be done. Negotiations were opened that resulted in scrapping the old contract and replacing it with a new one dated July 19, 1935.

The old contract had become unworkable. The needs of major sponsors like General Motors for hockey, and others anxious for network time, could not be satisfied under it. Efficient scheduling was impossible. The new contract provided for six hours each evening, 5:30 to 11:30 P.M., and eight and a half hours on Sunday. The price was \$375,000 annually, plus three cents per mile-hour, when excess time required was contiguous with regular contract time, and five cents per mile-hour for non-contiguous time.

By far the most important feature of the new contract was the provision that the Commission could use its circuits for either sustaining or commercial programs. The Commission retained the earnings from the release of its lines to sponsors. Under this arrangement it was not long before the earnings of the private commercial pool fell off seriously, and in 1936 the telephone interests pulled out of the pool. Though far from perfect, the new contract was a vast improvement over the old

one. Had it been put into effect in the spring of 1933, many of the Commission's headaches would have been avoided, and a far smoother working organization would have resulted.

The new contract was negotiated by Jacques Cartier, who in 1934 succeeded Maher as Vice-Chairman, and who had much more broadcasting experience than any of the other Commissioners. It provided service to fifty-seven stations at thirty-nine points. At the suggestion of the railways—and a very clever suggestion it was—the contract was extended to five years, until 1940. Once more this shut out the telephone interests from any prospect of participating in the revenues received from the Commission, except for such local facilities as the railways could not themselves provide. But the new contract once more fell short of answering the network requirements of the Commission, and for the year ending March 31, 1936, an additional \$58,000 had to be added to the contract price.

TELEPHONE INTERESTS KEPT IN THE DARK

The telephone companies, thoroughly chagrined at being outsmarted in the original contract, were out for a share of any future contracts. They were under the impression that the first contract had been for two years instead of three. On May 28, 1935, they once more tendered their services to the Commission and said: "The Trans-Canada Telephone Systems suggest that some plan be developed for utilizing the services of the telegraph and telephone companies on a fair basis of apportionment." They wrote again on July 12, and a third time on July 21 (PCB 1936, pp. 470-72). On July 24, the Chairman of the Commission finally acknowledged their letters. He said: "I looked into this matter and find that the contract with the wire companies made in 1933 does not expire until March 31, 1936. While we may be asking the railway companies to arrange certain services not contemplated in 1933, it is quite obvious that no contract could be entered into with the telephone companies during the present year" (PCB 1936, p. 472).

This letter was written four days *after* the new contract negotiated by Cartier and approved by Steel had been signed with the railway companies, a contract that pledged for five years one-quarter or more of all the revenues of the Commission, and totalled only slightly less than two million dollars. It illustrates again the utter lack of co-ordination in the affairs of the Commission and how the Commissioners failed to

keep the Chairman informed of what was going on. The contract was completed while he was on his holidays. When asked about this before the Parliamentary Committee of 1936, Steel could give no logical explanation.

On July 30, 1935, the railways, with a new contract safely signed, then notified their telephone partners in the commercial pool that one of the articles of agreement between the Commission and the railways provided for the Commission to exercise the privilege of transmitting programs over its network, the revenue therefrom to accrue to the Commission, from August 1 (PCB 1936, p. 474). Finally, on August 19, a representative of the Trans-Canada Telephone System went to Ottawa to find out whether there was a new contract, and the terms that permitted the Commission to share in the commercial business. Colonel Steel at first indicated that the information obtained by the telephone interests was incorrect. But the following day he located the contract he had signed only a month before and advised them that it was for a period of five years from the first of August, 1935 (PCB 1936, p. 475). He then wrote the Trans-Canada Telephone System on September 10, 1935: "Insofar as commercial programs are concerned, and you are mainly interested in this point, there has not been any appreciable change from the original [1933] contract. The only change of any importance is an arrangement whereby the Commission can release their circuits for special events or commercial features during our contract and for these periods we are now in a position to claim some return. In the past we have been forced to do this on some occasions and have been out of pocket *not only for the cost of the lines, but for the cost of the programs we had prepared for those periods*. I can assure you the Commission has no intention of going into the commercial field in an extended campaign" (PCB 1936, p. 484).

D. L. Howard, the Railways' representative before the Parliamentary Committee of 1936 said: "It might be termed a co-ordinating arrangement to enable the Commission to secure certain programs and embody them in its own set-up. The intention was never that they should be a commercial organization" (PCB 1936, p. 539). This was a remarkable assumption, considering there was nothing whatever in the Aird Report, the plan of the Radio League, or the Broadcasting Act to warrant this interpretation.

Nevertheless, according to its annual reports, the commercial earnings of the Commission, which were \$149,000 for the year ending March 31, 1935, rose to \$372,000 the following year, a result substan-

tially contributed to by network commercials. Had the extra earnings, which were derived from the network operations and resulted from even the restricted change of policy, been added to the amount spent for wire lines, there is little doubt it would have enabled the Commission to engage the circuits on a sixteen-hour-a-day basis and given vastly greater freedom to its operations.

The Commission not only restricted its acceptance of *network* commercial programs but practically spurned the acceptance of commercial programs of *local* origin whatever their merit. An analysis of commercial time on CRCT Toronto in March of 1936 showed less than three-and-one-half hours a week of such programs, although at the time it was broadcasting twelve hours weekly of commercials from NBC. It was almost impossible to buy time for local programs. This policy was partially a hang-over from fear of press criticism in the interim following the election of 1935.

Steel contended that the ability of the railways to provide alternate circuits across the entire country had been an important factor in the Commission's decision to give the business exclusively to the Railways. When it was suggested to him by a member of the Parliamentary Committee of 1936 that the pooling arrangement should have been extended to include all the wire services, and that a triplicate service would be better still, he made no response (PCB 1936, p. 761). The Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee further emphasized this point by adding: "It is hard for me to understand if your 60-40 arrangement works so well in one way why it will not work in another" (PCB 1936, p. 761). To contend that the pooling arrangements could not have been applied equally well to sustaining as well as commercial programs was arrant nonsense, and Steel on the last day of the 1936 Committee hearings finally admitted: "Were we asked to do the same thing in the future I would be in favour of calling for sealed tenders" (PCB 1936, p. 758).

It was not until the CBC took over that a satisfactory line contract emerged in 1937. The Corporation negotiated a line contract on a sixteen-hour daily basis, which left it untrammelled in setting rates and policy. The total cost under the new contract, including several additional stations, was \$515,000 for the first two years and \$575,000 annually for the last three. No extras were necessary for additional time. It was approximately \$70,000 more than the Commission paid for six-and-one-half hours. This contract, and the emergence of the Trans-Canada and Dominion networks, will be discussed later.

AFTERMATH OF DISPUTE

Though the telephone interests found themselves shut out of most of the revenues from radio broadcasting, they did not give up the fight. When television arrived in 1952, the Bell Telephone Company built the Trans-Canada facilities for the CBC television network. They are also furnishing the facilities for the new "second" television network. Total annual expenditures of the CBC alone—for transmission facilities—now exceeds \$10,000,000 annually, over 75 per cent of which is for television. The railways furnish the TV facilities for the French network and also from Toronto to Windsor. The railways managed to retain all the *radio* business until 1961. When the radio contracts came up for renewal that year, the telephone interests underbid the railways for this too, and since the fall of 1962 have furnished the major part of the facilities for radio transmission as well as for television. The railways have now completed a new transcontinental microwave network as part of a Commonwealth Communications System, which was officially opened on May 11, 1964, at a reported cost of \$41,000,000. The first announcement of this proposal immediately provoked a statement from the Trans-Canada Telephone System that this would duplicate their facilities. It claimed that the latter's potential was ample to meet all foreseeable communications requirements, including defence. When the new railway microwave system is completed, broadcasters should be assured for a long time of both competitive service and rates.²

Nevertheless, the concept of a unified service shared by all transmission interests—as contemplated in the early negotiations of 1932 and 1933—was sound. A study with a board that would determine fair and equitable rates, at that time of all facilities available and their co-ordination was advocated. Though the railways gained a very substantial advantage in income from 1933 to 1952, over what they would have received under a unified arrangement, it seems doubtful whether this was adequate to compensate for the situation when total earnings from broadcasting have multiplied many times. Under such a unified arrangement, nothing could have kept the railways from sharing, on at least an equal basis, in the vast TV transmission developments of later years.

² *The Financial Post*, reviewing the new railway microwave system, said on September 26, 1964: "We now have communications systems galore, but users say antiquated rates hold back expansion."

PROMISES OF HIGHER POWER

Throughout the country, and in the House of Commons, there were demands during the life of the Commission from 1933 to 1936 for the improvement of coverage, especially in Northern Ontario, the west, and the Maritimes. After almost four years of a moratorium on radio station expansion—from December 1928 to 1933—it was very important for the protection of Canada's interests in the matter of high-power channels that some worthwhile capital construction should be undertaken. Demands for new high-power stations were numerous and insistent, but the CRBC was powerless to give effect to them. The Commission's limited funds left nothing for capital construction, and the government made no move to help build the required stations.

On May 11, 1933, a full-dress debate on the affairs of the Commission took place in the House of Commons. The Prime Minister said:

There you have the problem, with this great country to the south with 120,000,000 people and with its powerful stations. You know the network of them, the one outside New York City, the very powerful one at Schenectady, the one at Cincinnati, then down the west coast and as far as Texas. We have the one across the Texas boundary with strength sufficient to produce interference in this country—that is the situation." (*Hansard*, May 11, 1933.)

During the same debate, the Honourable Alfred Duranleau, Minister of Marine, said: "After a careful survey of radio conditions in Canada, the Commission considers that it is essential that two new stations should be erected in Western Canada. It is proposed to begin construction of two high-powered stations in British Columbia and in Saskatchewan. The coverage in British Columbia is at present very poor. . . ." Two months later, interviewed by *The Edmonton Bulletin*, during his first official visit to the west, Hector Charlesworth was quoted on July 13, 1933, as saying that the CRBC had been planning to build two powerful stations, one in Saskatchewan, the other in British Columbia, but the Treasury Board had vetoed any capital expenditure. In October of 1933, the Chairman promised a more powerful station in Northern Ontario, where conditions were particularly bad. Again, on March 9, 1934, the Minister said: "At the present time we are contemplating the construction of very powerful stations in Canada in order to protect

our wave-lengths from Mexican interference. And once more, on April 16, 1935, he reiterated his annual and empty assurances about high-power stations in the House.

Meantime, 50-kw. stations were erected throughout the United States, with others still more powerful along the Mexican border, some of the latter broadcasting on channels reserved for Canada.³ On January 1, 1933, there were sixteen 50-kw. stations in the United States, with several permits outstanding. In December of 1937, when Canada's first two 50-kw. stations were opened, there were over thirty 50-kw. stations to the south. But for eight years, until the CBC began, the Canadian government did little more than talk.

When Charlesworth was interrogated about capital construction at the opening of the Parliamentary Committee of 1936's hearings, the Honourable C. H. Cahan, on behalf of the government, took the responsibility. He said that from time to time the question of increasing governmental appropriations for this purpose had been duly considered, and in view of the financial position in the country the recommendations of the 1934 Committee were not carried into effect because the time was not deemed appropriate in view of the resources and revenues of the country. And in debate in the House during the 1936 session, Bennett, then Leader of the Opposition, said: "Owing to the lack of funds, our organization was not able to build stations" (*Hansard*, 1936, p. 3710).

Nevertheless, while Parliament was consistently voting even less than was being currently collected in licence fees each year—after deducting collection charges and expenditures for the suppression of interference—almost \$2,400,000 had been collected through the Receiver-General from licence fees (over and above all expenses of collection and other expenditures, plus suppression of interference). From 1922 to March 31, 1932, exactly 2,593,691 licences had been issued at one dollar each. During that period, \$1,336,000 of this was spent "in collections, in the suppression of interference, and all the work that goes with it" (PCB 1932, p. 108). This left \$1,257,000, which went into Consolidated Revenue.

On April 1, 1932, the fee was raised to two dollars, and during that fiscal year 761,000 licences were issued. Out of this was paid \$235,301 for collections, interference, etc., plus \$149,296 spent by the Commission between November 1, 1932, and March 31, 1933. This left

³ *Analyzing the Havana Treaty*, Keith MacKinnon, 9.

\$1,137,400 which, added to the net amount collected prior to April 1, 1932, brought the total to a conservative \$2,395,000 at March 31, 1933. It was money secured not out of general taxes but from licence fees. It was enough to have built the seven 50-kw. stations recommended by the Aird Commission. Colonel Steel said before the Parliamentary Committee of 1932: "I am quite convinced that you could buy a 50-kw. station to-day for \$250,000" (PCB 1932, p. 90), adding that costs had fallen since the Aird Report had been made. Others put the cost of such stations around \$300,000 each. This sum would not only have built the stations, but it would have left a substantial sum for other purposes. Though the monies accumulated prior to April 1, 1932, had become irredeemable, this was certainly not true of those collected after that date. These alone would have built several 50-kw. stations, had they been made available to the Commission which made this statement in its Annual Report for 1934-35: "The need for higher-power stations, strategically located, is even greater than heretofore recognized. It is impracticable, however, to provide such high-power stations from the present Parliamentary appropriation." The Parliamentary votes to the Commission from licence fees were: for 1933-34, \$1,025,000; for 1934-35, \$1,250,000; for 1935-36, \$1,500,000.

POLITICAL PRESSURES ON CRBC

Undoubtedly the government was hard put in face of falling revenues. But there were other influences at work within the Cabinet. In spite of more than \$1,000,000 remaining unspent from the 1932-33 collections, and a healthy anticipated increase in licence fees in 1933-34, the vote to the Commission was still restricted to approximately \$1,000,000. This had been authorized for only a few months, and the Act was revised to make it more workable, when the Minister, in June of 1933, asked the Commission to cut its expenditures for that year to one-half, or \$500,000, stating that this had been put to him by his colleagues, some of whom favored a suspension of the operations of the Commission for a full year. This pressure group went to work while the Prime Minister was in England, just one month after the Minister had assured the House that the Commission was planning to erect high-power stations in British Columbia and Saskatchewan. Such a cut would have reduced the Commission to impotency, and when the Chairman threatened to cable his resignation to the Prime Minister, the Minister

hastily changed his mind, asked him to forget it, and assured him that he would do his best with his colleagues.⁴

Much the same thing happened again in 1935. That spring, following a strenuous period during which he broadcast an extraordinary series of addresses on his "New Deal" policies, the Prime Minister was obliged to take a rest and went to England for a brief visit. During his absence according to Charlesworth, the private-station lobby against the Commission was intensified. He said:

A big coup was planned whereby three private stations in Central Canada which were outlets of a great United States network⁵ were to be licensed to increase their power to 50 kw. each and allotted three of the six clear channels Canada owns under its agreement with the United States.

The lobbyists also sought an arrangement whereby commercial programs, both American and Canadian, should have the right of way on the national network over our sustaining programs and thereby a part of our revenues should be directed toward lowering the costs of network distribution to advertisers. . . . A western member whose constituency lay remote from central Canada was enlisted as chief agent of these plans and by one argument or another he succeeded in lining up with him twenty-seven fellow members of the Conservative caucus who wanted to have a House Committee assembled and jam through the scheme before the Prime Minister returned. Mr. Bennett got back sooner than expected and the iron heel came down quickly on this "sinister conspiracy" as he called it.⁶

In 1935, the Commission erected a 1,000-watt station to serve the Quebec City area, and one of similar power at Windsor, the latter in co-operation with the Western Ontario Broadcasting Company in whose premises the transmitter was located. It constructed a small short-wave receiving station at Britannia Heights, near Ottawa. The Commission also sought to implement a promise of the Chairman, made in 1933, to effect an improvement at Vancouver, and the CRBC

⁴ *I'm Telling You*, pp. 67-9.

⁵ The only network having three outlets in Canada at the time was the Columbia Broadcasting System. The outlets were CKLW Windsor, CFRB Toronto, and CKAC Montreal.

⁶ *I'm Telling You*, p. 116.

had a new 5-kw. station partially completed by the time the CBC took over late in 1936. This was the extent of its building program during four years of office.

How much the restrictive policies of the government—Cahan said they were reconsidered from time to time—were due to the more or less continuous turmoil in which the Commission found itself will never be certain. Unquestionably the confidence of the government in the capacity and sagacity of its own creation had been badly shaken, and there is little or no evidence that the Commission accepted this situation with other than complacency.

Under the circumstances, the Commission had no alternative but to lease stations in a few key centres and depend generally on private stations to distribute its programs. In the Spring of 1933, it sought a full-time outlet in the Toronto area, and entered into negotiations with CFRB. In spite of no little adjuration on the part of the Commission, the effort got nowhere (PCB 1934, pp. 356-57). CFRB regarded the offer of eleven dollars an hour for evening time as entirely inadequate.

AN EXPENSIVE LAWSUIT

The Commission next sought to acquire CKGW, the NBC outlet in Toronto, which was known as the "Cheerio" station. It was owned by Gooderham and Worts, the distillers, and was managed by R. W. Ashcroft who had a particular aversion to nationalization and the Commission. The station had been located at Bowmanville, where its coverage was most advantageous during the period when the Volstead Act governing prohibition was in force in the neighbouring United States. Though prohibition did not end in the United States until December 5, 1933, the certainty of its ending was evident for some time, and the approach of CRBC to acquire CKGW was not unwelcome. The studios of CKGW were in the King Edward Hotel, under lease, and one condition of the contract was that the hotel was to have a certain number of free mentions each day. Its orchestras were also to be broadcast a certain number of times each day.

Preliminary negotiations were carried on between the Chairman and the President of Gooderham and Worts. The details were left to be worked out by Colonel Steel. The lease had to be authorized by an Order-in-Council. The Commission recommended to the Minister a five-year lease, at \$12,000 a year, mentioning in its recommendation:

"This is a very favourable offer in view of the fact that the station has returned a profit to its owners of approximately \$20,000 a year since its inauguration in 1928." This was strangely different from the Chairman's evidence a few months later, on April 20, 1934, when he reported that there had been a loss of \$40,000 under Ashcroft's management for three months (PCB 1934, p. 255). Figures submitted in court later by Gooderham and Worts claimed that, though the station had lost \$20,458 in its first year, 1928, in each succeeding year it had made a profit averaging over \$30,000 annually, after repairs, but before depreciation.

The Order-in-Council approved a lease of CKGW for three years, but without reference to conditions that were subsequently included in the lease, which was signed on June 15. Two clauses in the lease of the Bowmanville property turned out to have unusual significance. One necessitated six months' clear notice by either party. The other said: "The lessee covenants with the lessor to keep the whole of the demised premises modern and up-to-date and in good repair and operating condition." In court, Gooderham and Worts claimed that they were entitled at the termination of the lease to the most modern plant the site would accommodate.

As soon as the Commission took over CKGW, it changed the call letters to CRCT, dropped most of the mentions of the King Edward Hotel, and greatly restricted the use of its orchestra. A little later, it moved its studio equipment to the premises of CKNC, from which it leased more spacious studios. The Hotel thereupon sued Gooderham and Worts and the CRBC as third party. It claimed damages of \$44,000, mostly for lost advertising. It recovered \$5,200, which the Commission had to make good to Gooderham and Worts. The judgment contained reasons that were to be significant in a later action.

The lease of the transmitter at Bowmanville continued under the CRBC after the first three years. When the CBC took over from the CRBC and completed its new 50-kw. station at Hornby, in December of 1937, it had no further need for the Bowmanville set-up. It transferred the channel to CBL and notified Gooderham and Worts, in January of 1938, of its wish to terminate the lease on May 15. The notice was not strictly according to the requirements of the lease. Nor was the CBC's offer with respect to restoring the property satisfactory to Gooderham and Worts, who claimed that the lease contained a proviso, coupled with a covenant, the effect of which was to make the lease binding in perpetuity. They made a claim for \$250,000, which was subsequently reduced to \$150,000.

The case dragged through the Ontario Courts and from there to the Privy Council which, on October 10, 1946, confirmed the decision of the Ontario Courts against the CBC. The total final assessment to the CBC for these actions, with costs, is said to have been well in excess of \$200,000. Thus ended the most fantastic and costly case in Canadian radio history, all based on an ineptly drawn and inadequately checked document.

Prior to the suit, the CBC's defence counsel sought knowledge of the circumstances from those who had been associated with the CRBC at the time the lease was signed, but little or nothing could be discovered. All disclaimed responsibility. It was claimed that the lease had been submitted to the Department of Justice for approval, but Justice Department officials denied ever seeing it.

In the fall of 1933, an arrangement was proposed between the Canadian National Carbon Company, who were owners and operators of CKNC in Toronto and the CRBC. The former would act as agent for the Commission in the organization and production of commercial network programs out of Toronto. It was an effort to prolong the life of a capable organization built up by CKNC at considerable expense over several years. However, this proposal to enter the commercial field fell flat. Then CKNC decided to terminate its radio operations. The Commission at that moment badly needed studio space and additional staff in Toronto, so it leased the facilities, studios, and staff of CKNC as a package deal, the Commission paying CKNC a lump sum monthly. The staff remained on the CKNC payroll. This arrangement continued until July of 1935, when the Carbon Company decided to leave broadcasting altogether and notified its staff that, as of August 31, they would cease to be employees of the Company. The Commission thereupon took over twenty-three staff members, as of September 1, although official approval did not come through until September 18. In the three weeks' interim, they carried on with only the expectation that they would become permanent employees of the Commission, although several leading members of the staff had joined the Commission earlier.

PAYMENT FOR NON-COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS

In January of 1933, I made a survey for the Commission of the schedules of all stations across Canada. This showed that a great amount of time was filled mainly with local miscellaneous, non-

commercial programs. Moreover, it was certain that non-sponsored time would increase considerably throughout the spring and summer. A letter was then sent to all stations offering the co-operation of the Commission in filling part of their open time with national or regional programs, thus helping them improve their programming and at the same time reduce their costs. This letter did not offer to pay any station for broadcasting non-commercial programs.

In the desperately difficult conditions of the early 'thirties, many stations were hard put to stay on the air with acceptable programs, even during evening hours. During the first week of January 1933, CNRO Ottawa was on the air a total of twenty-four hours after 7:00 P.M. Of this only four-and-one-half hours were commercial programs, and this was typical of most stations. To assist them, and at the same time encourage sponsors to use its circuits, the Canadian National Telegraphs, from early 1931 until 1933, placed its facilities free of charge after 7:30 P.M., E.S.T., daily to enable Eastern stations to make regular exchanges of non-commercial programs. Thus, according to a letter from W. G. George, Manager of CFCF Montreal, who helped promote this plan, from 7:30 to 11:00 P.M. each evening in London, Hamilton, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Moncton, Fredericton, and Halifax, listeners could hear sustaining programs originated in the other cities. This operation continued until the advent of the CRBC in 1933, which took over the facilities and with that the special program features which had been developed by the stations.

The effectiveness of this arrangement can be illustrated by the exchanges which took place during the month of August, 1932. CNRO Ottawa sent to CFRB 47 programs, to CFCF 30 programs, to CNRA Moncton 10, to CHRC Quebec City 2, to CFPL London 19. It received from CFRB 34 programs, from CKNC Toronto 15, from CFCF 70 and from CKOC Hamilton 6. The CNR also contemplated setting up a similar arrangement between Alberta stations and CNRV Vancouver, but the advent of the Commission ended this idea.

In June of 1933, the Commission, with its line contract in force, set up a permanent network supplying its programs to thirty-eight stations in thirty-three cities. Eighteen of these stations in sixteen cities constituted its *basic*⁷ network. Six of this basic group were operated by the Commission itself, while twelve were privately owned. Contracts were

⁷ A *basic* network implies a group of stations connected by wire lines or microwave circuits under agreement between the network authority and member stations by which the latter are available for sponsorship at

entered into with these twelve, which were all paid to broadcast its non-commercial programs three hours each evening, thus guaranteeing distribution at certain centres which included most of the provincial capitals.

To the remaining twenty stations (in nineteen centres, seventeen of them unduplicated), it offered its program service to be used at the discretion of the stations, but without payment. That a large proportion of the Commission's programs would have been broadcast by the twelve basic stations, whether they had been paid or not, was beyond question, owing to the circumstances just outlined, though they could not afford to donate nightly three whole hours selected at the discretion of the Commission. It was the only time, so far as I am aware, that a network has contracted to pay its member stations to carry non-commercial programs. Those stations that received no compensation broadcast the Commission's offerings extensively, as clearly indicated from their schedules at that time. It was very doubtful that the extra distribution secured on the paid stations was worth the price, reasonable as the figure was.

The net result was that, for the years 1933-34 to 1935-36, the distribution cost (lines plus station payments) of the Commission's programs considerably exceeded the program costs themselves (53 per cent of the total budget as against 47 per cent). Had the money spent on paying stations been added to the program budget, it would have raised what was spent on programs to 62 per cent. But program costs were unnecessarily increased, and its budget was further unbalanced by a wholesale takeover of many programs already existing on station schedules. These stations would still have continued to produce and make programs available had the Commission only been willing to give them credit for doing so. While the Commission elaborated some of them, in many cases it did little if anything more than change the name.

There are few better illustrations of the differences in emphasis and efficiency between the CRBC and the CBC than a comparison of how they spent their revenue. If the amounts seem insignificantly small today—

established rates. In addition to providing commercial programs for which they are paid, affiliates agree to broadcast a certain schedule of non-commercial, public-service programs. *Supplementary* stations are stations which may be added to the network at the request of sponsors but their inclusion is not compulsory. This CRBC basic network was confined to non-commercials until the fall season of 1935.

and they must—this was not so in the starving 'thirties. In the last complete fiscal year 1935-36, the expenditures of the CRBC were \$1,702,965. In the first full year of the CBC's administration (1937-38), expenditures were \$2,075,470. Here are the relative percentages spent for various purposes.

	<i>Under CRBC</i>	<i>Under CBC</i>
Programs	29.5%	52.5%
Network Facilities	40.0%	25.8%
General Administration and Station Operation	30.5%	21.7%

Had the Commission been creating important public-service or educational features, it could have asked (or even insisted) that all stations carry a reasonable number without payment. Undoubtedly such a request would have met with a sympathetic response. It was mainly the nature of the programming that made the stations demand payment, and in a measure the programming justified their doing so.

On November 4, 1933, the Commission issued a special brochure in connection with the official opening of CRCM, which set out in detail the week's schedule of programs and their distribution. More than 40 per cent consisted of hotel orchestras, plus programs taken over from private stations without appreciable change. In the brochure, the Commission listed thirteen of what it called its best programs in the week, bringing "Canada's Brightest Stars to All." Without exception, they were musical programs of the popular type, many of them admirable, though with very little real diversity. The same schedule showed daily average of a mere thirty minutes of non-musical programming. When the Chairman was asked by the Parliamentary Committee of 1934 what had been done about educational programming, he replied: "We have done as much of that as we could without depriving people of entertainment."

Although the programs were entirely non-commercial, and the Commission needed maximum coverage, it even protected certain of its basic stations by refusing permission to other stations in the same areas to broadcast its programs. CKUA of the University of Alberta, at Edmonton, sought permission to augment its schedule of mainly educational programs by carrying a number of CRBC musical features, which would have balanced its schedules most acceptably. It rebuilt its transmitter to meet CRBC technical requirements, put in a line to CJCA,

the basic station in Edmonton, and prepared to publicize the Commission's programs, only to be told at the last moment, by wire, that it would not be allowed to broadcast the Commission's programs. Nor could it learn why. Had the programs been commercials, such a refusal would have been understandable; but applied to sustainers, when the only purpose was a maximum audience, it made no sense whatever. This was confirmed in a letter from Dr. E. A. Corbett to the author in 1933.

CHAPTER 14

REGULATIONS AND PROVOCATIONS

The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission was charged with the double duty of regulation and operation. Its regulations governed technical requirements to be met by stations. Advertising standards also had to be defined. Physical obsolescence was general among stations. Considerable reshufflings of channels took place, which provoked bitter criticism among listeners and stations, especially in Western Ontario. A classic example of this arose at Toronto. CKLW Windsor had for some years been using the 540-kc. channel which, by international agreement, was to be used fifteen hundred miles from either sea coast. Six years later, in 1939, the 540-kc. channel was finally allotted to CBK, the 50-kw. CBC station at Watrous, Saskatchewan. The allocation to Windsor had been temporary, and when the Commission took it over the CRBC set out to correct this. It was faced with allotting to Windsor either the 840-kc. channel, then being used by its own station CRCT in Toronto, or 960 kc. Quite properly it chose 960 kc., but WJR Detroit, then on 920 kc., fearing interference from 960, appealed directly to the Prime Minister's office. On the Commission's own statement, it had no option but to allot the 840 channel to CKLW and 960 to CRCT. Almost immediately a very powerful Mexican border station moved to the same 960 frequency. This resulted in chaotic reception in the Toronto area, and brought a veritable storm of protest, so much so that in less than a year the 840 channel had to be returned to CRCT. The Commission gave the following extraordinary reason for allocating 840 kc. to Windsor: It was "far better for the Commission's station [in Toronto] to have this trouble than that the commercial station in Windsor which is

forced to make its living should have been subject to this interference." (PCB 1934, p. 557.) This despite the fact that, at the time CKLW was not a basic outlet of the Commission's network, it carried next to none of its programs, and was virtually an American station insofar as its programming was concerned, and was obviously so regarded by WJR.

Nevertheless, the technical standards laid down by the CRBC were generally adhered to and ultimately helped to reduce local interference and improve listening conditions, though it did for a time reduce coverage in some areas. On April 1, 1933, out of sixty-one stations in operation in Canada, only twelve fulfilled the requirements of the new regulations. But by the end of March, 1935, fifty-two met the technical requirements of the CRBC. This improvement could be attributed to the liberation of stations from the virtual freeze imposed on them when the Aird Commission was appointed, which continued for several years. With knowledge that the danger of being nationalized *en masse* had pretty well dissipated, owners were prepared to spend money to improve their properties by increasing power and improving studios. The Commission, with its competent engineering staff, was of definite help by way of advice and assistance. Frequency-monitoring stations were established at Ottawa and Strathburn, Ontario, to check the adherence of stations to their channels. Monthly reports were sent to each station checked, and this helped to reduce interference.

Allied to this was a genuinely constructive project carried out by the Commission in 1935: a ground-conductivity survey of most of the settled areas of Canada. Colonel Steel recognized that no intelligent planning for a chain of high-power stations could be carried out without such a survey. The Commission had on its staff such brilliant engineers as Keith MacKinnon, specialist in channel allocations, H. M. Smith, for many years in charge of the entire CBC installation at Sackville, New Brunswick, and others under the general direction of Gordon Olive, who carried out much of the actual work in Eastern Canada himself. Smith did the work in the western provinces, driving some five thousand miles back and forth between Winnipeg and Edmonton that summer. British Columbia was also covered, particularly the lower mainland.

These measurements provided qualitative data regarding the actual coverage of most of the existing broadcasting stations. They permitted the Commission to determine with far greater accuracy the coverage to be expected from each station it hoped to build. The result was that when the CBC's Board of Governors took over on November 2, 1936—and very shortly thereafter called upon its Engineering Department

for a national plan of coverage—Olive, who by that time was Chief Engineer, was able to lay before the management a reasonably complete plan almost immediately. Without this field-strength survey, it would have taken at least a year for the CBC to prepare its own plan from scratch.

ADVERTISING CLAIMS

The administration of regulations governing advertising and controversy presented very different and even more provocative problems than those having to do with technical matters. The practices of some patent-medicine vendors quickly came under fire. The first broadcast banned was that of a quack who had a short program of hymns with a discourse to the general effect that Our Lord commanded people to use his Indian-herb remedies. But it quickly became evident that this was a far bigger and more difficult undertaking than the Commission could ever hope to handle with its limited and untrained personnel. The Department of National Health was even more aware of charlatanism and false and exaggerated advertising claims. The Chief Executive of that Department was anxious to exercise some control over patent-medicine advertising on radio. Hitherto it had been difficult, but the advent of the Commission and its power to regulate, with neither staff nor facilities, provided an opportunity not to be missed. The Department of National Health offered to check all patent-medicine continuities promptly, if they were submitted by the Commission, and it did so. It was a fortunate combination, simple and expeditious. Occasionally there were delays, but usually these were due to the shortcomings of advertisers or their agencies. It took time, but ultimately sponsors came to accept surveillance as inevitable. There were some early attempts at evasion and some heated arguments, but the Commission authorized every inspector of the Department of Health to enter any station suspected of not observing the regulations, to impound the advertising copy and satisfy himself regarding the practices carried on. Stations were so notified, and violations virtually ceased in a very short time.

Action was also taken to secure the co-operation of stock exchanges and the Better Business Bureau in restraining deceptive advertising. On October 24, 1934, at the suggestion of the Prime Minister, the Chairman clamped down on a budding radio campaign of mining-stock

promotion. Market quotations continued, but all commentaries on the prospects of individual properties and their alleged resources, and all efforts to advertise such shares by radio, were forbidden. The Ontario Securities Commission co-operated by announcing that any broker or promoter who defied the rulings of the CRBC would have his licence cancelled. In March of 1935, oil promoters were brought under the prohibition.

An effort that did not end so happily occurred in January of 1933, when one of the Chairman's very first acts was to ban from all Canadian stations Judge Rutherford, Chief Prophet of Jehovah's Witnesses. This was the same group that provoked the rumpus in 1928 which resulted in the Aird Commission. An extensive transcription campaign throughout the United States featuring Rutherford's speeches also included some twenty-five Canadian stations. When complaints reached the Commission, it requested advance copies of the scripts or recordings. When these were not forthcoming, the Commission ordered stations to cease broadcasting them. It was claimed that Rutherford's talks constituted slanderous attacks on the Christian clergy and governmental authority. The ban brought down Rutherford's violent condemnation of the Commission, as well as criticism from a considerable section of the press and public to whom the regulation smacked of censorship. Tracts were distributed widely by Rutherford's supporters that fiercely attacked the Commission, and it was said they were reprinted in the *Watchtower*, the Witnesses' organ. The tracts found their way into the Court of Recorder G. H. Semple in Montreal who, on April 13, said: "The circular itself is but a protest, thinly veiled and replete with quotations from the prophets—against authority as constituted by the Radio Broadcasting Act. That is its preconceived, determined, and sole purpose; and in that respect it is subversive of peace, order, and good government." In the House of Commons, the Minister said the literature attacking the Commission described the Chairman "as a liar, thief, Judas, and polecat and therefore fit to associate only with the clergy" (*Hansard*, p. 4,149). He added that the Commission had offered to allow the Witnesses to substitute their own Canadian speakers for Rutherford; it also noted that the American networks had refused time to Rutherford.

But there were many who did not agree with Recorder Semple. Again petitions were circulated far and wide, following the almost identical pattern of 1928. An animated debate followed in the House of Commons, when demands were made to know what principles

governed the Commission in deciding what should or should not be broadcast. Though its ruling stood, the animosities stirred up undoubtedly impaired to some extent the image of the Commission in the public mind. The Commission was unfairly charged with censorship and high-handedness, although a little more care in the matter of public relations might have considerably lessened this if not avoided it altogether.

Indeed, the Commission exhibited an extraordinary faculty for stumbling into situations that would provoke contention and unfavourable publicity. This was again illustrated by an incident in March of 1934. It was staging a series of talks by prominent citizens from representative organizations. One was by Professor T. W. L. McDermott, who was later High Commissioner at Canberra and appointed in 1963 to the CBC Board of Directors. In 1933, McDermott was Secretary of the League of Nations' Society. As the Society's spokesman, he said over the air that war for Canada—not to mention other countries—was the one contingency against which this country's national existence and social institutions could not be protected. He added: "In another war there seems no doubt that the division of opinion between French and English Canadians, between east and west, between those who fight and those who send men to fight, on such issues as the conscription of wealth and the conscription of men and women which another war would mean, would be so great that either internal revolution or a break-up of the Dominion as we have it would take place."¹

This statement aroused the ire of "100 per cent militarists and of 51 per cent internationalists." Immediately the Commission ran for cover. Though the talk had been arranged under its auspices, when the storm broke the Commission repudiated it, disavowed any agreement with the speaker's views, and expressed regrets that the suggestion that civil war might arise through any of the causes mentioned was permitted to go on the air. This was by no means an unfair illustration of how the Commission faced up to controversial issues.

The most contentious regulation promulgated by the Commission was, without doubt, Article 90. This provided that: "No broadcasting station may broadcast any speech, printed matter, program or advertising matter containing abusive or defamatory statements with regard to individuals or institutions or statements or suggestions contrary to

¹ R. Lypsett in *The Toronto Star*, March 31, 1934.

the express purpose of any existing legislation, as for example, the Patent Medicine Act or any regulations promulgated thereunder.”

In the House, the opposition claimed that this could be used to prevent them from criticizing government legislation at election time. Very frank expressions of opinion were voiced about its repressive possibilities in the hands of the Commission. Both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the opposition took part in the debate. The regulation was then rescinded, and the following was substituted by PC 2214 on August 12, 1935: “No broadcasting station may broadcast any speech, printed matter, or program containing defamatory, libellous, or obscene statements with regard to persons or institutions, or statements of a treasonable character, or intended to promote change by unlawful means, and which might lead to a breach of the peace, or any advertising matter containing false or deceptive statements.” The new regulation was soon to be tested, and found wanting, in the crucible of the election of 1935, for a way was found to evade it.

CHAPTER 15

CRBC'S PROGRAMMING POLICY

Early in the summer of 1933, Thomas Maher, Vice-Chairman of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, announced that auditions would be held in all main centres across Canada in the search for new talent. Frank Chamberlain wrote in *The Toronto Star*, on July 7, 1933: "Radio editors and music critics have been invited . . . to act as adjudicators in a series of public auditions. . . . Artists will be heard every ten minutes and will continue daily until everyone anxious to broadcast over the nationalized air waves has been heard."

The first audition in Toronto was on July 11, when thirty-five hopefuls were auditioned. A realistic if somewhat humorous account of this audition was given by Archibald Lampman on the following day in *The Toronto Star*:

Yesterday the waiting room for the auditions was jammed with boys and girls, children and matronly ladies, still ambitious. Some said they couldn't sing but could whistle—others were the life of the party—mothers dragged in plump-faced urchins whom the neighbours said ought to be on the air, or given the air, or something. Many were abusive—and all were optimistic. They couldn't have got a bigger mob if they'd hung out a sign 'Make Big Money—Be a Radio Star in your Spare Time'."

Maher was later quoted in the *Star* (October 30, 1933) as saying: "It is a source of wonderment to me to find what wonderful talent we have in Canada for broadcasting; no matter what program we plan,

we can always find the proper artist in this country." But the great talent hunt very soon petered out. "Why has the Commission discontinued auditions in Toronto?" he was asked. "Because the number of programs produced by the Commission is limited and there is no common sense in going on hearing artists, only to disappoint them." "Why has the Commission not brought out one new artist in Toronto during the first year of broadcasting?" Mr. Maher's reply was: "The listeners had to be considered before the artists. We had to establish our reputation as broadcasters. We picked the best artists available, engaged several under a year's contract, and didn't run the risk of hampering our progress by engaging inexperienced talent." This exchange is from *The Toronto Star* for January 12, 1934.

About the auditions, Jim Hunter, the radio editor of *The Toronto Telegram* charged before the Parliamentary Committee of 1934 on Radio that: "While the Commission has auditioned over twelve hundred singers and musicians [in Toronto] they have to date actually employed on the air only two singers who were never on the air before" (PCB 1934, p. 186). Replying to this, the Commission claimed:

The program department as it is presently constituted has neither the time, the money, nor the staff to establish a training school for artists. It is the desire of the Commission to assist artists in becoming nationally and internationally known and this has been done in many cases. In the sense of creating national and international reputations for these artists and musical organizations, the Commission has made great strides in the development and the advancement of Canadian artists.

Among the program efforts of the Commission during its first year, two were of special significance. Through the co-operation of The Canadian Press, two five-minute newscasts were instituted daily over the network. News reports were prepared by The Canadian Press at no charge to the Commission, which exercised no control over the content. Though very limited in time, and closely controlled by the press, which was averse to having the newspapers anticipated, this was the beginning of the news and reporting service so extensively developed later under the CBC.

Weather-forecast bulletins prepared by the Meteorological Service of Canada were also carried over the national network. And on December 2, 1933, largely through Colonel Steel's efforts, a service of

personal messages to the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions was commenced over the network for far-flung agents, medical officers, nurses, government officials, RCMP detachments, trappers, traders, miners, and missionaries. It ran from November to May, from 11:30 to 12:00 P.M., E.S.T., on Saturday nights. It was not the first northern messenger service: CKY at Winnipeg had instituted a similar service several years before, while KDKA had co-operated with the Canadian government and the RCMP in furnishing news and information to the far north nearly ten years earlier. Nevertheless, the Commission's service was the first on a Canadian network and was most valuable. About one hundred messages were broadcast each Saturday night. To celebrate Christmas in 1935, some 493 messages were sent to 131 separate northern outposts.

The Commission was not equipped for many special broadcasts until 1935. But during its first year, it carried over the network the celebration of the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the founding of St. John by the United Empire Loyalists, the arrival of the "Balboa Flyers" at Shediac, the Harmsworth Trophy Race on Lake St. Clair, the National Balloon Race, and the Institute of Pacific Relations meetings at Banff.

THE NEWFOUNDLAND TOUR

Perhaps the most picturesque—if not the most defensible—of CRBC's exploits was a joy-ride (or goodwill tour) to St. John's, Newfoundland, in June of 1934 on the *Northland* of the Clarke Steamship Company of Quebec. That spring an invitation was received by the Canadian Government from the Honourable F. C. Alderdyce, Commissioner of Home Affairs for Newfoundland, for the Commission to visit St. John's and stage a broadcast to Canada from there. *The St. John's Telegram* of June 13, 1934, reported that this special trip was arranged by Desmond Clarke "as a goodwill effort to further cement the close business relations existing between Canada and Newfoundland." Maher was named official delegate. The passenger list of over sixty officials and guests was largely composed of friends of his from Quebec City. A considerable number of well-known artists was taken along to entertain the party and provide the talent for the broadcast at St. John's. The boat called at Charlottetown *en route* where, in the studios of CFCY, there was a dress rehearsal of the program to be broadcast two

days later at St. John's. This was piped to Ottawa and recorded on the Blattnerphone. Representatives of both American networks accompanied the party from Montreal as far as Charlottetown, whence they returned to New York.

After the program from CFCY and a party aboard the ship, the representative of one American network thought the party should be continued into the morning. The Captain, who wished to leave early the next morning, thought otherwise. One guest, and by no means an unimportant one, was rather unceremoniously conducted down the gang-plank, vehemently protesting and shouting repeatedly at the top of his voice that he would be back. The ship departed not long after.

No sooner did he touch ground than he proceeded to make good his threat. In the very early morning, when the ship was well into the Northumberland Strait, a plane appeared and headed straight for the *Northland*. As it passed over, the plane zoomed low and there, holding a bag of empty beer bottles, was their friend of the previous evening who proceeded to bomb the ship. The plane circled and another bag of bottles bounced over the deck and off into the sea. By this time both crew and passengers—the latter in their night attire—thought war had broken out. They rushed on deck, but as the plane zoomed for another dive, they rushed back fast. Over once again, the bomber disappeared in the morning mist toward Charlottetown, thus ending the battle of Northumberland Strait.

The *Northland* arrived the following afternoon gaily bedecked, with a band playing the "Banks of Newfoundland." The next evening a reception for some two hundred guests was given on board, when the talent from Canada provided the same program as at Charlottetown plus a speech by His Excellency, the Governor. Simultaneously, the Blattnerphone recording from Ottawa was broadcast to the CRBC, CBS, and NBC networks. The limit of the broadcast at St. John's scarcely exceeded fifty miles. This led the Americans, who were unaware they were transmitting the Blattnerphone recording, to inquire what had happened to the Governor's speech.

On July 9, a few days after his return, Thomas Maher resigned. There were persistent rumours in Ottawa that his resignation had been requested by the Prime Minister, though confirmation of it could not be obtained by the press. *The Montreal Standard* (the forerunner of *Weekend Magazine*), reflecting press opinion in an editorial on July 21 under the heading "Not a Howling Success," said:

Radio Commissioner Maher has put in his resignation to take effect next month. This will leave a void in the personnel of the Commission, but so far as we can learn, it will not be an aching one. Mr. Maher did not do very well with his job of arranging programs.

The net results of Mr. Maher's efforts to promote harmony by the sweet strains of music has been to embroil Quebec and Ontario over programs in French and precipitate a strike of union musicians.

The suggestion has been made that a program director be appointed who will take up where Maher left off and pick up his mistakes. . . . It is interesting to note that Maher will go back to his former profession of Forestry Engineering. There is no orchestra in the world that vies with the music of the birds in the greenwood trees. And there is no instrument in the orchestra except the xylophone, which is a little wooden piano, that demands the services of a forestry engineer.

With Maher's departure, the programs of the Commission finally passed into more experienced and capable hands. Ernest L. Bushnell became Program Director, and soon a more stable and better program organization emerged. Relations between the CRBC and the British Broadcasting Corporation during much of the first two years of the CRBC were very strained. In a letter to Alan Plaunt (in the Plaunt Papers), written September 2, 1935, Gladstone Murray said:

The CRBC attitude was of sullen aloofness. Negotiations in 1933 and 1934 for the relay and exchange of programs broke down chiefly because of irrational obstruction, suspicion, and bad handling at Ottawa. Just before Christmas the attitude swung over to eager solicitation.

It is true to say that until December last relations between the BBC and the CRBC were practically non-existent and it was only my being a Canadian that prevented an open split. BBC, giving up hope, decided to make New York its liaison centre for North America, and to have its special representation there. Of course, the recent change is dictated by the exigencies of a general election.

ANOTHER POLITICAL APPOINTMENT

Maher was succeeded as Vice-Chairman in November by Jacques Cartier, an experienced broadcaster, a capable newspaperman, and an active Conservative. Charlesworth said of him in 1937: "My Vice-Chairman at the time was Jacques Cartier who had been one of those instrumental in organizing the Province of Quebec for the Conservatives in 1930 when the Liberal bloc was reduced to the extent of twenty-four seats."¹ Again Mr. Bennett's assurances of non-partisanship went down the drain. Cartier's sojourn with the Commission lasted less than a year. Political ambition caught up with him by way of the new Reconstruction Party, headed by the Honourable H. H. Stevens, M.P. for Vancouver. Cartier, who was a friend of Stevens, left the Commission to organize the Party in Quebec, and went down among the other 173 aspirants to catastrophic defeat, leaving Stevens the sole survivor of his Reconstruction Party.

Among notable contributions to network improvement under the Commission were the extension nationally of the concerts of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra from the Columbia Broadcasting System, and the Metropolitan Opera from the National Broadcasting Company, which had previously been limited to local outlets in Toronto and Montreal. These and other fine American sustaining programs cost the Commission nothing. American networks were always most generous in permitting the use of their sustaining features over CRBC and CBC networks without remuneration. And whatever their real feelings about nationalized broadcasting, they were careful to avoid exerting pressures upon either the CRBC or the CBC. The American networks took the stand that broadcasting in Canada was Canada's business, not theirs. Any pressures that did arise came from sponsors or their agencies. Moreover, at the time, these networks agreed to carry over their networks several sustaining programs of the Commission which received favourable commendation and constituted genuinely valuable publicity for Canada. Unfortunately, under the intensified commercial development of radio in more recent years, exchanges of such fine cultural programs are virtually non-existent.

After 1934, more emphasis was laid on novelty programs and drama. A service of stock-market quotations from Toronto to the eastern network commenced each day late in 1934, and a French service was

¹ *I'm Telling You*, p. 179.

established from Montreal to the French network. Noticeable improvements in the Commission's program service in 1935 and 1936 were the increasing number of special events and international broadcasts. The Empire Christmas broadcast continued from year to year. On January 17, 1935, the ceremonies at the opening of Parliament were broadcast for the first time. Throughout the lifetime of the Commission, practically all the technical arrangements for its remote control pick-ups were carried out by the Canadian Marconi Company.

IMPROVEMENTS IN PROGRAMMING

Improvement grew steadily and, considering the severe budget limitations, much new and pretentious programming was undertaken. Notable among dramatic broadcasts was a fascinating series "Forgotten Footsteps" written and produced by Don Henshaw and based on ancient relics in the Royal Ontario Museum. These did much to broaden knowledge of ROM and of human history. From Montreal there was a series of Biblical dramatizations "And it Came to Pass." From Toronto there were adaptations of several important movies, "The Scarlet Pimpernel," "Les Miserables," "Top Hat," "Dark Angel," "Magnificent Obsession," "Ah! Wilderness," and "A Midsummer Night's Dream." On the evening of Lord Tweedsmuir's installation as Governor-General, an adaptation of the film version of his "Thirty-Nine Steps" was broadcast, and on the death of T. E. Lawrence, a dramatization of his life under the title "The Desert Warrior" originated in Montreal. "The Young Bloods of Beaver Bend," possibly the first serial on Canadian radio, was the contribution of Tommy Tweed of Winnipeg, writer and participant in so many successful programs since.

Talks increased in number. These originated mainly from numerous organizations, societies, and clubs, though an ever-growing number of capable Canadian commentators and well-informed personalities were heard. Among many programs on the French network during 1935 and 1936, there was a series of dramatizations of novels by leading French-Canadian authors; this was of particular significance because it recognized Canadian source materials as suitable for broadcasting. Of sponsored network programs, Imperial Tobacco's "spectaculars," including two-way transatlantic reports of the British Empire Games stood out.

As a result of the line contract made in 1935, special events notably increased, among them several Empire programs, including the Silver

Jubilee of King George V and Empire Day. The Jubilee ceremonies for His Majesty, on May 6, were extensive, and included a civil and military ceremony with massed children's and church choirs on Parliament Square, Ottawa, and the presentation of the King's Special Jubilee Medal to twenty officials and their wives, representing the ten thousand Canadians to whom the medal had been awarded.

At noon "Canada in 1935" took the air. Addresses by the Lieutenant-Governors of the nine provinces were followed by a panoramic presentation of Canadian personalities. Bands were synchronized during the playing of patriotic airs. There were interviews with: Captain Angus Walters of Lunenburg; Jack Miner, the naturalist; Audrey Alexandria Brown, poetess of Victoria; a champion farmer of Quebec; an Ontario prospector; a pioneer lumberman of British Columbia; Dr. Seegar Wheeler, the former world's champion wheat-grower from Rosthern, Saskatchewan; and finally, with citizens on the street. Jubilee ceremonies from London followed, including a review of the great events of His Majesty's reign. At 3:00 P.M., the Commission presented "Canadian Cavalcade," a rapid kaleidoscopic summary of events from 1910 to 1935.

On May 24, 1935, Canada took its turn in presenting the annual Empire Day Broadcast. This was a dramatized story of the founding of Canada, the arrival of the U.E.L., at St. John, the opening up of the west, the start of historical societies, and finally the contribution of Clementina Fessenden of Hamilton, the founder of Empire Day, on June 6, 1896. These were tied in with a brief speech by the Prime Minister and fed to the BBC, where the proceedings were relayed to the other Dominions.

Christmas Day of 1935 saw the apogee of network broadcasting by the CRBC. At 3:00 P.M., "Canada Celebrates Christmas," which was the greatest effort of the Commission to date, took the air. It was a technical triumph of the first magnitude, for which the Engineering and the Program Departments of the CRBC deservedly received the highest praise. The program consisted of a two-hour moving panorama of Canadians at home and away on Christmas Day. The most striking feature of this broadcast was the forging of a choral chain from Halifax to Vancouver. Eight choirs at eight key cities each contributed a link in the chain of good tidings. The singing opened with "Good King Wenceslas," the solo parts being sung by a soprano in Halifax and a tenor in Vancouver. A band stood by in Montreal to play the introductory music and fill in should anything go wrong. On a given

cue, the band commenced playing at a pre-arranged tempo, which set the beat to which all eight choirs were required to sing. Commencing with Halifax, each choir sang in turn one line only, east to west, until Vancouver was reached at the end of the first stanza. The Vancouver tenor then sang the first half of the second verse, and the Halifax soprano completed it. Again the Vancouver tenor sang the first half of the third verse, and the Winnipeg choir finished it. Once more Halifax and Vancouver alternated with the fourth verse, and then all the choirs joined in, one line each, from west to east, thus completing the carol. It was an impressive performance, made possible only by expert work at the control panel in Montreal, where W. A. Reid, former CNR master-control operator on such notable broadcasts as "The Romance of Canada" made all the necessary switches, without a slip.

In the second half of the program, a military band, concert, and xylophone orchestra from Montreal faded in the various sections, but without introductions for the musical fills. CRBC "Enquiring Reporter" interviewed interesting and representative personalities across Canada, winding up with an exchange of felicitations with the NBC network, followed by the Canadian Club in the Waldorf-Astoria in New York, cross-fading with the American Women's Club in Montreal, both singing "Auld Lang Syne." "Canada Celebrates Christmas" ended with the singing of "The First Noel" in much the same manner as the opening song.

Undoubtedly the most memorable of all broadcasts during the CRBC regime—and a notable one in radio history—was the program devoted to the Moose River Mine tragedy in Halifax county, Nova Scotia, where three men were buried on April 12, 1936, while inspecting an abandoned gold mine. The story of that broadcast, which was carried on for sixty-eight hours and thirty minutes, by the same unrelieved crew of three men—Frank Willis and Arleigh Canning of the CRBC, with Cecil Landry of CHNS as relief operator—has been told many times. When the ordeal was finally over, Willis said: "Despite the fact that the only telephone was in constant use on many occasions up to ten seconds of our broadcast—all ninety-nine of them were made without having made a single operating error." So great was the tension that all fifty-eight stations in Canada, and some 650 in the United States, carried these broadcasts. It was a rare feat of endurance to work unrelieved from 8:00 A.M. on Sunday until 1:00 P.M. on Thursday. Canning said: "It may sound like fiction, but broadcasting in those days was a rugged business."

COMMISSION'S POSITION IN 1935

Some of the effects of placing the administration of national broadcasting under a three-man Commission (at least one appointment of which was political) have been described, as well as the result of refusing—because it would not be good politics—to increase the licence fee to three dollars as urged by the Radio League. The fact that the Commissioners, none of whom had practical experience in broadcasting, insisted on acting as both operating executives and policy-makers had its effect as well. But the most serious error was the failure of the government to make any provision for capital construction.

The proposed provincial advisory councils were quietly forgotten, when they could have been of real help, had they been shrewdly chosen. Perhaps the fear that they would have been mostly political hacks made the Commission shy away from urging their appointment. It was also feared that they might become meddlesome, a feeling that found its way into CBC days.

In spite of such difficulties, the more systematic and sustained program efforts late in 1934 and 1935 resulted in a definite improvement in the public image of the Commission. The popular but inconsequential musical programs taken over from hotels and private stations were gradually recast and supplemented with more original features. The field of drama was notably expanded by many varied and thoroughly good productions. The importation of such programs as the New York Philharmonic and the Metropolitan Opera added character and prestige to the network at no expense to the Commission. Special events like the opening of Parliament, anniversaries, and spectacles enhanced the standing of the Commission. The expanded line contract of 1935 helped to augment its schedules. News broadcasts, though very restricted, were important, and some encouragement was given to Canadian talent, though more than a little activity in this area was designed to relieve pressures from persistent groups and individuals.

By the summer of 1935, there was a clearer public recognition of the possibilities inherent in nationalized broadcasting. Canadians knew more about their country than they had ever known before, and there were demands that the extra half million dollars from licence fees left after the meagre votes to the Commission should be turned over to it. *The Ottawa Journal* said: "The Government has no moral right to this money and an extra half million would make possible the realization of plans now beyond the Commission's means." Charlesworth was

quoted as saying: "When newspapers hostile to nationalization published the lying accusation that we were making 'raids on the Treasury,' I used to reflect quietly that the Treasury was making raids on us—and that was the true situation."

But the patched-up physical network was still pretty much of a shambles. Nothing whatever had been done to implement the promises to develop high power. Worse, the government was wavering and uncertain about the future of the Commission itself. Its life was extended from year to year, and when the renewal of the Act came up in the House of Commons on June 6, 1935, Minister Duranleau said: "This matter has been given careful consideration and we have come to the conclusion that we should ask the House to extend the life of the Commission to the end of this fiscal year. The Commission has been in operation since January 1, 1933, and it was thought that it should be continued a few months longer and we shall let another Parliament decide whether it should be abolished or its powers modified." This was the tenuous situation on the eve of the 1935 election, more than three years after the Broadcasting Act had been enacted. Though public opinion had been mobilized behind nationalization, the depression, the indifference of the government, plus the incompetence and frustrations of the Commission had brought the project perilously close to extinction. The Commission was very shortly to become involved in a fracas that would bring its own downfall.

POLITICS AND "MR. SAGE"

When the 1935 election campaign opened in the late summer, the Conservative Party had plans for the use of radio. Its programs anticipated "soap operas" and were up-to-the-minute series. "The Woman Pays," "Men Who Toil," "I am Twenty-one," "Canada in 1936," and —most important of all—the notable and provocative "Mr. Sage," which was regarded by the Liberals as nothing short of scurrilous and has profoundly affected all dramatic broadcasts from that day to this.

There were six "Mr. Sage" broadcasts between September 7 and October 11. The first and second were confined to a network of Ontario stations. But they created so much elation among government supporters that the remaining four were extended nationally. From the very first they were the subject of bitter complaints from the opposition.

Mr. Sage was an argumentative old codger in a small Ontario town, an ardent and convincing life-long Conservative who lured his Grit neighbours to his verandah for discussions on the parties, issues, and even some of the personalities of the campaign. Mrs. Sage was no less ardent, and she did nothing to discourage her husband. Newspaper ads for the series said: "Radio tonight. Introducing Mr. Sage, a shrewd observer who sees through the pretences, knows the facts, understands the true issues of the present political campaign, and discusses the election with his friends." The artful and amazingly well-informed Mr. Sage invariably bested his opponents to the discomfiture and rising indignation of Liberals, and to the delight of many—but by no means all—Conservatives, for a few of the latter scented danger.

The first two and the final "Mr. Sage" broadcasts were produced in the Commission's studio in Toronto, the remainder in the studios of CKCL (now CKEY). In the first two, Mr. Sage was played by the late Rupert Lucas, on the staff of CKNC in the third by the veteran actor Maurice Boddington, and in the last three by Vaughan Glaser, all accomplished and versatile radio performers. "Mrs. Sage" was the highly competent Grace Webster who played Martha continuously on the CBC farm broadcast "The Craigs" from the time it commenced in 1939 until it was discontinued in July of 1964. The scripts were written by R. L. Wright, head of the Research Department of the J. J. Gibbons Advertising Agency. The finder of talent, co-ordinator, and producer was Don Henshaw, a capable and versatile radio writer and executive who had come to Canada from the United States to assist in the Toronto Centennial.

The first program mentioned no sponsor, and was thought by many listeners to be a Commission feature. It was immediately called into question by *The Winnipeg Free Press* for certain disparaging allusions to the Leader of the Opposition, the Right Honourable W. L. Mackenzie King. It was said that this put some Liberals into tantrums, and they sought legal advice as to whether the broadcasts were actionable on the ground of defamation; if so, "Mr. Sage" was clearly against the regulations of the Commission. The Secretary of the National Liberal Association (later Senator) Norman Lambert, phoned the Chairman to say that, though he had not heard the first broadcast, he had been told it was objectionable and suggested that the charge be looked into. It was said that when King himself heard the reflections cast on him, he was livid; he was alleged to have predicted then and there that if he were returned to power he would put a stop for good to such dramatized

political broadcasts. In the House, he called them "scurrilous and libellous misrepresentations—propaganda of the worst type that any party has ever put out because it was most insidious." He added: "That sort of thing will not continue under either the present or any other Radio Commission in Canada" (*Hansard*, February 11, 1936).

On the morning of the second broadcast, the Chairman of the Radio Commission phoned the President of the Gibbons Agency and told him that future broadcasts must be clearly identified as being sponsored by the Conservative Party, and that all objectionable references to personalities should be removed. He was told that "Mr. Sage" could not be announced as sponsored by the Conservative Party, since it had not been possible to place the scripts before the Party Committee for approval. It was agreed that if the program was announced as being sponsored by the Gibbons Agency it would be acceptable, since the Company was widely known to be the advertising agency for the Conservative Party. Charlesworth stated that he was given definite assurances there would be no defamatory material in the second broadcast.

Nevertheless, the second broadcast again carried allusions to King, fully as objectionable as those in the first. Instead of stating that it was sponsored by the Gibbons Agency, the credits merely mentioned the name of the writer of the script. Succeeding broadcasts announced the sponsor as "R. L. Wright and a Group of Conservatives" but never as the Conservative Party.

Gibbons had sold the idea to the Honourable Earl Lawson, head of the National Conservative Committee, who assumed the responsibility for the broadcasts and their content, expressing regrets regarding what had been said about King. But it was said in a manner that assuaged none of the anger of the Liberals. Indeed, many Conservatives were hardly less exercised, for they saw clearly that such propaganda could boomerang, as it did. When a Parliamentary Committee was appointed on March 19, 1936, the Liberals were still burning with resentment over the "Sage" broadcasts. Though Charlesworth in his book called it an "absurd clamour" and a "piffing affair," it quickly became apparent that the new government considered it much more. Ultimately it occupied 150 pages in the Committee's Proceedings.

During the Committee's hearings, the Commissioners and all the principal participants in the "Sage" affair were subjected to a grilling such as seldom takes place before such a Committee. From none could much explicit information be elicited. Memories were hazy. No one

knew where copies of any of the scripts could be found. Two of the actors claimed that during the production of the series they had been threatened with violence, one with death. Gibbons, the originator of the series, felt he had done a good service, and that the interests of the Conservative Party and those of Canada were synonymous. Henshaw carried off the honour as the most impassive witness, cool and imperturbable. But any doubts about the fate of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission were sealed. From that moment on it lived on borrowed time.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE OF 1936

After the election of October, 1935, which returned the Liberals to power, Alan Plaunt was the first person to see the new Minister of Marine, the Honourable C. D. Howe, regarding the reorganization of broadcasting. At Howe's request, he prepared a comprehensive memorandum and a summary of the views of the League. The Minister went over this with him, and prior to Christmas he agreed with the general line taken and sought his opinion regarding a General Manager. At the same time Howe authorized Plaunt and Brooke Claxton to prepare a draft bill. He also instructed C. P. Edwards, Director of Radio in the Department, to draft a bill. Various discussions regarding these two drafts ensued. They differed with respect to technical control. After conversations with the Minister, further action was deferred, a decision having been reached meantime to appoint a Parliamentary Committee.

It became important once more to alert the membership of the Radio League to the possibilities of the moment. The press rallied strongly. Plaunt, from 1930, had maintained a close liaison with the press, and especially with J. B. Livesay, General Manager of The Canadian Press. Indeed, this was one of his most effective levers. The Parliamentary Committee was instructed to inquire into the administration of the Act of 1932 to determine whether there had been abuse of broadcasting privileges for either political or advertising purposes, and what changes should be effected. Plaunt presented the League's case immediately after the "Sage" discussions, before the case could be presented by the opponents of nationalization. His timing was effective, so much so that, after reading the presentation, the Prime Minister sent word to the Chairman that he would like to see the proposals implemented. He said: "We want the Aird Report and this is the Aird Report

brought up to date." The result was a revamping of the first draft of the report.

The following were the main conclusions of the Committee. Under the CRBC, there had been lack of co-ordination and loose administration of the Commission's affairs. A Commission of three could not be moulded into an effective unit to formulate and execute policies successfully. The recommendation of the 1934 Committee regarding the need for a General Manager was justified. The direction of broadcasting should be placed in the hands of a Corporation with an honorary board of nine governors, so selected as to give representation to all parts of Canada, and its operations should be carried on through a General Manager and an Assistant General Manager. The Corporation should have full control over the character of all programs, political or otherwise, and advertising content, for all Canadian stations or networks. It should have full authority to engage, dismiss, or control all employees and fix their salaries. The allocation of channels should remain with the Department of Transport, but the Minister before authorizing licences, changes, or power increases should first obtain the recommendation of the Corporation. The Committee suggested that, as soon as it became possible to amend the contracts for line service, consideration should be given to including the telephone systems in the pool.

The principle was restated that no allowance should be made for the value of any licence, should a station be taken over by the Corporation, since all licences were in the public domain. No person should be deemed to have any proprietary right to a channel. Of political broadcasts, the Committee said: "First, that dramatized political broadcasts should be prohibited; second, that full sponsorship of all political broadcasts should be required; third, that political broadcasts should be under full control of the Corporation which would assign time on an equitable basis among all parties and rival candidates."

The Corporation was instructed that: "Each year prior to the renewal of licences to private stations by the minister, it shall review the activities of such private stations and make recommendations in regard to their working, broadcasting, or such other matters as it may deem desirable." It was an instruction that would be leniently administered to the point of laxity, as will be shown later, in spite of which private operators would complain and contend that the Corporation was their prosecutor, judge, and jury.

PART III)))))))))))))))))))))))))))) RADIO AND TELEVISION

CHAPTER 16

THE CBC BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Although the Broadcasting Act of 1936 was assented to on June 23, the Act was not proclaimed until November 2. In the meantime, the Board of Governors was named. The Chairman was Leonard W. Brockington, k.c., Counsel for the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, scholar and orator, about whom more will be said later. Rene W. Morin of Montreal, graduate of McGill, notary and man of financial standing in Quebec, was named Vice-Chairman. Other members of the Board were: N. L. Nathanson, of the Famous Players Corporation in Toronto; Monseigneur A. Vachon, Dean of the Faculty of Science, Laval University, a distinguished chemist and member of the National Research Council; Mrs. Nellie McClung, well-known author who had pioneered in Manitoba, a former member of the Alberta Legislature; Alan B. Plaunt, graduate of the University of Toronto and Oxford, and former President of the Radio League; Colonel Wilfred Bovey, Director of Extension of McGill University; and J. W. Godfrey, k.c., of Halifax.

Of all the Board members, Plaunt was the best informed for the task ahead of them. He had spent years studying all the aspects of radio in Canada and was unswervingly dedicated to making national broadcasting work. Brockington had penetrating vision, an ability for expression unrivalled in Canada, plus courage and determination scarcely second to his gift of oratory. Nathanson was a brilliant businessman with rare abilities in the realms of finances. He knew which was Board business and which was better delegated to the executive. His knowledge and shrewdness saved the CBC a great deal of money. Vachon was a man of broad vision and tolerance.

Unhappily, over the years Board appointments have too often fallen far short of the standards set by that first Board. Far too frequently appointments have savoured of political recognition. In some instances, appointees have been active political partisans; in others, they have regarded regional interests above national ones, or lacked any real capacity for their important tasks.

A preliminary meeting was held on September 26 at the request of the Minister, the Honourable C. D. Howe, through whom the Board reported to Parliament. The meeting was eminently satisfactory. Sound principles were laid down. There would be no political interference. With this Howe fully concurred, and this was emphasized by the Chairman, who had already discussed this with Howe. No sectionalism was to be tolerated, especially between the two founding races. The Board would act as a unit, all members agreeing not to push individual candidates nor to concern themselves with anything but policy; this agreement was provoked by the flood of applications for positions already received. Wire-line and commercial policy and various technical matters were also touched upon, and decisions were taken as to the positions of General Manager and the Assistant General Manager. The choice for the former fell on Gladstone Murray, and for the latter on Dr. Augustin Frigon, both eminently qualified men. Soon after this Plaunt tried to interest L. B. Pearson in serving as director of Public Relations of the Corporation and an offer was made to him by Murray in November of 1937. It was not accepted.

As soon as the Act was proclaimed, the first regular meeting of the Board was held on November 4, when the managerial appointments were confirmed. At that meeting the Board took over the staff of 132 and the facilities of the CRBC; it approved by-laws regulating the activities of officers and employees, and the procedures to be followed at future meetings; it authorized a technical survey to determine the precise coverage of Canadian stations, the extent and character of outside interference, and a program survey to determine both the extent and character of Canadian talent and how it could best be developed and organized; finally, it laid down the dictum that a fundamental policy of the Corporation should be to improve the relations between Canadians who speak French and those who speak English.

The Board now set about drafting comprehensive and detailed plans for the development of national broadcasting, viewing this as a long-term undertaking to be accomplished over several stages. The members met again on December 17 and 18. On December 19 they met in

the Minister's office, and Howe indicated to them his opinion regarding their proper function. It very soon became apparent that there were wide divergencies of opinion between the Minister and the Board. Howe's interpretation of their functions was a rude jolt that might have deterred less determined men, but it only served to spur them on.

HOWE AND THE CORPORATION

A carefully prepared, three-year plan of fundamental development was forwarded to the Minister by the Chairman on January 4, 1937. This was based on the Aird report and included proposals for 50-kw. stations in Montreal and Toronto, improved facilities in the Maritimes and Saskatchewan, where the need was greatest, together with coverage charts, maps, etc., and a request for a loan of \$500,000 as authorized by the Act. This was acknowledged on January 8, when Howe said:

I regret to note that my discussions with the Board and similar discussions that I have had on four or five occasions with the officers and Governors of your Corporation in which I outlined the government policy toward broadcasting left no visible impression on your plans. . . . The government believes that the most important function of your board lies in the direction of building more suitable and satisfactory programs. I regret to say that it now appears that your chief interest is in the mechanical operation of broadcasting stations.¹

Howe suggested that the Board in its long-range plan was envisioning something beyond the scope of the Act. He charged it with attempting to interpret government policy, for which he was responsible, and urged the members to explore less ambitious aims by spending the largest possible proportion of its revenue on the building of programs. Howe felt the Board should revise its contractual relations with private stations and also look into the problem of granting power-increases to some of the many private applicants under suitable contracts. He added:

¹ Only the most pertinent sections of the contentious correspondence that followed can be included here, but the complete file may be seen in the Archives of the University of British Columbia among the Plaunt Papers, the source of this information.

While public ownership is an idea to be achieved ultimately, private ownership and operation under government control and regulation is also a sound policy. . . . I sincerely hope that your Board will face realities and so act that the greatest possible improvement that the present Act will permit can be effected at the earliest possible moment. You have capable technical officers but to date it seems to me that their efforts are not being directed along practical lines. . . . The government is now prepared to loan \$500,000 to advance matters but no commitment beyond this can or will be made at this time. The sooner your Board can be brought to appreciate this, the sooner real progress can commence. . . . Perhaps this letter is written in stronger terms than would have been the case had my remarks to the Board at Ottawa not been so completely disregarded.

If Howe thought his letter would cow the Board, he had reckoned with the wrong group. On January 18, Chairman Brockington answered Howe in a seven-page letter, which opened like this:

I was instructed to write to you not because your remarks were unheeded but because they were received with attention and astonishment. At the meeting between yourself and the Governors held in your office on December 19 you stated:

- (1) That the Governors of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation should consider themselves only as a programme-building organization.
- (2) That the improvement of broadcasting facilities should be left to private capital, initiative, and enterprise.
- (3) That in your opinion there was not any appreciable amount of public opinion in favour of the public ownership of broadcasting facilities.
- (4) That no attention need be paid to complaints from Saskatchewan or the Maritimes, because in your opinion, residents of these parts were receiving all the Canadian Broadcasting service which their geographical and economic position warranted.

It was hoped that these statements did not represent your considered opinion; it was believed that in any event they did

not and do not represent the opinion of the government which appointed us. They certainly do not reflect our conception of our duties. Any general policy based upon such a foundation would constitute a surrender in which we would not wish to participate.

Brockington quoted from the informal meeting of the Board of September 26, which Howe attended, as to the policy of accepting the Board's recommendations, and Brockington stated that: the Board felt no capital expenditure was desirable that could not be usefully employed as a unit on a truly national scheme; that the Board was aware of the limitations of the Act but desired that the Minister and the government should be equally aware of them; and that the Board's plans left a reasonable field for private enterprise. He also: made suggestions as to sources of additional revenue; called the Minister's suggestion that the chief interest of the Board appeared to be in the mechanical operations of stations as incorrect and unfair; and refuted the reference to the use of technical staff. He concluded with this:

I have written you with the frankness that your letter demands and deserves. We would be grateful if, after further consideration of all the correspondence, you would let us know definitely whether:

- (a) The government will consider an ultimate plan based upon the technical surveys, as explained and modified in my letter of January 4.
- (b) Whether as an initial step, the sum provided for under the Act will be advanced for definite construction purposes as necessarily ancillary to the survey plan so outlined.
- (c) Whether it is the intention of your Department and the government to act upon the recommendations of the Corporation in the matter of station licences and power increases.

On the same date Brockington sent a copy of this letter to Alan Plaunt with this observation: "The Minister's letter to me was very disappointing and I felt that unless the Board was to become a mere rubber stamp sub-department of the Ministry of Transport, I was obliged to reply as I did."

HOWE CHANGES HIS TUNE

On January 21, 1937, Howe replied in a much more conciliatory vein. He reaffirmed his interest in public ownership. He said it was the desire of his Department and the government to act upon the recommendations of the Corporation, though he could not commit either himself or the Government until the full nature of such recommendations were known. He suggested that he had probably been at fault in not explaining more fully where his difficulties lay.

His reply to Brockington's opening statement was: "Your letters place in my mouth four statements that I certainly did not make in the form stated and which had they been made would severely reflect on my position in public life. It would serve no useful purpose to elaborate on this statement, and I only make it for the reason that, without any statement, this letter might be considered an admission that I made the statements."

Howe pleaded pressures, receiving some thirty letters each day on broadcasting alone, plus being besieged by members. He suggested that he and Brockington should have a talk with the Prime Minister about broadcasting, to which the latter was favourable, and concluded: "There is little hope of my getting to Winnipeg while the session is on, but if you can possibly arrange to spend a day or two in Ottawa in the near future, I feel sure we can iron out any difference of viewpoint to our mutual satisfaction."

Thus ended the first encounter of two very determined men. Clearly Howe had underestimated both the calibre and the determination of the Board. This exchange was to be followed by another of greater interest and finality. However, from this time forward, nearly all correspondence with the Minister was carried on through the General Manager.

On February 27, 1927, the General Manager, Gladstone Murray, formally laid before the Minister the request for the loan of \$500,000, noting that the Board planned to build one 50-kw. station in Quebec, another in Ontario, and planned to begin one 15-kw. station in the Maritimes and another in Saskatchewan, the last two capable of enlargement to 50 kw. Details of cost and proposed financing were clearly set out. On March 6, the grant for the first two was agreed to, but Howe advised the Board that the details respecting the other two were not sufficient, and that the government felt both the Maritime and western projects should be deferred until the first two had been placed

in operation and had demonstrated carrying power sufficient to carry the other two.

The Ontario and Quebec stations—CBL and CBF—were completed and opened by the Minister shortly before Christmas of 1937. On October 12, speaking at Moncton, Howe said: “The Broadcasting Corporation has adopted as a policy, government ownership and operation of the larger stations. The Corporation will proceed as rapidly as funds will permit to build a series of high-power stations which will in themselves give full coverage.”

CBC AND THE HAVANA TREATY

Early in 1937, the Board pressed on the Government the urgency of action to clarify the international-channel situation. No really satisfactory plans could be made for national coverage until this was done. The step resulted in the Havana Treaty, which cleared the way for CBC high-power and for limited increases to private stations. The agreement reached at Havana provided an entirely new system of frequency allocation. Broadcasting stations were classified in four categories, as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| CLASS I STATIONS | Dominant stations operating on a clear channel and designed to serve a large area. Class I Stations were subdivided into: (a) stations operating with a power of 50 kilowatts or more; and (b) stations operating with a power of from 10 to 50 kilowatts. |
| CLASS II STATIONS | Secondary stations operating on a clear channel and designed to render service over a large area, but limited by interference from Class I stations. Class II stations are to operate with a power of from 250 watts to 50 kilowatts. |
| CLASS III STATIONS | Stations operating on a regional channel designed to serve primarily a metropolitan area and surrounding country. Class III stations operate with a power of from 500 watts to 5 kilowatts. |
| CLASS IV STATIONS | Stations using a local channel, and serving a city or town with surrounding suburbs. The power of such a station must be between 100 and 250 watts. |

Before the Havana Agreement, Canada had: first, six so-called "exclusive" channels available for high-powered stations, five of which were subject to intense interference from more powerful Mexican and Cuban stations; second, two high-power channels shared with the United States; and last, fifteen regional or local channels shared with the United States on a hit-and-miss basis. After the agreement, Canada had the use of six clear channels for Class I(a) stations with no power limitations; four clear channels for Class I(b) stations; and four clear channels for Class II stations, with power limitations of from 5 to 15 kilowatts. Besides these fourteen clear channels, Canada was given also the free use of forty-one regional channels, with power from 500 watts to 5 kilowatts, and six local channels for use with power of from 100 to 250 watts. The conclusion of the Havana Agreement made it possible for the CBC, through its Engineering Department, to embark on a "three-year plan" designed to extend the service of the national network.

The Board had established as a basic principle that all clear channels should be reserved for CBC high-power stations. It also froze power increases to private stations at one kilowatt—except those already in excess of that power—until the situation was completely clarified. This limitation it raised to five kilowatts in 1944. These limitations provoked the contention of certain private broadcasters that the CBC's action resulted in a permanent loss to Canada of much potential coverage. The private stations felt they should be permitted to appeal to a higher authority, to increase their power and protect Canada's interests—and their own. However, the best-informed authorities did not agree. In a speech before the Western Association of Broadcasters at their Annual Meeting at Banff, on August 7, 1944, Keith A. MacKinnon spoke to the broadcasters. MacKinnon, for several years on the engineering staff of the CBC, was one of Canada's most competent radio engineers. He had been attached to the Canadian delegation during the Havana Treaty negotiations. His speech, published by the CBC under the title *Analyzing the Havana Treaty*, so impressed private broadcasters that soon a group of them engaged him as their expert adviser on channel allocations and allied matters. MacKinnon said that years before the CBC started Canada lost permanently much potential coverage, and the inadequate channels available had led the CBC to initiate steps which resulted in the Havana Treaty. If, on all the exclusive Canadian channels, stations had gone to 50 kw. at the same time as those in the United States, then it is probable that the Mexican interference would never have developed on these channels.

In the channel discussions between the United States and Canada up to 1933, no consideration was given to the claims of Cuba or Mexico. As a result, both these countries did what the United States had done, appropriated any and all of the channels in the broadcast band. Several super-power stations (200 kw. or more) were located along the northern border of Mexico, some of them financed by Americans who could no longer secure licences at Washington and who engaged in advertising that would never have been countenanced anywhere else. Far removed from Canada, with its low-power outlets, several of these border stations used Canadian channels, for they interfered least with the American stations. From 1933 to 1937, the interference set up by these Mexico stations all across Canada, but particularly throughout Western Ontario, was very serious. Of seven exclusive Canadian channels, four were subjected to this interference. Though interference persisted in some places for many years after the final ratification of the Havana Treaty by Mexico in 1941, and subsequent agreements, this problem finally faded into obscurity.

In 1937, the issue of an increase in the licence fee arose, a question that could have been settled in 1932 had it not been regarded as bad politics. The General Manager discussed this with the Minister, again emphasizing the seriousness of the situation in the Maritimes and the Prairies. On November 16, 1937, it was conveyed to the Board that the government would be prepared to increase the licence fee to \$2.50, and to recommend to Parliament an additional loan of \$500,000. In urging this step, the Board had again emphasized as strongly as possible the importance of high-power construction in the west as well as the Maritimes, since the CBC had no outlet between Toronto and Vancouver. On February 3, 1938, the Chairman of the CBC explained to listeners over the national network the need and purpose of the increased licence fee; the Vice-Chairman did the same over the French network. The Minister made the same explanation in the House of Commons on February 8, stressing the importance of holding the radio channels allotted to Canada by international agreement, and the fact that the money would enable the erection of two stations in the next year. The increase to \$2.50 went into effect with the new fiscal year on April 1.

BROCKINGTON REVIEWS PROGRESS

Brockington appeared before the first Parliamentary Committee following the Board's installation on March 24, 1938. He said:

On November 2, 1936, the day on which we took office, there were seventy-five licensed broadcasting stations in Canada, of which eight were owned or leased by the Corporation; two were owned by the government of the Province of Manitoba, and sixty-five were privately owned. The total wattage in power on November 2, 1936, of the eight stations operated by the corporation was 14,200 watts, and of all others 64,300, making a total of 78,500 watts, a condition which, compared with other Anglo-Saxon countries, placed Canada far behind what one might reasonably expect to be its normal national occupation of air channels.

The total power of stations now operated by the CBC is 112,200 watts. The power of all others is 69,200, making a total now of 181,400 watts. The increase in power between November 2, 1936, and the present for the CBC stations is 99,000 watts, and for all stations 103,400 watts.

On November 2, 1936, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's basic network, which was made up of some twenty-two stations owned privately plus those the corporation owned, served approximately 60 per cent of the total population of Canada under normal conditions, but Mexican station interference at night reduced this service to approximately 49 per cent of the total population.

When the Corporation's new 50-kw. transmitters at Hornby and Verchères were placed in operation in December of 1937, and with the CBC network extended to include some thirty-nine stations, the network coverage was improved to approximately 78 per cent of the total population. When the new Maritime and Prairie 50-kw. transmitters CBA and CBK are placed in operation, the primary coverage will be extended to 84 per cent of the total population of Canada.

Brockington also laid down certain principles which deserve to be regarded as landmarks in Canadian broadcasting. On program distribution, a subject which was to recur again and again, he had this to say:

We decline to be a program-building body that feeds and subsidizes private stations with CBC programs taken at their convenience. I am going to give you an example exactly of what I mean. During the week of February 13-19, a typical week, chosen at random, three programs offered in Western Canada by the CBC were not heard at all. In the same week, twenty-two programs were heard on only one station from Winnipeg to the Rockies. Thirteen programs were heard on only two stations, and twelve on three. Seven programs were heard only partially. On Monday, February 14, at 6:45 P.M. Winnipeg time, CBC offered an informative review of trade and industry called "Canada Week by Week." No station in Western Canada carried it.

The Corporation, which ended its first year with a surplus of \$128,819, and its second on March 31, 1938, with a surplus of \$186,633, budgeted for \$3,200,000 in its third year. Of this, \$500,000 was set aside as surplus; \$100,000 for current capital improvements; \$100,000 for usual cash surplus; and \$300,000 as a special reserve. Moreover, it projected into that year's accounts expenses anticipated for the new Maritime and Prairie stations and for improved studios and increased wire costs. The Parliamentary Committee, which reviewed both the work of the Corporation and its budget for the following year, of which the Minister was the most important member, commended the Board's policies and administration as both prudent and efficient.

SHOWDOWN OVER CBK

Thus fortified, the Board prepared to proceed with the last of the four high-power stations envisaged in its preliminary plan, the Saskatchewan station. CBA in the Maritimes had been agreed to earlier. On July 2, 1938, the General Manager wrote the Minister seeking his approval but, on July 4, Howe advised him that he did not agree. He pointed out that the Corporation was being sued by Gooderham and Worts for \$250,000, and he suggested that it had no resources to meet the proposed construction costs if it lost the case. He also questioned the rising costs of the Corporation and emphasized the need for re-examining the revenue situation in light of opposition to the existing scale of licence fees.

The Chairman immediately called an emergency meeting of the

Board for July 11 in Ottawa and prepared a comprehensive statement of the events leading up to the request. He pointed out: that the Minister had been present in the Parliamentary Committee when the Chairman had set forth the urgency of the whole project; that this statement had been given extensive national press publicity; and that only following the announcement had the Minister shown any evidence of dissent. In the meantime, he said, the Minister had intimated that there was the possibility of a reduction in the receiver licence fee previous to the next election. He disposed of Howe's argument regarding the suit of Gooderham and Worts by showing that even if the lawsuit was lost adequate provision had been made in the special fund of \$300,000. If there was a possibility of the licence fee being lowered, official indication should be given immediately, and the Board would be obliged to act accordingly. This decisive communication was dispatched to the Minister with a request for a meeting later the same day; the Prime Minister was also informed of the situation.

Following their meeting, the members of the Board waited on the Minister. Howe did not take kindly to their insistence. Tempers flared, but Brockington informed him that they had all brought their resignations with them and would tender them then and there, and that Brockington himself would go on the air the next day to tell the Canadian public why they had resigned. The Minister withdrew his objection. Council approved an order for the station the next day and, on July 13, Howe wrote to the Chairman that it seemed undesirable and unnecessary that there should be any friction between the Board and the government.

The Minister's opposition, although based on principle, coincided with pressures from other sources anxious to stop the Corporation in its tracks. At that time a powerful group within the Liberal party was also seeking higher power for another station on the Prairies. But CBK was born. Located at Watrous, on 540 kc., it soon became Canada's greatest station in coverage, reaching far beyond the boundaries of Saskatchewan in all directions.

USE OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

Brockington appeared again before the Parliamentary Committee of 1939 to deliver his account of stewardship and erect additional guide posts for nationalized broadcasting. He said:

We believe that radio speech should be forthright, provocative, and stimulating, that censorship is undesirable and perhaps impossible beyond the limits of decency and the minor and necessary prohibitions which we have fixed in our regulations.

We are opposed to, and shall resist, any attempt to regiment opinion and to throttle freedom of utterance. We are opposed also, and shall always be opposed to, any attempt to buy the right on our network for the advancement of personal opinion or propaganda. If opinion sufficiently informed on the lips of an attractive speaker is available, it will be offered by the CBC without remuneration as a contribution to national enlightenment and provocative discussion. The free interchange of opinion is one of the safeguards of our democracy, and we believe we should be false to our trust as custodians of part of the public domain if we did not resist external control and any attempt to place a free air under the domination of the power of wealth. I have thought it necessary to make that statement.

The maintenance of the national position needs vigilance and determination. Without public control and progressive public development, sustaining, educational, and cultural features cannot be extensively broadcast. Without public control, listeners in isolated and less populous parts of the country cannot enjoy the privileges which have hitherto been reserved for some of the great centres of population. The decision of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to extend its listening facilities, and to subserve all interests to those of the listener, is only implementing the paramount duty which has been set upon us by the parliamentary trust which we have undertaken. From that trust, that duty, and that determination, this board of governors does not propose to deviate.

On the matter of proprietary rights in radio channels, he said:

Anybody who is enjoying the right to operate a radio station is occupying the public domain; in other words he owns a franchise, because a franchise consists of the occupation of the public domain, whether it be a franchise to use the air or to use the streets of a city or to use any other national or community property. I submit, therefore, that the owner of every private station is as much a trustee for all classes of listeners as is the CBC.

Anybody who occupies the public domain enjoys a franchise that is in the nature of a public utility. The principle of public-utility ownership is that it shall be highly regulated and that there shall be limitations on its profits with surplus profits going back for an improvement of the public service. The earnings of gas companies, of electric light companies, and of other companies occupying public franchises are limited usually to what is described as a reasonable return upon the capital used and useful in the business. Now the CBC does not want, and I am sure nobody else wants, to prohibit private radio stations making a reasonable profit. But I think the essential interests of the community demand that there shall be no profiteering in private radio. I am going to suggest for the consideration of this Committee some legislation whereby the profits of holders of a franchise being part of the public domain should be limited rather than increased.

BROCKINGTON RESIGNS

Leonard Brockington continued as first Chairman of the Board of Governors until October of 1939. He was undoubtedly the most forthright and powerful personality to date on the broadcast scene in Canada. He was not only the living voice of the CBC, expressing clearly in specific terms what it stood for and what it did, but he was also its most formidable defence. It took a brave or foolish adversary of the Corporation to challenge him. I saw this happen once, and the occasion remains the most vivid among all the many scenes before Parliamentary Committees that I have been privileged to witness. To anyone who knew Brockington as I knew him, and saw him in action before such a Committee, particularly when he was really roused, or heard him deliver his account of stewardship,² both his personality and his words must ever remain clearly etched and vivid.

Born in Cardiff, Brockington graduated from the University of Wales with honours in Latin and Greek. After four years as Classics and English Master at Cowley Grammar School, St. Helen's, Lancashire, he emigrated to Calgary and became the Gold Medalist in Law from the University of Alberta, City Solicitor for Calgary, and General Counsel

² This was published later by the CBC under the title *Account of Stewardship, 1939—The Origins, Growth, Present Position, Problems, and Possibilities of our National Broadcasting System.*

for the North-West Grain Dealers' Association at Winnipeg. His knowledge of the classics, his wit, his superb oratorical ability soon marked him out for distinction, and in due course he found himself the guest of honour before such distinguished gatherings as the American Bar Association. He became an Honorary Bencher of the Inner Temple and adviser on Commonwealth Affairs to the British Minister of Information during the Second World War, and he broadcast to the world from many countries. His appointment to head the CBC Board of Governors was one of the most fortunate circumstances in the history of broadcasting in Canada, and his leaving the post late in 1939 was one of the most unfortunate.

With Brockington as Chairman, it was a period of inspiration. Everyone knew where he stood—management, private stations, politicians. There was no equivocation. Unfortunately, there were limits to the time that he could spare from his clients in Winnipeg, who had been generous. Since as Chairman he received no salary, he had no choice but to resign after nearly three years of unselfish service to the CBC.

When he retired as Chairman of the Board of Governors of the CBC, Prime Minister King wrote this tribute:

The concern which has been shown by yourself and your colleagues—for the preservation of broadcasting to the public domain, in defence of freedom of speech and equality before the microphone, and the genuine appreciation of the many aspects of our national life of which its actual broadcasting activities have given evidence—has, I believe, laid a firm foundation on which to erect a national radio which will at once contribute to and reflect our national development.

GRAHAM SPRY AND ALAN PLAUNT

A short time after the enactment of the Broadcasting Act of 1932, the late W. C. Good, the patron saint of the Canadian Co-operative Movement, invited Graham Stry to take over *The Weekly Sun* of Toronto. Published up to 1910 by the late Goldwin Smith, the United Farmers of Ontario acquired this magazine in 1919 as the organ of their movement. Following the defeat of the Farmers' Government in 1923, the *Sun* dropped steadily from some fifty thousand paid circulation to about six thousand. Though warned by Stry that it was a risky

undertaking, Alan Plaunt and Hume Blake joined him in the enterprise.

In 1932, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation emerged at Calgary. The United Farmers of Ontario were affiliated with the Ontario section, and Spry attended the Conference as a delegate. Later, when the UFO withdrew from the CCF, Spry continued with the new party and attended the Regina Convention in 1933.

Plaunt and Blake were not supporters of the CCF. They were more inclined to the Liberal left, and in 1933 they asked Spry to choose between the *Sun* and the CCF. He chose the latter and drafted the first outline for the League for Social Reconstruction. In 1934 and 1935, he contested Toronto-Broadview against the redoubtable Tommy Church and was defeated, as he put it, "by large and enthusiastic majorities."

In 1937, Spry left politics to recoup his finances. He became an executive of Standard Oil of California and was sent to London. In 1940, he became Managing Director of the company in London, and a director of several associated companies. In 1942, while still in business, he became Personal Assistant to Sir Stafford Cripps and accompanied him on his historic mission to offer independence to India. Since 1947, Spry has been Agent-General for Saskatchewan in London, and no Agent-General has kept more closely in touch with his homeland or served his province with greater fidelity and distinction. His interest in Canadian broadcasting remains unabated. He has written several penetrating articles on the subject in the *Queen's Quarterly*, and has assembled the most complete documentary collection of material on Canadian broadcasting in existence. At no time has he received any salary, emolument, or other recognition for the work he did in laying the foundations of the CBC.

Alan Plaunt continued to operate *The Weekly Sun* during the nadir of the depression. He used it as the voice of the "New Canada" movement which he sparked and developed. This was a non-partisan, rural-youth movement very much in keeping with youth movements in other lands during the depressed and savage 'thirties. It had a training course and sent teams into county after county to establish study groups in Ontario in 1933 and 1934. In six months, some eight hundred such groups were organized across Ontario. Beginning in Bruce County, it spread to Huron, then Lambton, gathering momentum as it went. It was a sort of peregrinating folk-school and gained a large measure of interest and support across Canada. Plaunt was surrounded by the most dedicated group of young men I have ever known. Almost without

exception they have become leaders—several quite distinguished leaders—in and far beyond the rural economy and sociology of Ontario.

But the economic problems of *The Weekly Sun*, on which the movement depended for its promotion, inevitably pressed. At the time all publications, and particularly the farm press, were suffering similar problems. The *Sun*, with its very limited circulation, was seriously affected. I joined Alan Plaunt temporarily in the summer of 1934, and since I had considerable experience with the farm press, he asked me to assess the *Sun's* prospects, and the probable cost of putting it into a sound competitive position. I reported that unless he was prepared to spend a substantial sum, running into at least six figures, he should either dispose of the paper or close it down. An idealist, ready to spend money freely on worthy causes, he was far from a dreamer when it came to business matters. Indeed, he was credited with an unusual degree of shrewdness in affairs of finance. He decided to try to sell it, and we conducted negotiations with one large Toronto publisher, but nothing finally came of the projected sale.

The suspension of the *Sun* also meant the suspension of the "New Canada" movement, since the *Sun* was its chief medium of propaganda. Fortunately or otherwise, this left Plaunt free once more to turn his entire attention to the recurring difficulties of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, which threatened even the continued existence of nationalized broadcasting. Though President of the Radio League from 1935 on, his greatest influence was behind the scenes, for he was an intense but undramatic worker shunning publicity. He had, as gauche as it may sound, a burning desire to build a better Canada. Indeed, it was this passion for his country that lay at the bottom of his devotion to nationalization of radio. He saw clearly as early as this some of the divisive forces at work in Canada, and he wanted to arrest them before it was too late. He was a decisive factor both in securing the adoption of the Act of 1936 and in making it work.

When the Act was passed, he was notified by the Prime Minister himself of his appointment to the Board of Governors of the CBC. He filled this role with distinction until October of 1940, when he resigned because he could not get follow-up action by the Board on reports he had been asked to make (PCB Report, 1942). Less than one year later, he died. A fitting tribute to his memory was established at Carleton University in 1958 by anonymous donors. This was the "Alan B. Plaunt Memorial Lecture Series," delivered annually by a distinguished speaker on a subject germane to the basic interests of Canada.

CHAPTER 17

CBC'S COMMERCIAL POLICY

The experience of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission made at least one thing abundantly clear. This was the need for the CBC to develop a network plan that would include both commercial programs and public-service sustaining programs within CBC schedules. It was out of the question to operate two networks, although a small group of idealists believed this was the only way the pressures and evils of commercialism would be avoided and a proper public service consistently provided. Such a view is still maintained and conceivably promoters of two systems may some day be proven right; but no such dual system was feasible in 1937, nor is it in 1965. So the CBC set about to combine the double function of serving both the cultural and the economic needs of the nation through a single radio network.

In 1937, radio in the United States was approaching its peak in variety and excellence of programming. Powerful American stations and networks had large and sometimes dominant audiences in much of Ontario, across the Prairies, and particularly in Vancouver, where both international and local competition was intense and rate-cutting rampant. Many areas in the Maritimes could hear New England stations more clearly and consistently than Canadian stations. Moreover, in Montreal, Toronto, and Windsor, American networks had powerful affiliates. Canadian branches of American-owned enterprises could reach the most concentrated population centres and the most profitable areas of Canada at very little additional cost. Many American sponsors were ready to extend their coverage over the less densely settled areas of Canada, provided it could be done at reasonable additional cost.

The task ahead of the CBC was to induce these advertisers to extend their programs across the country and share in the programming of the entire network, instead of confining their coverage to only parts of one or two regions.

Commercials were important in the network schedules, not for the revenue alone but perhaps even more for the hours they filled with popular, audience-building programs. This relieved the Corporation of the obligation of filling a great deal of time with what, in many cases, due to the CBC's very limited budget, must inevitably have been mediocre productions. To fill sixteen hours daily with programs of the high standard expected from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation was no small task.

Until the advent of television, this was the most important period in Canadian broadcasting. The evils of excessive commercialism in the United States had been obvious for all to hear for some time. Mass audiences and mass sales were considered by American broadcasters to be the prime purposes of broadcasting. They still are, not because many American broadcasters prefer it that way, but because they are inevitably victims of the system and its attendant pressures. Could commercialization of all broadcasting be avoided in Canada? Two conditions offered some insurance against it. The first was the complete control of networks by the CBC. As long as the CBC controlled the network, as specified in the Act, the CBC also controlled what went across the network. It could accept or reject programs and products and maintain standards. The second condition was equally important, if less stable. This was the attitude of the administration in regard to commercials. Were they an end in themselves, or were they only complementary, one means to an end? There was an emphatic weight of opinion against overdoing commercials and this view was shared alike by the Board of Governors and the management.

With this basic approach in mind, the CBC set out to develop a network in 1937. Commercials were important – very important – but they were to be kept in proper balance with the public-service obligations of the Corporation. Although the 1935 line contract of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission with the railways still had three years to run, it was imperative that this should be revised and extended on a basis of sixteen hours a day, which would leave the Corporation untrammelled in its operations. Negotiations were conducted by Dr. Frigon, and the contract, a far more meticulously drawn document than any that had preceded it, became effective on October 1,

1937. The cost of the complete service was \$515,000 for each of the first two years, and \$575,000 for each of the last three, but no extra or overtime payments were necessary. The former sum was just \$64,000 more than what the CRBC had paid during its last fiscal year for six and one-half hours, and it was \$62,000 less than the CRBC had paid for line service plus leased time on private stations not owned or operated by the Commission. Leased time on private stations ceased entirely under the CBC.

The first task was to devise the best system of network. Meetings were held during the summer of 1937 with advertisers and advertising agencies; American networks were studied with a view to adopting any features that might prove advantageous. Radio stations were sounded out, but no direct approach was made to any of them until the plan was ready. Twenty pages of questions and answers, covering every conceivable objection stations might raise to the plan, were prepared. With all of this I was concerned and I had the able assistance of Walter Powell, who had an unusual aptitude for commercial operation. Powell had carried on, pretty much single-handed, the difficult though limited commercial operations under the CRBC.

It fell to me to negotiate agreements with the twenty-five privately owned stations that were to be included on the English network, for at that time the CBC owned or operated only four English and three French stations. The French privately owned stations were contacted by Arthur Dupont. All agreements were verbal, confirmed by letter. Up to 1952, there never were written contracts.

The new system brought tremendous reductions in wire-line charges to sponsors. It also brought the adoption of a principle new to network operations: a system of regional discounts to encourage sponsors to stretch their programs across the entire country, rather than confine them to the most populous and profitable centres. This principle was subsequently adopted by some American networks, whose previous discounts had been based on volume of business alone. Regional discounts are still the core of the CBC's television network.

Stations were divided into five regional groups corresponding to the several time zones: Maritime, Quebec (French), Eastern, Prairie, and Pacific. Cumulative discounts of 5 per cent on station time for each region were offered, plus 5 per cent addition if the French network was included, either directly or by the addition of a special French program. Thus a sponsor could earn up to 25 per cent in discounts on station time if he carried his program to the 5 regions.

Network station rates were set by mutual agreement with the private stations, as equitably as possible, according to coverage, power, existing rates, and other factors. Occasionally there were hard bargainings, but generally private stations met the Corporation half way or more. Stations were paid a straight one-half of their agreed network rates, and had no discounts or commissions to pay. Out of the remainder, the CBC absorbed all discounts, frequency and regional, as well as agency commissions of 15 per cent. When all regions were used, this left the CBC slightly better than breaking even; when less than the entire network was used, the CBC made a small premium. The principle was a sharing process between the CBC and the private stations, and was based on the well-recognized general principle that the total cost to an advertiser for either regional or national networks should not exceed the total cost of the so-called national spot rates of all the stations comprising the network.

What other compensations did the member stations receive? They received the entire network-sustaining service of the CBC, whatever it might be—domestic productions, sporting or special events, importations—all free of charge. They were thus assured of being able to fill much of their available time at no extra cost. But they had to agree to certain limited but specified hours of “reserved time” for important CBC public-service programs.

PRIVATE STATIONS AS “PARTNERS”

Under this arrangement, stations on the CBC network enjoyed a much better arrangement than they would have received had they been members of an American network. At that time stations affiliated with an American network received no payment for the first sixteen commercial program hours fed to them each month. For the next twenty-five hours, they received only 25 per cent of the average unit-hour network rate. Under the American system, basic Canadian stations would have received only 65 per cent of what they were paid by the CBC, while supplementary stations—stations that were not regular network members, but were added only at the request of a sponsor—would have received very little—if, indeed, anything—because they could not have broadcast enough hours to entitle them to remuneration.

It was made clear to the private affiliates that there were definite limits to the number of network commercials that could be booked

while still maintaining a balanced schedule. There were, of course, no such limits in the United States. As Dr. Frigon was careful to emphasize, *the object was not to make a profit from privately owned member stations, but to treat them as partners in creating a co-operative system for the general benefit of the listener.*

Transmission rates were reduced from more than \$1,100 to \$345 for one hour on the national network; to \$295 for half an hour; and to \$245 for quarter of an hour. It became possible to buy sixty minutes of prime evening time, for both lines and stations, over the national network of thirty-four stations on a twenty-six occasion basis for \$1,900 net. Previously this would have cost nearly \$3,400. If the hour chosen preceded 6:00 P.M., the total cost was only \$1,283. Day-station rates were 60 per cent of night rates, but line rates were the same for either day or night. A half-hour of network time in the evening cost the same as a full hour during the day. Half-an-hour day time for stations and lines cost only \$857.

Early in December of 1937, the CBC's plan, together with a schedule of rates, was laid before a meeting of the Association of Advertising Agencies and the Canadian Association of Advertisers. It was commended at once by joint resolution. At last sponsors had a practical plan, and they set to work in earnest to use it. But the sponsors were not confined to the CBC network. At that time provision was made by the CBC whereby regional groups of private stations, upon application, could link up to carry sponsored programs individually or in series, and this was facilitated when requested. These were called "subsidiary hook-ups." The line rate was not as low as the over-all national rate, since extra circuits had to be engaged, but the rates remained reasonable.

At the same time, Commercial Departments were instituted in Toronto and Montreal. An "acceptance" policy for commercials was laid down, and a list of unacceptable accounts was drawn up. With slight modifications that list stands today, very little changed during twenty-seven years, and the acceptance policy is still being directed by much the same personnel that first administered it. The acceptance staff were sticklers for adherence to policy, but they ultimately gained the respect—if somewhat grudgingly—of both agencies and sponsors. The same over-all policy governed both French and English operations. High standards were aimed at, and several hundreds of thousands of dollars of network business was rejected annually.¹ Commercial

¹ During the fiscal year 1946-47 (a fairly typical one), gross business that was rejected for various reasons exceeded \$550,000. Of this, \$238,000

programs were always subject to final approval by the CBC Program Department, mainly because it was necessary to maintain program balance. Neither local-business advertising nor spot announcements were accepted in the 'forties; this revenue was left entirely to private stations. The basic interest of the CBC was network programming.

BATTLE WITH THE PRESS

The new line contract was signed in October, and the announcement of a new commercial system and schedule of rates brought an immediate response. By early December, five contracts for series of programs on the national network had been concluded, two of which included the French network. Following the meeting with the advertisers and agencies in December and widespread publication of the new rates, interest was intensified. Several Canadian branches of American concerns, which had hoped either to bring into Canada new shows or extend the network shows sponsored by their parent companies, immediately authorized their extension. The result was that, by early in January of 1938, there were sixteen commercial evening programs on the national network, of which six originated in Canada and ten in the United States; eight of these programs included the French network. Though it took two or three years, the percentage of Canadian commercial network programs grew, until they exceeded those from the United States.

Among listeners across Canada, the new programs were welcomed, especially in many areas in which they could not be heard before. But among newspaper and magazine publishers the effect was electric. The new policy was not only a complete surprise, it was a great shock. The CBC had publicized its plans mainly among sponsors and agencies, but it made no effort whatever to conceal them. The perturbation—not to say indignation—of the press at the emergence of the new network commercials was spontaneous. The publishers called a meeting in the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, which was attended by approximately

concerned the network, for which time could not be cleared on account of sustaining programs, and \$74,000 was not acceptable for reasons of product or program standards. Spot business rejected totalled \$235,000, of which \$138,000 was owing to time not being available, and \$97,000 because of unacceptability of commercials, products, or programs. Spot business on all CBC stations originated with national advertisers only, except at Chicoutimi, where there was no private station. The commercial revenue of the Corporation during that fiscal year was \$1,781,000.

125 representatives of the daily, weekly, and periodical press from the entire country. They summoned Gladstone Murray, the General Manager of the CBC, to appear before them and account for this extraordinary development. He took me with him.

Emphatic condemnation of what had been done was rife, and some very uncomplimentary things were said about the CBC. It was blamed for the cancellation of some four-colour advertisements in several magazines, but subsequently it was found that their cancellation had taken place months before the network began. The periodical press, in particular, was genuinely frightened. It was demanded that the General Manager declare, then and there, how far he intended to go with his commercial policy. The issue could not be evaded; the worst must be known without delay. Murray was on the spot, but his amazing mental agility for improvisation did not desert him in such circumstances, and he devised an answer while he stood and talked. He had not headed half a dozen departments at the British Broadcasting Corporation, launched the *Radio Times*, and served as a lobbyist at the British House of Commons for nothing. He was inordinately astute, a fast thinker and, above all, most ingratiating. In many ways Murray was a most remarkable man. Lord Burnham once described him as the missing link between a BBC official and humanity. Murray told them:

We must have a certain amount of commercial revenue in addition to licence fees. This is imperative. Just how much I do not know. However, I would say off-hand, and subject to further consideration, that if we had a \$3.00 licence fee we might be able to limit our commercial revenue to \$250,000. If we had a \$2.50 licence fee we might be able to get along with as little as \$500,000 commercial revenue, but if we have to carry on with the present \$2.00 licence fee, then there is no limit to the number of commercial programs we shall need.

Murray also explained that the public-service nature of the CBC necessitated a substantial proportion of sustaining programs in the schedules at all times, thus precluding their being overloaded with network commercials. This his listeners took with a grain of salt. It was a straight bid for press support to secure an increased licence fee, and it was straightforward. Angry as the publishers were, the meeting nevertheless swallowed the bait and appointed a committee then and there to hurry to Ottawa to persuade the Minister of the advantages of

a three-dollar licence fee. Howe, who had heard of the impending call, met the committee on the front steps of the Parliament Buildings with a blank refusal even to discuss the matter.

When our meeting at the Royal York ended, it was understood there would shortly be a second meeting at which further discussions would take place. Meanwhile, the General Manager reported to the Board of Governors, and the matter was also discussed with the Minister, who shortly after, in a speech at Moncton, made a general policy statement that coincided almost exactly with the formula devised by Murray on the spur of the moment.

Instead of awaiting the outcome of the second meeting, newspapers across the country launched a violently abusive attack against the Corporation. A few papers were exceptions, but not many. CBC acceptance of American programs was characterized as a "betrayal of trust, an insult to patriotism, a refinement of cynicism." One prominent weekly said: "The CBC points out that it needs money. It suggests that it be given time to collect funds from abroad and then it will be healthy enough to go Canadian. It's like a man who says that if he can rob a few more banks he can afford to go straight." Many of these publications were carrying extensive advertising from the same companies, as was the CBC.

Three weeks later, Murray met a committee of some fifteen representatives of the various publishing groups. Again I accompanied him. He said: "Since our last meeting, I have been called almost every sort of prostitute, except, I am glad to say, a common prostitute." He told of his report to his Board of Governors and pointed out that the formula he had outlined had now been announced by the Minister as a matter of public policy. He added: "Now gentlemen, what I should like you to tell me is this, where are we to get this revenue we need? Shall we go out in Toronto and Montreal among advertisers and enter into direct competition with you for it from Canadian sources, or shall we continue to take much of it from the source from which it is presently coming? This is a definite and immediate problem in which I need your guidance."

There was considerable hemming and hawing. It was suggested that the Commercial Manager might develop programs for sponsorship by such public bodies as the City of Toronto, the Ontario Hydro, or the CNR and CPR, both always fair game. It was also suggested that the CBC's rates were unfair and subsidized, whereupon Murray suggested that a committee be appointed to sit down with the Commercial Man-

ager and discuss rates. This offer was not accepted. Finally, before the meeting closed, it was agreed almost unanimously by the press representatives that if the CBC must have the money, it should continue to take a substantial part of its revenue from programs originating in the United States, rather than intensify competition at home for the advertisers' dollar. For the moment, the great issue of Americanization by the CBC was over.

LICENCE FEES INCREASED

But the question of whether the press would sit with the CBC to discuss comparative rates, as suggested by Murray, was not dead. On October 24, 1939, nearly two years later, a meeting was held in the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa. This was attended by Murray and the Commercial Manager, and a long debate was held between two factions of the press. One wanted to appoint a committee to discuss rates with the CBC; the other contended that such action would be tantamount to admitting the CBC's contentions, and would be an invitation for the CBC to discuss press rates. Moreover, it was contended, if the CBC increased its rates, it would probably take an equally large volume of business, and this would only mean more money. Forthwith the rate-committee proposal was abandoned.

At this 1939 meeting in Ottawa, the CBC was asked how closely it had come to the estimated commercial revenue of \$500,000. It was shown that gross business in 1938-39 had amounted to \$1,129,000, of which \$660,000 was obtained from programs of American origin, and \$468,000 from Canada. This represented a net of \$506,702. It was estimated that the 1939-40 net figure would be \$600,000. It was also pointed out at this meeting that the CBC had rejected acceptable sponsored programs during the past year to the value of more than \$250,000 so that certain hours could be kept clear for non-commercial programs, thus bearing out Murray's statement at the January 1938 meeting regarding a balanced schedule. This was aside from its rejection of a large volume of business that was regarded by the CBC as unacceptable, though a good deal of it was of a kind that appeared regularly in the press. In this discussion, no clear definition of "commercial revenues" was ever laid down—whether it meant gross billings, revenue left after payment of all commissions, or net revenues after all administration and operational expenses had been paid.

On June 1, 1944, the periodical and weekly press once more appeared before the Parliamentary Committee to protest the steadily rising commercial revenues of the CBC. The statements by Murray, Brockington, and Howe, during January and February of 1938, were recalled, and much of the old ground was reworked. It was claimed that, while publishers were restricted in many ways during the war, the CBC had spent money freely on commercial promotion. These and other charges were answered in a detailed statement filed by the Commercial Manager on June 28 (PCB 1944, p. 538).

Meanwhile business expanded rapidly, particularly the demand for evening time. By 1941, the increasing requirements of the CBC for time to broadcast sustaining programs associated with the war effort made it impossible to satisfy the requests of many sponsors. Sometimes competing shows at the same time period on two American networks sought an outlet on the single CBC national network. Others could not be satisfied without interfering with CBC public-service programs. Sponsors were sometimes obliged to move to less desirable times, and occasionally it worked the other way. Sometimes members of the Program Department claimed they could not undertake desirable and ambitious series because the times they wanted were occupied by commercial programs. Generally this seemed to the Commercial Department much more an excuse than a reason.

It was not always easy to maintain a complete program balance between commercial and non-commercial programs. But Ernest Bushnell, who headed the Program Department, fortunately had a thorough understanding of commercial operations. He realized that commercials could not be turned on and off like a water tap. A sound balance was maintained, and this is indicated by the fact that, by November of 1941, CBC commercial programs averaged sixteen per cent of total time on the national network. During the peak listening hours of 7:00 to 11:00 P.M., commercial programs accounted for one-third of the time. In March of 1942, the percentage of commercial programs in peak evening time reached a maximum of 35 per cent. For ten or more years this relationship changed very little if at all.

PRESSURES FOR A "SECOND" NETWORK

As early as July of 1941, the increasing backlog of unsatisfied business led to the setting up from time to time of a so-called "alternative"

network for evening commercial programs to relieve the pressure and give additional sponsors an opportunity to compete with those who, by priority more than anything else, retained their time on the national network. Occasionally this alternative network included the Corporation's 50-kw. stations in the Maritimes and Saskatchewan. In 1942, the CBC was obliged to use this system to broadcast its series of sustaining symphonies since the national network at the desired hour was occupied by "Fibber Magee and Molly." But the alternative network did not prove practicable, for the Corporation was never certain it could obtain time on stations when time was most needed. Finally the CBC withdrew both CBA and CBK from it.

The Parliamentary Committee of 1942 reported that an alternative network was important and recommended that "every effort be made to obviate duplication of broadcasts in the same area and provide listeners with alternative programs." Duplication of coverage was very marked in many areas, especially on the Prairies, where sponsor-pressure sought to gain an almost exclusive audience by the addition of many supplementary stations to the basic network.

From 1939 to 1945, the responsibilities of the CBC in furthering the war-effort multiplied. Demand mounted for network distribution of national-service programs for many different purposes. Late in 1939, the Farm Broadcast Department was started. On January 1, 1941, the CBC National News Service was inaugurated under Dan McArthur. A highly competent over-seas war unit was established and maintained. These three services alone—none of which was anticipated in January of 1938—increased annual expenditures by more than \$400,000, to say nothing of numerous special war programs. The demands for increased funds were insatiable, driven on to a great extent by the pressures of war. There were ceaseless requests for more time for "eye-witness" reports, two-way over-seas conversations, etc. Twenty per cent of CBC broadcasting time came to be devoted to news. There was also a corresponding increase in the demand for public-service broadcasts from all sorts of charitable and patriotic organizations. Thus the war added a new and compelling impetus to the demand for alternative network facilities. These were apart from the pressures of sponsors and stations without network affiliations, or the prospect of any, unless an alternative network was established.

Within the Corporation, management was pressed for action. The reply was that action was impracticable, that several stations in the West—which were being regularly added by sponsors to the national network

as supplementaries to intensify coverage, and had originally been part of the basic network when it was organized in 1937 – could not now be detached from it and added to a competing network.

Finally, somewhat grudgingly, it was agreed that the Commercial Division might make the effort, though it was certain to be fruitless. So, early in August of 1943, armed with a dummy schedule listing the network commercial programs seeking time, I set out for the west. In quick succession, CKX of Brandon, CHAB Moose Jaw, CJBI Prince Albert, CFQC Saskatoon, and CKCK Regina were sold on the idea of joining the proposed network. Within five days of arriving in Winnipeg, I was able to report this on August 9 to the General Manager, then in Vancouver, where the Board of Governors was meeting. The network was authorized forthwith.

A special problem arose in Toronto. If the network was to function efficiently, it required a high-power outlet in that city. The most obvious solution was to make CFRB, the local affiliate of the Columbia Broadcasting System, that outlet, provided a satisfactory agreement could be reached. However, this idea met powerful opposition within the Corporation. With CFRB as a key station, the network would have been composed entirely of privately owned stations and it was feared by management that influences might creep in under such an arrangement that would weaken or undermine the Corporation's network control. Nevertheless, there would have been very distinct advantages had CFRB been brought within the orbit of the second CBC network at that time.

Given these circumstances, it was essential that the key station of the new network should have maximum coverage in the main population centre. The 860 channel, which CFRB was then using, was one of the clear channels reserved for the CBC under the policy announced by the Board years before. Its use by CFRB had been regarded by the CBC as temporary, until it was required by the Corporation. To have made CFRB the key station of the new network might have confirmed its occupancy of the 860 clear channel, and this the Corporation was not prepared to do. However, an arrangement was reached whereby CFRB moved to 1010 kc. and was granted an increase of power to 50 kw. This change was referred to later by the CAB before the Fowler Commission as an illustration of the Corporation being both judge and jury, but it was clearly in keeping, not only with the policy announced by the CBC in 1936, but with the declaration of both the Prime Minister and of the Parliamentary Committee Report of 1932. The manner in which CFRB effected the transfer of audience from 860 to 1010, without any

great loss of listeners or sponsors, was one of the most amazing accomplishments of Canadian radio, an enormous tribute to the organization and publicity that accompanied it.

TRANS-CANADA AND DOMINION NETWORKS

The new network was named the Dominion Network while the former National Network was renamed the Trans-Canada Network. With the shift of frequencies and audience, it became essential to put new management and aggressive publicity behind CJBC, the key station of the new network. It devolved upon me to find a manager, and Spencer Caldwell was chosen. He was later to form the CTV network in 1961.

The Dominion Network, which began officially on January 2, 1944, created nothing new in the way of facilities. All the stations on it had been in existence long before, and even CJBC was a replacement for CBX. But it brought to the stations improved evening-program service, both commercial and sustaining, and reduced some of the disparity between these stations and those favoured by affiliation with the first National Network. It gave listeners alternative program service, and it eased the rising demand among stations for network affiliation, without sacrifice of control by the CBC. Yet it provoked an outcry second only to that in January of 1939. *The Canadian Broadcaster* said: "The announcement that the CBC's second network will open January 1, 1944, means that the bells may shortly be tolling the death knell, not just of private radio, but of the whole democratic structure of our system of competitive business." There was much more equally absurd and characteristic nonsense.

When television was established, it soon provided alternative-network service for most listeners. Moreover, it wrought havoc with commercial-radio networks, first evening programs and later daytime shows. American radio networks were decimated, and their revenues fell, seriously. Within ten years the need for the Dominion Network was sharply reduced, and one of my last recommendations to management in 1955 was to discontinue it. This step was not taken until October 1, 1962, when both the Trans-Canada Network and the Dominion Network were once more merged in an enlarged single national English network. The prolonged life of the Dominion Network was for the continuing accommodation of its private member stations.

CHAPTER 18

UNCERTAINTIES VEX PRIVATE BROADCASTERS

Throughout the administration of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, much uncertainty vexed both the Commission and the private stations. But with the establishing of the CBC at the end of 1936, a brief period of relative calm set in. The finality of the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee on Broadcasting of that year, coupled with the competence of the Board of Governors, and the forthrightness of its Chairman, brought a general feeling of assurance that nationalization was at last on its way. But this did not bring peace of mind to some private broadcasters, particularly to owners of dominant stations in major centres. The erection in 1937 and 1938 of the CBC's 50-kw. stations, and the general improvement in national programming, made the owners of major private stations nervous as to their future status. The smaller community stations had nothing to fear. Their positions were reasonably assured under the Broadcasting Act.

Although the Canadian Association of Broadcasters did not appear before the Parliamentary Committee of 1938, it sought a hearing before the Committee of 1939, to discuss in particular the future status of its members. However, in the meantime, arrangements were being made for a meeting in Montreal with the CBC Board of Governors on March 20. Following that meeting, the CAB withdrew its application to appear, and the late Harry Sedgwick, President of CAB, wrote to the Committee Chairman to say:

We believe that we have laid the basis for a solution of those things that have troubled us. We have been assured by the Chair-

man of the Board of Governors that our right to continue is recognized as being inherent in Canadian broadcasting and we have been assured that whatever seems reasonably necessary to enable us to complement the service being given by the Corporation and to extend and improve our facilities in the interest of the listening public will be granted to us. We are concerned for the future of broadcasting in Canada and are anxious to make our maximum contribution to its advancement.

Although the meeting in Montreal had been forecast by the CBC Chairman when he appeared before the Committee on March 3, the nature and indefiniteness of the Sedgwick letter indicated that the discussions had gone beyond what had been anticipated. This inevitably provoked curiosity among members of the Parliamentary Committee, who sought further details. As a result, on March 31, 1939, the General Manager, Gladstone Murray, made a statement to the Committee. He said that some sixty private stations had been represented at the Montreal meeting. A number of proposals had been made and accepted, but they had still to be worked out in consultation. He emphasized that CBC control of all network and hook-up operations had been accepted, hook-ups being regional groups of private stations periodically authorized by the CBC for the broadcasting of sponsored programs. "A planned pattern of the latter was being worked upon in which the profit motive was not the dominant or sole consideration. It had been agreed that facsimile and television were reserved in the public domain. Some immediate but less important regulations had been satisfactorily discussed." Then Murray added: "The atmosphere was that of unqualified cordiality. Points of doubt and misgivings were cleared up. On the one hand there was admission of the position and public responsibility of the CBC; on the other hand there was admission of the place of private ownership in the pattern of Canadian broadcasting and a recognition of its legitimate desire for that measure of security and elbow room which is consistent with a fair interpretation of the public interest." This was a beautifully phrased bit of indefiniteness, susceptible to a variety of interpretations when the Committees of 1942 and 1944 met. The Montreal meeting avoided dragging some of the issues they discussed before the Parliamentary Committee, but there were those who felt that these issues should have been threshed out then and there before the Committee.

Five years later, before the Parliamentary Committee of 1944,

Joseph Sedgwick, Counsel for CAB, disclosed that, at this 1939 meeting in Montreal, the private broadcasters had asked for permission to operate a second or alternative radio network; thereupon they were asked by Brockington to put their views in a written summary. The summary proposed that the CBC should co-operate with the private broadcasters in establishing such a network, which would be financed by the private broadcasters, using lines leased from the Corporation at a price that would permit the network to compete commercially.

Numerous references would be made in later years to the desire and the requests of private broadcasters to operate a second network in competition with the CBC, but this appears to have been the only formal proposal ever made. It also appears to have been lacking in detail and definiteness. Its programming and success would have depended very largely on its affiliation with one of the larger American networks, the Columbia Broadcasting System. This would have helped to conserve the affiliation of that network with its existing outlets, CFRB in Toronto and CKAC in Montreal, and would also have assured a continuous wire service between these two stations, something they wanted very much at that time, but which was contrary to the policy laid down by the Board of Governors of the CBC. A second network so organized would have been an extension of the CBS network in Canada on a national basis, and it would have been discriminatory to the National Broadcasting Company. Indeed, the Parliamentary Committee of 1942 recommended that the CBC consider carefully whether the continued affiliation of these two stations and that of CKLW in Windsor with American networks was in the best interests of Canadian broadcasting. Subsequent to the organization of the Dominion Network, this matter would be raised again before the Committee of 1944.

PRIVATE OPERATORS AND COVERAGE

No Parliamentary Committees on broadcasting met during the 1940 and 1941 sessions of the House of Commons, for the war was then in its most critical stage. However, between 1936 and 1939, the number of privately owned radio stations grew slowly from sixty-one to seventy-two, and for two years stood at that number until the 1942 Committee met. Before that Committee Glen Bannerman, the CAB President said:

It is noteworthy that up until 1932 all the pioneering, all the experimenting with the new medium, all the struggles and heart-aches were borne by privately owned stations. Every bit of development was financed by private capital and large yearly losses were the common experience. In fact, it is only within the last five years that any number of privately owned stations have begun to recover some of the losses of the last fifteen years.

Actually, a complete change had come over the economics of radio between 1933 and 1937. A rapidly increasing percentage of the advertising budget was spent on radio, aided by the aggressive merchandising activities of the American networks. Stations all across Canada, with few exceptions, were making good profits. Owners found themselves in possession of valuable properties, most noticeably in the Maritimes, on the Prairies, and particularly in Toronto, where owing to the reluctance of the CRBC to engage in any local commercialism, private stations increasingly found radio a gold-mine.

The problem in most places was not so much one of selling time but of finding time to sell and produce—day in and day out—suitable material for presentation. Broadcast advertising in 1935 gained 20 per cent over 1934, and a survey at the end of 1935 showed that 62 per cent of sponsors would expand their appropriations in 1936 while only 1.3 per cent would spend less.

Reviewing the activities of the Columbia Broadcasting System, *Fortune* said: "Five hours daily of sponsored programs out of sixteen used to be considered a high percentage and most broadcasters considered they were doing a splendid business when they were able to place that much time. The NBC Red Network sold an average of 6 hours a day in 1934, Columbia sold a little over 5½ hours, and NBC Blue Network 4¼ hours. WOR Newark, said to be the most prosperous independent station in the United States, sells about 5 hours. For the last year and a half both big networks have been breaking all records in sales of time. At various periods they have averaged better than 7 commercial hours per day." CBS revenues increased from \$5,000,000 in 1929 to \$19,000,000 in 1934.

A few years later, before a Parliamentary Committee, counsel for CAB pleaded the case for private stations and emphasized the difficulty of their problems. He was asked a few minutes later by M. J. Coldwell, M.P., if he were owner or part-owner of a station, and in an unguarded moment replied, "Unfortunately, no."

Significantly, Bannerman returned to the statement Gladstone Murray made before the Parliamentary Committee following the meeting of private stations with the CBC Board of Governors in February of 1939, and inquired: "What is to be the position of privately owned stations in the national picture. . . . Obviously the high-powered station [meaning the CBC] cannot enter fully into the community life of any one of the several communities within its area, since it speaks to several communities with the same voice" (PCB 1942, p. 969). The contention raised by Bannerman regarding community service of 50-kw. stations was equally true of regional private stations then, and still applies to the multiplied privately owned 50 kw. stations today.

CAB CLAIMS CBC A "COMPETITOR"

Shortly before this statement, controversy arose with respect to a request in the House of Commons that the minutes of the meeting of the CBC Board of Governors should be available to public scrutiny. The Honourable Joseph Thorson, Minister of National War Services, objected, contending that to do so would put the CBC in a disadvantageous position *vis-à-vis* its competitor (PCB 1942, pp. 33-4). Though there was a very limited field of competition, indeed, between a few of the more powerful regional privately owned stations and the CBC's high-power transmitters—a field confined almost exclusively to Toronto and Montreal—there were no real grounds for regarding the CBC as a competitor of the vast majority of truly community stations throughout the country. On the contrary, it was soon to become the main support of very many of them.

But this reference by Thorson to "its competitor" was immediately seized upon by Bannerman, who suggested that this was the first time that the position of private stations as a competitor had been clearly put by a responsible person. He claimed that the Act of 1936 placed the competitor of private stations in the position of both making the rules and regulating the competition. He suggested, then and there, that a separate regulatory board should be set up, more or less on the pattern of the Railway Commission.

However, the 1942 Parliamentary Committee in its report emphasized the paramount importance of a single authority to control all broadcasting. There should be public ownership of all high-powered stations, with low-power stations individually operated and co-

ordinated within the dominant system. According to the Committee, this single authority should also control all wire-lines and networks that are used to carry programs. It recommended "that the CBC work out with the private stations means to increase their services to the national cause as well as to their local communities in providing and distributing programs and developing and making use of local talent."

The 1942 Committee reiterated the principle, laid down by previous committees, that the Corporation should extend its services to give complete national coverage, by taking over private stations if necessary. The national authority should control the character of all programs, and the advertising content thereof. The government and the Corporation should not hesitate to terminate any licence when it was in the public interest to do so. It further recommended that the Corporation should consider carefully if the continuance of affiliated outlets of American networks in Canada—through stations in Windsor, Montreal, and Toronto—was in the best interests of Canadian broadcasting. It also sat down hard on any extension of group ownership of private stations, which seemed then about to blossom. This last recommendation dashed the aspirations of Roy Thomson and Jack Kent Cooke, who at that time had high hopes of extending their control over additional Canadian radio stations. It undoubtedly was a major influence in diverting Thomson's attention from the ownership of radio stations to the ownership of newspapers.

The 1942 Parliamentary Hearings also dealt with problems of management which had become acute and had resulted in the gradual replacement of Gladstone Murray as General Manager. The PCB of that year criticized both the Board of Governors and the Government; the former for inappropriate actions in the matter of management responsibility; also for an increasing tendency to operate the English and French networks under entirely distinct programming supervision and policy. It urged closer integration. To the government it said: "The Committee recommends that the government progressively strengthen the Board by appointing persons selected because of outstanding ability and genuine interest and not because of any political affiliations." It criticized severely interminable delays in appointing replacements to the Board.

When the next Broadcasting Committee met in 1943, CAB was represented by Joseph Sedgwick, Q.C., who was to appear many times on its behalf. There were important interests at stake, including those of the powerful private stations in Toronto and Montreal then enjoying

American network affiliation. After a comprehensive review of private broadcasting, in the course of which he referred to the CRBC as both "competitor and executioner" of private stations, Mr. Sedgwick emphasized that private stations had been far from encouraged by the blunt statement of the Committee of 1942 that the government and the Corporation should not hesitate to terminate any licence when it was in the public interest to do so. This, he claimed, returned private stations to the state of total uncertainty which they had faced for so many years, and it weakened the sense of security they had enjoyed, at least since 1939. He did not consider this either adequate or fair, and he urged that existing licence-holders be assured continuance of their licences as long as they operated with due regard to "public interest, convenience, and necessity." They should be encouraged to improve their facilities, increase their power to the limits allowed by international treaty, and do anything that made for better broadcasting in the public interest. He pleaded for a continuation of the existing American affiliations, and contended that the use of the air channels differed fundamentally from the exploitation of other natural resources, in that the air was in no way depleted, irrespective of the number or the power of the stations using the atmosphere.

In its report, the 1943 Committee once more reiterated the paramount importance of a single national authority and public ownership of all high-power stations. It emphasized the need to maintain the independence of the Corporation from partisan control and, significantly, it urged that members of the Board of Governors should be persons of broad outlook, capable of making definite contributions to the solution of the problems before the Corporation.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE IRRITATED

Between 1944 and 1947, CAB pressed repeatedly for a separate regulatory body. They now contended that their relations with the CBC should be a matter of contract rather than regulation. They sought the right to establish permanent or occasional networks (including affiliation with American networks); these were to be freely competitive with the CBC national networks with the right to increase power to the practical limits.

But now there were definite signs that the Committee was irritated by the demands of private broadcasters, as evidenced by its Report:

"We believe that the regulations with references to control over privately owned stations have been exercised with fairness and we recommend a continuation of that policy. Ever since 1928 every Parliament, every political party, every Parliamentary Committee has been in favour of a system similar to that which we now have. Your Committee is of the opinion that nothing would be gained for the public by having another overall controlling commission." It also discussed the advisability of broadening the terms of reference for future Committees "so that the affairs of private broadcasters might be investigated as well as those of the CBC." An important recommendation of the 1944 Committee was the one favouring the appointment of a permanent, full-time salaried Chairman of the Board of Governors, which became effective on November 14, 1945, when A. Davidson Dunton was appointed by an Order-in-Council.

When the Parliamentary Committee of 1946 opened, friends of the CBC were worried by the activities of CAB. The latter's brief was well-organized. It reviewed comprehensively the work of member stations, stressing that community stations were discovering, developing, and rewarding local talent. They were giving special attention to minority groups, were providing adequate local creative programming, and were producing worthwhile sustaining and public-service programs. CAB hoped to forestall possible criticism on these counts. Again it contended that the system of control should be changed. Its case did not rest on disclosures of any cases of hardship, for none was offered, but entirely on the theory that "no government with any claim to being democratic combines in one body the legislative, executive, and policy powers." CAB now claimed that there should be the right to appeal the CBC's decisions to a court of higher authority, and that, in addition to the nationally owned system controlling its own stations and such networks as deemed necessary, there should be a separate system of independently owned community stations. CAB's definition of a community was "a centre with its surrounding satellite communities and its adjacent territory," a definition broad enough to embrace every private station in the country.

While agreeing that on the whole private stations were giving useful community service, and that they were needed to supplement the national system, the Committee once more reiterated its opinion that the occupancy of radio frequencies conferred no permanent right. Use was in the nature of a trust that should be discharged by making sure that a reasonable segment of every day's broadcasts would be used for

the general benefit of listeners in each community served. Quoting the Act and Regulations, the 1946 Committee emphasized that it was the clear duty of the CBC and the Minister to see that this was done. Before new licences were issued, or others renewed, an understanding should be secured that the stations would faithfully perform their duties as trustees of the frequencies, and would indicate the amount of time and proportion of revenue they would devote to local interests of various types. The right to occupy a frequency was a privilege and a temporary monopoly. The Committee added: "Service to community areas is the function of the private stations. Network operation, or coverage of whole regions of the country, are not the normal function of the private radio station. Your Committee feels it would be good for all concerned if a clear understanding were to be obtained upon this point." While the Committee was not prepared to give its approval to the idea of a court of appeal, it was prepared to say the idea should not be dismissed lightly. The matter should be studied by the CBC and the Department of Transport.

CAB CAMPAIGNS FOR SEPARATE BOARD

The Canadian Association of Broadcasters appeared once more, this time before the 1947 Parliamentary Committee, to press its claim with increased determination. It sought to have the whole field of regulation removed from the CBC's control, though again it submitted no specific grievances. The competitor-argument was yet again its main contention. In 1946, CAB only urged a body to hear appeals in case of disputes; now it advocated a separate regulatory body having complete control over all licensing of stations as well as regulation. This proposal would have invaded the prerogatives of the Department of Transport, always the final licensing authority for the government. No government, before or since, has ever seriously considered relaxing its final control.

Tired of trying to attain its aims through Parliamentary Committees, which had given little or no evidence of agreeing with it, CAB this time sought to pressure the Committee through an active campaign to mobilize public opinion in its support. Its brief was widely distributed, while broadcasts over private stations and advertisements in newspapers also set out its claims. CAB attacked the existing radio legislation as belonging to "horse-and-buggy" days, and as badly in need of revision.

In its Report, the Committee of 1947 emphasized that the area of competition between the CBC and community stations was very small, that the latter were really in no danger from CBC regulations or competition. It found private radio in most cases a quite lucrative business. Though a few stations had not made a profit, the great majority showed substantial surpluses. Figures were submitted by the Department of Transport to substantiate this (PCB 1947, pp. 624-25). The Committee approved the action of the CBC in carrying out the recommendation of the 1946 Committee: "As a condition of issuances or renewal of a licence a station should be required to submit to an undertaking that it would faithfully perform its duty as trustee of a frequency and would indicate the amount of time and the proportion of its revenue it was prepared to devote to local events, discussions of matters of local interest, the development of local talent, and other public service."

Though some stations had not supplied statements, their licences were renewed, subject to a notification that their failure to co-operate would be taken into account in making recommendations for the ensuing year. It was always the next time. Indeed, for forty years, all licences have invariably been renewed, until possession of licences has become synonymous with a vested interest in fixed properties, that are now bought and sold and traded in, always subject, of course, to approval, which has almost invariably been forthcoming, though sometimes it may have been slightly delayed. Only very recently, when stations have been jostling one another for elbow room, have frowns been cast on this traffic, even by some of the larger private stations. The effort of E. S. Rogers (the son of the founder of CFRB) to shift the use of the 680-kc. channel from St. Thomas to the Toronto area was vigorously opposed by CFRB and CKFH which feared the added competition within their coverage area. If a single licence was cancelled for non-fulfilment of obligations, the fact has yet to be revealed. The CBC Board leaned backwards, and too far, to be considerate and has never been thanked for doing so. It was criticized by both the Massey Commission and the Fowler Commission, which emphasized that the regulations had been inadequately enforced.

CBC AND HIGH POWER

The demands the Second World War was making compelled the suspension of the well-planned efforts of the Corporation to extend

high-power. When the war was over, and after the inevitable period of readjustment, the CBC somewhat wearily renewed its efforts in this area. But much of the old determination had gone for good, and television was beginning to cast its shadows. On July 1, the CBC took over CKY¹ in Winnipeg, which had been owned and operated since 1923 by the Province of Manitoba. On September 3, 1948, it opened, at Carman, a new 50-kw. transmitter, renamed CBW, with studios in Winnipeg. Five days later it opened still another new 50-kw. transmitter, CBX, at Lacombe, Alberta, which it hoped would cover both Calgary and Edmonton. Unfortunately it covered neither, and even its rural coverage was limited. A peculiar set of circumstances conspired against it. The ground-conductivity tests on which the anticipated coverage was based had been made when the water table was high. Successive droughts in the meantime had altered the pattern. Though in the best of hands, the transmitter proved inefficient, and it was subjected, soon after it commenced, to unanticipated interference from an American high-power station. A 100-watt local relay station (later 250 watts) was built in Edmonton, so that CBC programs could be heard there. Even at that, reception was the poorest of all stations in that city. For Calgary and for all south-central, and southern Alberta, nothing was done to establish a CBC station.

In November, 1951, I made a voluntary report on this Albertan situation, following a trip through the west, and said:

There could be no greater mistake than to become complacent about the Alberta situation because I believe it is fraught with real danger to nationalized radio. . . . The daily farm broadcast is almost the one tenuous thread that ties the CBC to Alberta. It is quite impossible to sense the pulsating atmosphere of Alberta from the armchairs in the east. The situation there is steadily deteriorating and actually constitutes a menace to the CBC and nationalization.

It was the prolonged continuation of this situation for another ten years that made it imperative for the CBC to establish a television station in Edmonton in 1961. The neglect of Alberta for so long produced a distorted image of the CBC in that province, and this evoked public

¹ In 1950, another CKY, under private ownership, was licensed by the CBC Board of Governors at Winnipeg, and in 1960, a power increase to 50-kw. was recommended for it by the Board of Broadcast Governors.

prejudices in many areas that are now exceedingly difficult to eradicate. This was confirmed recently in an unusual way. In the spring of 1962, the CBC conducted a national public-opinion survey. The response in Alberta and especially in Edmonton was quite unlike almost every other part of Canada. Public appreciation of the CBC was at its very lowest in Alberta, especially in the Edmonton area. This was the direct result of long-continued neglect of that area. The CBC finally, in October of 1964, opened two new 50-kw. radio stations—one in Calgary, the other at Edmonton. But these appeared sixteen years late.

On November 1, 1948, the CBC opened a one-kilowatt station in Sydney, Nova Scotia. On April 1, 1949, Newfoundland entered Confederation, and the CBC inherited the state-owned broadcasting corporation of the new province. Publicly owned broadcasting had been established in Newfoundland ten years earlier, in 1939, and a very limited number of programs were exchanged with Canada during the next decade. It had a single 10,000-watt station at St. John's, and a small low-power outlet at Corner Brook. There were several privately owned stations in the province. In the meantime, at the other end of the country, the power of CBV Vancouver was raised to 10 kw.

These installations marked the end of the CBC's efforts to build high-power radio stations. CJBC at Toronto had been increased to 50 kw., but this was to serve as the key station of the Dominion Network which was otherwise composed entirely of privately owned stations. CJBC added nothing to the basic CBC program service. All other efforts at improvement in coverage after 1949 were limited to plugging holes in local isolated spots with small, on-the-line, low-power relay transmitters (which are known in radio parlance as LPRTS). The first of these was established at Revelstoke in October of 1940. By 1963, there were more than one hundred, almost all in communities that otherwise would have little or no radio service.

The building of CBX in Alberta in 1948 had theoretically completed the high-power stations recommended by the Aird Commission. But that plan was already out of date. The growing number of stations and increasing interference from many sources severely limited clear reception. Large areas in Eastern Nova Scotia, Northern New Brunswick, and other parts of the Maritimes seldom heard CBA at Sackville or its satellite CBH in Halifax. In Quebec, CBF left great spaces in the north and east not covered. In Ontario, there were equally large—if not larger—areas, especially in Northern Ontario, where no CBC-owned stations could be heard. This was also true of many parts of the

interior of British Columbia. Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island were the only provinces adequately and consistently covered by CBC-owned radio stations; Manitoba was well, though not completely, served.

COVERAGE DETERIORATES

In spite of the high-power outlets it had built, the CBC at the advent of television in 1952 was still almost as dependent on private stations for distribution of its radio programs as it had been ten years earlier. This situation exists today, more than ten years later. Indeed, with the exception of the isolated areas reached by the little, on-the-line relay transmitters, the CBC's position in radio coverage by its own stations is, relatively, much worse than it was in 1950.

When the CBC's high-power outlets were built, the regulations of the Department of Transport permitted only a limited signal in densely populated areas. As a result, CBF had to be built at Verchères, CBL at Hornby, CBW at Carman, all twenty-five to thirty miles from the centre of the main cities they served. Since then, there has been a rising tide of interference. The prosperity that brought more radio stations brought television; it also brought a plethora of household gadgets and power tools, all churning out static and making the signals of remote stations less adequate and clear. Moreover, the number of private stations has multiplied in both Canada and the United States. To overcome this growing interference, the regulations of the Department of Transport were amended, whereby stations were permitted to increase power and put several times their former signal-intensity into densely populated areas. The result has been that the CBC's few so-called high-power stations are not only outnumbered but they are badly handicapped in comparison with many more recently erected private stations. CBC transmitters are now relatively far out and infinitely less dominant than they were when they were built. Not only are they less dominant but they are largely out of date. If the Corporation ever revamps its swamped and inadequate radio structure, it is hoped that the power of some of its clear-channel outlets can be raised from 50 to 500 kw. The most expensive part of such a change—studios, auxiliary equipment, land—has already been paid for, and some operating costs would even be reduced. It takes no greater production staff to run an efficient distribution system than it does to manage an inefficient one.

The mere addition of a few low-power outlets here and there will never be adequate.

So ended the dream of high-power publicly owned radio. Television, with its fantastic demands after 1951, occupied most of the thought and effort of the Corporation. Radio became very much a "has-been" operation and even today receives scant attention compared with her glamorous sister who upstages everything else. Whether the dreams of the pioneers will be revived remains to be seen, but in light of current events this seems highly improbable.

THE MASSEY COMMISSION

By 1949, Canada was faced with the compelling need to do something about television. In March of that year, the government announced an interim plan for its development under the auspices of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. At the same time, it was recognized that the whole broadcasting scene, as well as certain other related media, would be due for a thorough and impartial review. In April, a Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences was appointed to study what had been done and what should be done in the field of broadcasting and other areas. The Chairman was the Right Honourable Vincent Massey, and the Commission quickly came to be known as "The Massey Commission." Massey's colleagues were: Dr. Norman A. MacKenzie, President of the University of British Columbia; the Most Reverend Georges Henri Levesque, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Laval University; Miss Hilda Neatby, Professor of History, University of Saskatchewan; and Arthur Surveyer, Civil Engineer of Montreal.

The responsibilities of the Massey Commission were far-reaching, and included studies of the work of several national institutions, among them to "examine and make recommendations upon the principles upon which the policy of Canada should be based in the fields of radio and television broadcasting." The Commission held 224 meetings, 114 of them in public session in sixteen cities of ten provinces. It received 462 briefs, and more than 1,200 witnesses appeared before the Commissioners. The briefs included submissions from thirteen federal governmental institutions, seven provincial governments, eighty-seven national institutions, 262 local bodies, and thirty-five private commercial radio stations.

The Massey Commission found that the system founded on the recommendation of the Aird Commission had developed "into the greatest single agency for national unity, understanding, and enlightenment. Despite inevitable limitations it has exceeded all reasonable expectations. . . . The CBC is in general performing its duty satisfactorily, even admirably, in providing appropriate and varied programs."

The Commission noted that a striking peculiarity of the Canadian system was the existence within the system of private community stations. Such stations had made a place for themselves in their communities, and they had shown they could also perform important national services. They should continue to be regarded as an integral part of the national system. The general program-content of many private stations was severely criticized. Matters of definite comment were the great number of recorded programs, the neglect of live talent, and the general lack of interest in cultural programs. Great variations in the performances of private stations were revealed:

Of the friendly services of the private stations we have abundant evidence, and these services help to justify the continued existence of such stations in our national system but from the study we have made we cannot believe that there is any justification for their undistinguished programs. While the programs of some were satisfactory and of a very few praise-worthy, those of far too many, regulated in principle by the CBC, could only be described as regrettable. After careful consideration of the evidence available we are convinced that only rarely can limited revenue be advanced as an extenuating circumstance for this inexpressive and unimaginative programming.

Twice during the hearings the Canadian Association of Broadcasters appeared to argue that since the CBC had not taken over private stations, which had been contemplated in 1932, and that many new private stations had been licensed since, it could reasonably be contended that there was now not one exclusive national system but a new public system in addition to the private one. On this basis, CAB protested against the regulation of private stations by the CBC Board of Governors as "a public corporation which is their commercial rival." They complained that the CBC was "at one and the same time their competitor, regulator, prosecutor, jury, and judge." This was a renewal of the organized campaign that had been conducted since 1942, a

campaign that has been conducted with mounting intensity ever since.

CAB made no complaint of unjust or inconsiderate treatment. On the contrary, it acknowledged most cordial relations with both the Board of Governors and the officials of the CBC. Nevertheless, the Act should be rewritten "to provide for the regulation of all radio broadcasting stations, whether CBC or privately owned, by a separate and completely impartial authority not associated in any way with the operation of the CBC."

CLAIMS OF CAB REJECTED

After considering the case presented by the private broadcasters through CAB, the Massey Commission said:

We cannot agree with their conclusions. The principal grievance of the private broadcasters is based, it seems to us, on a false assumption that broadcasting in Canada is an industry. Broadcasting in Canada, in our view, is a public service directed and controlled in the public interest by a body responsible to Parliament. Private citizens are permitted to engage their capital and energies in this service, subject to the regulation of this body. That these citizens should enjoy adequate security or compensation for the actual monetary investment they are permitted to make, is apparent. But, that they enjoy any vested right to engage in broadcasting as an industry, or that they have any status except as part of the national broadcasting system, is inadmissible.

The only status of private broadcasters is as part of the national broadcasting system. They have no civil right to broadcast or any property rights in broadcasting. They have been granted in the national interest a privilege over their fellow-citizens, and they now base their claim for equality with their "business rivals" on the abundant material rewards which they have been able to reap from this privilege. The statement that the Board of Governors of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is at once their judge and their business rival implies a view of the national system which has no foundation in law, and which has never been accepted by parliamentary committees or by the general public.

We were particularly impressed by the fact that few of the representatives of private stations who appeared before us

recognized any public responsibility beyond the provision of acceptable entertainment and community services. The general attitude was that . . . the private stations must be left free to pursue their business enterprise subject only to limitations imposed by decency and good taste. We offer no criticism of this frankly commercial attitude; we cite it only as evidence that those who honestly hold these views are not primarily concerned with the national function of radio. . . .

The chief demand of private broadcasters is that in place of the present system of control exercised by the Board of Governors of the CBC, a new and separate body should be set up to regulate all broadcasting in Canada. . . . We have considered these proposals and find that they would either divide and destroy, or merely duplicate the present system of national control. Legislation to set up a separate regulatory body would alter the present national system and would result in two independent groups of radio broadcasting stations, one public and one private. The CBC would no longer have the control over all channels considered necessary to ensure national coverage. A completely separate body treating public and private radio broadcasting with judicial impartiality could not fail to destroy the present system upon which we depend for national coverage with national programmes.

The Commission recommended:

That the grant of the privilege of radio broadcasting in Canada continue to be under the control of the National Government; that the control of the national broadcasting system continue to be vested in a single body responsible to Parliament; that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation as now constituted be that authority and continue to provide directly by its operations and indirectly by its control of the operations of others a national radio broadcasting service free from partisan influence; and that no private broadcasting station operate in Canada as part of a network without the permission of the CBC.

In an effort to remove any conceivable injustice that private stations might suffer from the CBC—though no injustices were complained of—the Commission recommended provision for appeals from the decisions of the CBC Board of Governors. There should be full opportunity to

be heard at a public hearing in matters affecting stations in person or by counsel. Also, such persons adversely affected should have the right to appeal to a federal court against any substantial miscarriage of justice.

Two main criticisms of CBC administration were: first, that it was reticent to the point of laxity in seeing that private stations lived up to their licence obligations in accordance with regulations; and second, that it had failed to enlighten the public adequately and properly as to its policies, plans, and methods of operation.

The final recommendation of the Massey Commission was that the whole subject of television be reconsidered, by an independent investigating body, not later than three years after the commencement of regular television broadcasting.

The Report of the Massey Commission was not unanimous. Arthur Surveyer did not see eye-to-eye with his colleagues. He made a minority report, recommending a separate Canadian Broadcasting and Telecasting Control Board. He believed that the right of appeal to a Federal Court from the decision of the CBC Board of Governors did not solve the basic problem of the relationship between the CBC and the private stations. He also felt that there was a tendency to underestimate the importance of advertising in the economic life of the country.

CHAPTER 19

TELEVISION ARRIVES IN CANADA

Television arrived in Canada in September of 1952. Though it could scarcely be said to have burst upon the scene, nevertheless once a beginning was made it was bomb-like in effect. On November 1, 1936, the British Broadcasting Corporation commenced the world's first regular television service, but the outbreak of the Second World War compelled suspension of this service until October of 1946. In the United States, public telecasting commenced on April 30, 1939, and commercial television was finally approved on July 1, 1941. Progress was very slow at first because the demands of military manufacturing interfered with production of receivers. There was marked criticism of programs, and the question of colour versus black-and-white became a live issue that resulted in much confusion. After the entry of the United States into the war, a government order ruled out construction of television equipment for civilian use. By 1946 there were estimated to be ten thousand receivers in the United States. Finally, in 1947 and 1948, stations went on the air in accordance with the plan of the Federal Communications Commission, but there was so much interference that a "freeze" had to be imposed on the construction of new stations to permit a complete re-examination of the situation. The order was finally rescinded in April of 1952, when the FCC charted the future of black-and-white television in its Final Television Allocation Report.¹ However, public acceptance of the new medium was fully assured; by 1950, there were four million sets. The following year, the number reached 10,600,000. By 1957, the figure had grown to

¹ *Television: A World Survey* (UNESCO, 1953).

48,600,000 sets, or 72 per cent of all homes; by 1962, it had reached more than fifty million sets. Though four networks were operating in the United States as early as 1948, these had been reduced by 1957 to three—the same number Canada is now attempting to support.

The CBC Board of Governors considered the prospects for television very carefully. In October of 1948, it held a public meeting to consider various questions, including applications for six private stations. It also heard representations against granting these applications. These were in favour of initial co-operative development in which private interests would participate with the national system. The CBC drew attention to the high costs of television, particularly in Canada, to special technical problems, and to the ready availability of American commercial programs. It urged a policy of careful planning and preparation. Though it had no responsibility for private investors willing to risk their money, the CBC felt responsible for the quality of the service that would be rendered to the public which spent millions on television receivers.

The end of the Second World War saw a great effort in Canada to bring about a conversion of industry from a war-time to a peace-time basis. Technical and organizational changes were spurred by discoveries and adaptations growing out of the war. Canada was on the threshold of a new era. Thousands of men returning from Europe had to be absorbed. This alone was an enormous task, accomplished with great skill and rapidity, aided by a vast backlog of demand accumulated during the war. Chief among the architects of this industrial reconstruction was the Honourable C. D. Howe, Minister of Trade and Commerce; in this area, he proved no less competent than he had as Minister of War Production. His influence was an important factor in the future direction of television policy during this very formative period.

One of the industries most vitally stimulated by the war was electronics, not the least part of which centred around the television industry. Soon the manufacturers of television equipment began to press Ottawa to open up the Canadian market by providing a program service that would ensure the nation-wide purchase of sets. Public acceptance of television on a national scale as rapidly as possible was regarded by the industry as essential to assured and maximum profits.

The government saw the rapid expansion of television as of potential value to industry and employment too. It also glimpsed the irresistible

pressures that must inevitably develop for the importation of American commercial programs as the new medium asserted itself. It was important that this should be adequately counterbalanced. The inherent capacity of the new medium for human as well as material development—for information, entertainment, and education—must be conserved and developed for Canadians.

CANADIAN TELEVISION POLICY

In March of 1949, the government made its first pronouncement on television policy. General direction of the new medium was to be under the jurisdiction of the CBC Board of Governors. The CBC was instructed to establish production centres in Toronto and Montreal as early as possible in order to prepare the way for a national program service for itself and for private stations, the latter being expected to broadcast a certain but undefined minimum of such programs. In every city or area a licence to establish one private station would be granted, provided adequate assurances of finances and services were forthcoming. Individuals and groups were encouraged to merge their efforts in seeking station licences. All network arrangements, whether by tele-transcriptions or physical links, were to be under CBC control.

This interim plan was approved by the Parliamentary Committee on Broadcasting of 1950, which said: "It is obviously in the national interest that television in Canada should be essentially Canadian." It stressed the need for an adequate method of financing TV in the national interest. To the frustrating facts of Canadian geography was to be added a medium nearly ten times more expensive than radio.

One month after the first government announcement on television, the Massey Commission was appointed to consider the future of television as well as to review the progress of radio. Its report in June of 1951 recommended that the direction and control of television in Canada continue to be vested in the CBC, that no private stations be licensed until the CBC had available a national service of television programs, and that all private stations be required to serve as outlets for national programs. It also stated that, desirable as it might be in theory to remove commercial broadcasting from the national radio networks, in practice the result would not raise but lower program standards and divert many listeners from Canadian to American stations. It added: "So long as Canada's neighbour maintains a

commercial system, Canada's radio can never be completely non-commercial."

In the beginning, opinions varied regarding the rapidity with which the growth of television should be encouraged in Canada. Definite savings have accrued to Canadians by letting Americans spend their money on experimenting and solving many problems associated with its early development. Some felt that Canada should continue with a policy of development by easy stages. Marked differences existed, even within the CBC, between those who favoured a gradual approach and those who urged full steam ahead.

It was at this moment that J. Alphonse Ouimet came into prominence. Ouimet had been associated with the Engineering Department of the CBC since 1934, and had been a pioneer in the development of the new medium. A brilliant and thoroughly trained research engineer, he had risen to be Assistant General Manager, and was admirably adapted to push through the development of such a project. He had acquainted himself intimately with many of the problems to be faced, and when he was made responsible for the undertaking, his dedication and unremitting drive were of the greatest importance. On January 1, 1953, four months after the CBC opened its first television stations, he became General Manager of the organization.

The first television station in Canada was CBFT in Montreal, opened on September 6, 1952. Two days later, CBLT in Toronto commenced. Three hours of programming daily was immediately instituted. At that time some 146,000 receivers had been installed in Canadian homes, mainly along the border, where American stations could be received without difficulty.

The opening of these two stations had been preceded by nearly two years of staff selection and training. Extensive studies were carried out in the United States, Great Britain, and France by key personnel. Early in 1952, a full-scale training scheme went into effect.

Unfortunately the lack of funds inhibited the best system in Toronto. Although the CBC Board of Governors asked for a loan of \$5,500,000 to orbit the two stations into operation, the government provided a loan of only \$4,500,000 for the first year. For purposes of economy, the CBLT mast was located adjacent to the studios at a ground elevation of about three hundred feet, with a five-hundred-foot antenna. The signal covered the city and the immediately contiguous areas, but it did not spread far beyond. There could have been substantial additional coverage if the tower had been located farther north with a much

higher mast. (In 1961, the CBC's plans for a higher aerial were checked by the government's austerity program.) In contrast, *WBEN* Buffalo went twenty miles south of that city and erected a mast fifteen hundred feet high, on an elevation of more than seventeen hundred feet. This gave *WBEN* commanding coverage over a large part of Western Ontario. The restricted coverage of *CBLT* was an invitation to private stations to locate near its fringe areas. Thirteen years later, this inadequacy still persists. Restricted coverage followed later, at Winnipeg, as the result of more or less similar false economies.

CBC LIMITED TO SIX LOCATIONS

In December of 1952, three months after the CBC opened its first two stations, the government made its second major policy announcement. After reviewing the recommendations of the Massey Commission, it reported:

The government believes, with the Royal Commission, that television should be developed in Canada with the aim of benefiting our national life. . . . It should be so developed that it is capable of providing a sensible pattern of programming for Canadian homes with at least a good portion of Canadian content reflecting Canadian ideas and creative abilities of our own people and life in all parts of Canada. . . . Now that television has started, it should be extended as widely and as quickly as possible to other areas.² Therefore, it is proposed to ask Parliament to approve a loan to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for the purpose of building stations on the Pacific coast, in the Prairie provinces and in the Atlantic provinces. These would be established in the Vancouver, Winnipeg and Halifax areas. Thus, in addition to the stations at Montreal and Toronto, and that to be built at Ottawa, there would be publicly owned stations with some production facilities at least in each of the main regions of the country.

In addition, the Government will now be ready to receive applications for licences for private stations to serve areas not now served or to be served by publicly owned facilities already announced. . . . The objective will be to make national television

² PCB 1961, p. 273, J. W. Pickersgill on Policy.

service available to as many Canadians as possible through co-operation between public and private enterprise. Under this plan the private stations licensed will carry national program service, besides having time for programming of their own. There will be plenty of opportunity for enterprise by private interests in television broadcasting and, at the same time, provision for wide extension of the national service. It is desirable to have one station in as many areas as possible before there are two in any one area.¹

In more ways than one, this was an interesting marriage of expediency: industry with entertainment and culture; public and private ownership in the creation and distribution of programs. While placing the main responsibility on the CBC for furnishing programs for both its own and private stations, the government restricted the stations of the Corporation to six cities and gave exclusive rights throughout the remainder of the country to private operators—including the capitals of five of the ten provinces.

There was again the sense of extreme urgency. CBC staff and facilities were driven to the utmost limits to build stations and studios, to secure equipment, to recruit and train additional staff, both technical and production, to produce a schedule of programs and assist private stations to get under way. At the same time, all this put a terrific strain on the organization, a strain difficult to appreciate except for those who lived through the period.

NATION LINKED BY MICROWAVE

By December of 1954, there were nine stations and 1,200,000 sets in Canada. Six months later, there were twenty-six stations and 1,400,000 sets. Initially, programs were distributed to network stations as filmed recordings made directly from kinescopes. As stations multiplied, this became a gigantic operation, consuming films during its peak period, at the rate of forty million feet a year.

¹ The CBC Board in 1952 envisioned the provision of production facilities in all key areas to reflect original characteristics and also to provide opportunities for Canadian talent, performers, writers and technicians. It was their opinion that CBC should have its own facilities wherever substantial populations could be served, in order that it also could be supported by revenues from commercial operations (PCB 1959, p. 14).

In June of 1953, the three main centres of Toronto, Ottawa, and Montreal were linked by microwave circuits, which were gradually extended to London, Kitchener, Quebec City, Winnipeg, and the Maritimes. Finally, on July 1, 1958, in a program "Memo to Champlain," Vancouver and Victoria were linked to Sydney and Halifax by an "electronic skyway" built by the transmission companies at a cost of \$50,000,000, backed by a ten-year contract with the CBC. The following June, the skyway was extended to St. John's, Newfoundland, making a network of 4,200 miles.

At first, CBFT in Montreal served both French and English but, in January of 1954, CBMT was completed to carry English programs; henceforth CBFT devoted its entire schedule to French-speaking viewers. In June of 1955, an exclusively French station was added in Ottawa, where CBOT had previously served both language groups.

The first privately owned station was opened in Sudbury in October of 1953; the second in London, Ontario, the following month. Others followed in rapid succession, the CBC lending assistance whenever possible. In Sudbury, during one month following the opening of CKSO-TV, 4,500 sets costing more than one million dollars were sold. In one year, at the peak, 776,500 sets were sold in Canada; by March of 1957, the number of sets had reached 2,750,000, costing approximately \$800,000,000. By December of 1955, there were thirty-five stations in Canada; by December of 1957, forty-two. But the pace was slowing down, and the great explosion was over. By the end of 1959, there were thirty-eight private stations, and nine CBC stations (six English and three French). Up to the end of 1963, one French-language station at Winnipeg and one English-language station at Edmonton had been added by the CBC. Three more private stations began in 1960. By January of 1961, a new era in television began with the opening of "second" stations in the major markets.

A striking commentary on the effect of television was contained in a speech by W. J. Wansbrough, President of the Electronics Industries of Canada. At the Canadian National Exhibition luncheon for press, radio, and television on August 22, 1963, he said that so rapid was the rate of television expansion that the market for new sets was saturated within five years. The rate of set-expansion was almost twice that of the United States. The result was that several companies soon found themselves without a market and succumbed.

When CBFT Montreal and CBLT Toronto began broadcasting in September of 1952, the schedule was eighteen hours a week. By

January of 1953, the schedule on these two stations had grown to thirty hours a week, of which approximately 20 per cent was commercial. This assured a substantial schedule of programs to private affiliates as soon as they were ready to open. All private stations leaned heavily on the CBC to fill out their schedules, as they still do. During their first three months of operation, only five private stations out of forty took less than 60 per cent of their programming from the CBC, and many used up to 85 per cent from that source. It was scarcely surprising that the operation of television stations became attractive investments, and that there was a rush by private operators to obtain licences.

By July of 1954, an average of twenty-five hours a week of CBC national-network service was being broadcast by network affiliates. By March of 1956, the CBC English television station schedules exceeded fifty hours weekly, of which a little more than 55 per cent was being produced in Canada. The French network was broadcasting forty hours weekly, of which more than 75 per cent was produced at home. By March of 1957, four-and-a-half years after the first stations were opened, the CBC was providing forty-eight hours weekly of English network service, of which an average of thirty-eight hours weekly were being broadcast by private affiliates. Of programs on the English network, 60 per cent were produced in Canada, while French-language productions continued to exceed 75 per cent. This was two years before the BPG and before the "Canadian content" regulations became effective. By 1957, it was possible for 3,450,000 homes representing 86 per cent of the population to tune in a considerable part of CBC television programs. Along with the phenomenal growth of television, more than 3,200,000 radio sets were sold during the same period.

By March of 1959—and the end of the fiscal year—CBC operations had reached the proportions of big business. Commercial revenues in that year exceeded \$30,000,000, of which a little less than \$2,000,000 came from radio. Parliamentary grants were \$51,491,000. In 1960-61, commercial revenues reached a peak of \$38,162,000, while public grants were \$52,300,000. Since then there has been a decline in commercial revenues, but no decline in the demands of the public for service. During 1961-62, commercial revenues dropped to \$32,910,000, mainly as the result of the new CTV network and stations in the major earning centres. To satisfy the public's demands, public grants had to be increased annually.

EXCISE TAX FOR TELEVISION

In February of 1953, the government announced that there would be no licence fee for television receivers. It took the further step of abolishing the radio licence fee which had been in existence for thirty years. It had been made clear to the government by the CBC that if television was to be supported by a licence fee, the fee could be no less than \$15.00 per set, in addition to the existing \$2.50 radio fee. The proximity of American stations along the extended border meant they could be tuned in with ease. This complicated the Canadian picture, as did the whole American concept of "free" programs. There had been enough grumbling about the radio fee of \$2.50. What hope would there be of collecting seven times as much? It was decided to finance broadcasting from an excise tax of fifteen per cent on radio and television sets and parts, together with revenues from advertising. The decision was welcomed, not the least by members of Parliament. It would have been difficult to muster even a half dozen votes in the House of Commons for the necessary licence fee. It was a lot easier to vote the necessary funds in lump sums from the public treasury, especially with the federal election of 1953 so near.

Under the excise-tax plan which was so readily adopted, revenues were high as long as sales of sets were high. In its Annual Report for 1953-54, the CBC noted: "Revenue based on sales of sets cannot be expected to rise much further and will drop in the future. At the same time costs will inevitably rise steeply as the system spreads across the country and as program production develops." Tax revenues considerably exceeded requirements for two or three years, and then declined until they were inadequate. Though the tax was retained, it ceased to have any direct relationship to the CBC's requirements.

During the early years, there were pressures from manufacturers for the adoption of colour television. Though the Corporation was fully aware that colour must ultimately come, its resources were too uncertain—and its existing needs and problems far too great—to invest substantial amounts in capital costs and increase its operating costs by 20 to 25 per cent. It could better afford to await developments in the United States, where colour progress was painfully slow, compared with the earlier development of black-and-white programming.

In 1962, the manufacturers again brought pressure to bear on the Government, the BGC, and the CBC. The argument was that CBC colour TV would stimulate the industry, lower the prices of sets, and relieve

Canadian unemployment. It was even suggested that the existing sales tax on sets should be removed, all this in spite of the fact that after many years of intense promotion of colour television in the United States, with very substantial reductions in the price of sets, only some two per cent of set-owning homes in that country had colour sets in 1962.

The CBC, BBG, and CTV opposed this pressure on the grounds that its costs would not be adequately compensated for by additional audiences, at least for a period of years. But in 1965, a new and semi-political factor suddenly arose. It was Expo '67, the Montreal World's Fair associated with Canada's Centenary Celebrations. No opportunity for promotion of the Fair could be left neglected.

It was said by the Secretary of State that several countries taking part—United States, Great Britain, Japan, and possibly France—would wish to originate programs in colour from the Exhibition. So early in June, the Government announced that the CBC would establish broadcasting facilities—including colour—to meet the needs of all the participating countries, and to originate network programs. A grant of \$10 million was made for this purpose, of which approximately \$1¼ million was for colour. Colour broadcasting by CBC would begin not later than January 1, 1967.

But colour at the Fair was useless to Canadians unless CBC facilities across Canada were also equipped. The immediate cost of these main installations was estimated by the CBC to be \$15 million, increasing to an estimated \$40 million over the next eight to ten years. Once more, the big drive for technical planning and development was on.

The above costs do not include colour installation by private affiliates of the CBC network. There will also be increased programming costs. Some authorities assert these will amount to ten per cent on programs produced in colour, a conservative figure compared to the estimate of 25 per cent given to the Fowler Commission in 1957.

The decision to introduce colour was also motivated by the rapidly mounting sales of receivers and the expansion of colour programming in the United States. Public expenditures on broadcasting in Canada are powerfully influenced by American programming and technical progress.

The CBC is expected to match or approach in both quality and popularity the productions of its vastly more wealthy neighbour, where slickness and expensiveness go hand in hand. Canadian programs are not compared with the average but with the most ambitious productions from the neighbouring networks. Canadian viewers who cannot know

all the factors involved look only at the end result. In this country it is next to impossible to place arbitrary limits on program expenditures unless Canadians want at the same time to run the risk of producing programs inferior in quality and audience appeal. American features and serials are, in a sense, "dumped" on the Canadian networks—at a fraction of their original cost.

CHAPTER 20

CBC'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SHORTCOMINGS

Unfortunately it is not possible to devote more than a few pages to the organization, programs, and accomplishments of the CBC. No one with any knowledge of the subject will dispute that over the years the achievements of the Corporation have been surpassingly creditable to Canada. Adequate treatment of the subject would require many volumes. A vast and fascinating field lies fallow. The CBC teems with interesting stories, some of which are to be found in Parliamentary hearings. Much has never been revealed, and never will be—the fights for freedom of the news, the occasional assaults of misguided politicians, the growing encroachment of bureaucracy, the daring exploits of men willing to risk dangers, even their lives, in the service of the Corporation. But the following brief glance may help towards a better understanding of the role the CBC plays in Canadian life.

Starting with an English network of thirty-four stations in 1937—thirty of them privately owned—and a French network of seven stations—four of which privately owned—these networks expanded until, in 1962, there were two CBC national English radio networks (the Dominion Network broadcasted evenings only), a near-national French radio network, a national English television network, and a French television network. In October of 1962, the two English radio networks were merged into one national network. A complete list of the CBC's networks and stations, publicly and privately owned, as at 1964, is included in the CBC's Annual Report for that year.

By December of 1962, there were—on CBC networks—155 stations (thirty-three CBC and 122 private), plus 183 auxiliaries, all strung

together by leased circuits for which the CBC in 1961-62 paid out \$7,606,000. In 1963-64, these payments alone totalled \$10,323,478. It also paid out in that year \$2,328,000 for the preparation and distribution of kine-recordings for non-connected stations, video-tape recordings and telecine play-backs, network delays, etc. No part of either sum was charged to private stations. Exclusive of tiny, unattended relay stations, the CBC operates only twenty-one of the ninety-five radio stations on its two networks, and twelve out of sixty stations on the two CBC television networks. Nevertheless, this system makes it possible for the CBC to say (in its Annual Report 1961-62) that "16,765,000 Canadians or 91 per cent of the population can receive CBC television programs and 17,850,000 Canadians or 97 per cent can receive CBC radio broadcasts." Just how much of this CBC program service viewers and listeners actually receive will be discussed later. The above summary, of course, does not include more than one hundred AM plus some thirty-five FM stations, non-network, privately owned radio stations, nor the eight privately owned "second" television stations constituting the CTV network which began in 1961.

The daily programming of the CBC is overwhelming—about three hundred programs of all kinds—a panorama of information and entertainment staggering in its scope and volume. It is greater by far than that of any American or British broadcasting organization. Two languages more than double its work, since a much larger percentage of time on the French networks must be filled with original productions than is the case on the national networks. Ideas, even formats, may be borrowed, and a limited amount of French programming imported, but there is no reservoir of American programs in French. Montreal and Toronto are among the half-dozen greatest program centres in the world. It is unfortunate that only a handful of Canadians have even the remotest idea of the vast complexities associated with the operations of the Corporation.

But there are a few highlights which cannot be passed by even in this very brief review. The references which immediately follow deal almost entirely with the era before television, the so-called "Golden Age of Radio." In 1936, an average of seven hours of music was broadcast daily, and this made up more than 70 per cent of the schedules. Five years later, eighteen hours of music programs were broadcast daily, but they occupied only 51 per cent of the total broadcasting time. In 1938, the CBC Drama Department was formed. During its first four years, it received and examined more than one thousand plays a year, of which

about 350 were broadcast, none of which were under commercial sponsorship.

The first CBC programs of special interest to farmers were instituted in Quebec on April 11, 1938, with "Reveil Rural" which has continued ever since. In 1939, the English Farm Department was started by Orville Shugg, one of the Corporation's most imaginative and capable young recruits. On a regional basis, it was soon furnishing the latest market prices and information, including daily fifteen-minute serials on farm life and problems. Later it began "Farm Forum" which has not only persisted here but has spread to many other countries around the world. The Farm Department has given continuous encouragement to the co-operative movement, and has recruited a large number of extremely able young men who have increasingly occupied positions of great importance in other departments of the Corporation. It keeps daily—almost hourly—contact with every movement of importance in the agricultural world. Together with the fishermen's broadcasts, it has been consistently the most significant feature of CBC radio programming.

THE ROYAL TOUR OF 1939

The CBC was only a few years old when it faced one of the greatest challenges of its career. This proved to be a godsend, a dress rehearsal for the stirring events that were shortly to follow—the Royal Tour of 1939. So thorough was the initial preparation that during May and June, ninety-one Royal programs, occupying fifty-one hours, were broadcast without a single mishap. Many months before the tour, CBC engineers were designing new equipment and arranging improvements in communication between operators and announcers. They had to determine the location of microphones and equipment, establish pick-up points, ensure the availability of circuits, and test all the equipment under operating conditions. Duplicate microphone systems were provided for every broadcast, so a change could be made at the flick of a switch. When King George VI and Queen Elizabeth arrived at Quebec, the CBC had thirty engineers and fifteen commentators on duty using more than forty microphones and a hundred units of equipment. There were fifteen pick-up points, and the system had to be duplicated to provide for both French and English commentaries.

Before the broadcasts began, an intensive search was made for the best announcers. A hundred candidates were tested, and a team of

thirteen young men was selected to work under the officers of the Special Events Department. At Ottawa, they were schooled in pronunciation, knowledge of technical terms, and the many other formalities associated with a Royal Visit. There were endless special broadcasts during the tour, but among the more notable were the arrival of Their Majesties at Quebec, the singing by forty-five thousand school children at Montreal, the trooping of the Colour, and the Queen's address at the laying of the cornerstone of the Supreme Court Building in Ottawa, the lengthy visit at Christie Street Hospital in Toronto, and the Empire Day broadcast from Winnipeg. All these were relayed to sixty-five stations across Canada, 335 in the United States, and to all parts of the Commonwealth.

CBC AND WORLD WAR II

No sooner was the Royal Tour finished than Canada was at war. Alone on this continent, Canada was fighting in Europe. The CBC had the double responsibility of meeting the new needs of Canadians and favourably impressing American listeners. Art Holmes and Bob Bowman accompanied the first Canadian contingent to go overseas and before long fearless and indefatigable Holmes was recording events in most theatres of war. E. L. Bushnell was loaned to the BBC to direct its shortwave broadcasts to America. Soon a group of competent commentators gathered around him: René Pelletier, Jacques Desbaillets, Matthew Halton, Marcel Ouimet, Paul Barrett, Jerry Wilmot, Jack Peach, Benny Lafleur, Paul Dupuis, Andrew Cowan, Jack Kannawin. From the CBC Mobile Unit No. 3 in Britain, which was a six-ton recording van designed for the severest of conditions, countless war programs originated. In the winter of 1940-41, more than a thousand recordings were made in six months, and the van was driven more than a thousand miles a month. Three half-hour programs were sent to Canada every week—recorded flights in the air, rides in tanks, interviews with soldiers, sailors, airmen, officials, doctors, nurses, visits to the camps of the Canadian Active Service force, and other material of human interest. Thus began the famous CBC sound commentaries.

At home, CBC Mobile Units carried the microphone to camps and barracks. The daily activities of a recruit, the manoeuvres, field exercises, social life, amusements, attitudes—all these were covered. Before long it was the Navy's turn. There were broadcasts from patrols, mine-

sweepers, destroyers, and corvettes. Attention was also paid to the RCAF, especially to the life of the young men in training under the Commonwealth Air Training Plan. Visits were made to armament factories and munition plants, to grain elevators and shipyards, to machine-gun and airplane factories to show the upsurge of production. A large group of American network broadcasters were invited to see what Canada was doing; they came and were impressed. The launching of the first Canadian corvette and mine-sweeper, the presentation of the first tank to come off the production line, the handing over of the first Spitfire, and the presentation to the Defence Minister of the first heavy field-gun were all vivid and important broadcasts. In March and April of 1941, the CBC brought to the microphone ten leading industrialists engaged in war production to report the progress of Canada's munitions effort. With the entry of Japan into the war, test blackouts were instituted by the authorities, in which the CBC played an important part.

On January 1, 1941, the CBC's first National News Service commenced under D. C. McArthur with five newsrooms across the nation. The great drama that made everyone both participant and spectator compelled this addition. At the end of 1939, news bulletins occupied 9.4 per cent of total program time, but by the autumn of 1941, this had risen to over 20 per cent. The day Pearl Harbour was attacked, thirteen special bulletins were given, in addition to those carried on American exchange programs. During the following week, network bulletins were provided every hour on the hour.

The simple presentation of news without embellishment and free of sponsorship was regarded as paramount. A clearly defined policy was laid down, and sensationalism was as sedulously avoided as dullness. Special precautions against rumours, inaccuracies, and misinterpretations had to be taken without resorting to censorship. Truth, with no attempt to modify the news, however disagreeable, so long as it was from a reliable source, was deemed imperative. In this respect, it was modelled very much upon the BBC. The extensive knowledge and experience of Gladstone Murray, the General Manager, were of untold value in the first five years of the CBC. Murray was highly imaginative and demanded a high standard of artistic achievement. He loathed overstatement, and insisted on fostering Canadian talent.

With the help of the Canadian Legion, the voices of friends at home were brought to the troops overseas. Recordings of community events and personal messages from family groups were retransmitted to Europe by the BBC. In this popular feature, private stations were very

helpful. The CBC News Service also prepared a weekly news-letter featuring such sports as National Hockey League games. And there were transatlantic conversations between war guests and their parents at home. "Neighbourly News," begun in 1940, soon spread nationally.

CBC AND TALENT

In 1941, thirteen plays by famous authors under the title "Theatre of Freedom" were produced. Ten were directed by Rupert Lucas, a veteran of the CBC staff, and they dealt with the various aspects of democracy. Shaw's *St. Joan* presented a study in tolerance; Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*, a plea for sanctity of conscience; Galsworthy's *Strife*, a warning against class-hatred and internal disputes; Drinkwater's *Abraham Lincoln*, a statement of the qualities of democratic leadership; Obler's *This Precious Freedom*, a warning of what the loss of liberty could mean; MacLeish's *The Fall of the City*, an allegory on the feeling of fear and defeatism. Other plays included were *Thunder Rock* by Ardrey, *Pastor Hall* by Toller, *Hellas* by Shelley, *The Flying Yorkshireman* by Knight, *Victoria the Great*, and *Seems Radio Is Here to Stay* by Corwin, and *This Is My Country* by John Coulter. The CBC invited noted actors to come to Canada to play the leading roles without fee, as their contribution to Canada's war effort. The response to the invitation was magnificent, and many stars came, including: Helen Menken, Walter Houston, Raymond Massey, Henry Hull, Barry Jones, Paul Muni, Herbert Marshall, Philip Merivale, Sir Cedric and Lady Hardwicke, Anna Neagle, Edward Gwenn and Philip Holmes. The supporting casts were Canadian.

Private broadcasters, the CBC, and the government united to carry one-hour "all-star" variety programs for the sale of war bonds. Among the stars who agreed to serve in these national network broadcasts between January 31 and June 20, 1941, were: conductors Percy Faith, Alfred Wallenstein, Andre Kostelanetz, Paul Whiteman; artists Stella Andrevá, Vivian dell Chiesa, John Charles Thomas, Kenny Baker, Larry Adler, Gracie Fields, Alec Templeton, Cary Grant, Herbert Marshall, Miriam Hopkins, Stuart Robertson, Morton Downey, Ruth Chatterton, Anthony Collins, C. Aubrey Smith, Ann Jamieson, Bob Hope, Rudy Vallee, Gene Lockhart, Robert Ambruster, Arch Obler, Kathleen Cruise, Irving Berlin, Joe E. Brown, Ronald Colman, Greer Garson and Felix Knight.

During the early years, many new personalities were discovered and developed. A series "Let's Face the Facts" featured such persons as Mackenzie King, Dorothy Thompson, Robert Sherwood, Alfred Lunt and Lynne Fontaine, John W. Dafoe, and Hendrick Willem Van Loon. "We Have Been There," another series, featured forty speakers. Twenty-one of the talks of "Let's Face the Facts" were published in book form and sold over eighteen thousand copies in the United States and Canada.

No less notable were the CBC's efforts in the field of music. Symphonies, the Proms from Varsity Arena, chamber music, recitals, choral and folk music were all presented and, for the first time in 1942, listeners in North America heard nine British ballad operas. Performances were all under the direction of Jean Beaudet who included as conductors Eugene Gossens, Sir Ernest MacMillan, Edwin MacArthur, and Arthur Benjamin. On October 23, 1938, a "Musical Portrait of Canada" was broadcast to fifty-five countries under the auspices of the International Broadcasting Union of Geneva as the Fifth World Concert. From October to December, eleven plays by William Shakespeare, featuring famous actors and actresses, were supported by all-Canadian casts. These performances gave young listeners in Canada an opportunity to hear Shakespeare's verse spoken in the English manner.

In March of 1943, a unique musical series was broadcast. The concertos of Carl Philip Emmanuel Bach were performed from their original scores. Some of the concertos had never before had public performance; these were given by the world-famous harpsichordist and authority on baroque music Wanda Landowska, with an orchestra under the direction of Adolph Koldofsky. For several years, the CBC co-operated with the Canadian Performing Rights Society to broadcast the Society's five prize-winning compositions in their competition for Canadian composers.

In 1942, a dramatic feature was the adaptation of Mazo de la Roche's *White Oaks of Jalna* with music by the Canadian composer John Weinsweig. In 1943, a series "Canada in Arms" depicted the life and work of the three armed forces. Scripts were prepared by the public-relations officers of each, with music by Howard Cable, conducted by Samuel Hersenhorn. A young lieutenant was assigned by the Army to help the producer during the Army Show. On one occasion, feeling that he was not making a sufficient impression on the producer, who was experienced and well-known, he brought with him a senior officer

of near-brigadier rank, whose presence was designed to produce respect if not awe. The officer proceeded to make all manner of impractical suggestions which ultimately bordered on commands. Failing to have the desired effect, he was quickly exasperated and burst out: "And I say it is high time the Army took over the CBC." The producer drew himself up, as though to salute, and replied: "And I say vice versa, sir!" That ended their efforts to influence production.

In 1943, successful regional plays began to appear on the network. *The People* by Len Peterson, produced by Sydney Brown; *He and She* by Fletcher Markle, and *Look at One of Those Faces* by Len Peterson, produced by Andrew Allan at Vancouver; *Tania* by Sydney Banks, produced by the talented Essa W. Ljungh from Winnipeg; *If a Man Should Dream* by Mac Shoub and *The Exiles* by Bert Kalmer, produced by Rupert Caplan from Montreal—Canadian writers and Canadian producers. Caplan produced the *Play of the Week*, while Archie MacCorkindale directed "Pacific Playhouse" in Vancouver. Another highly successful series was *Baker's Dozen* by Fletcher Markle from Vancouver, which was again, fifteen years later, proving itself a dominant production centre for drama.

More than 80 per cent of the plays broadcast in 1944 were by Canadian authors, and this percentage grew until in 1947 it reached 97 per cent. Canadian musicians, authors, and poets were commissioned to write special works. Canadian talent was given genuine encouragement on an increasing scale, and—most important of all—there was a growing spirit of creative work being accomplished, which made the Corporation increasingly attractive to young and talented intellectuals.

In 1945, the CBC's Overseas Service had perhaps its greatest year. Matthew Halton and Marcel Ouimet landed in Normandy only moments after the first assault on D-Day. The Italian front was covered by Halton, Ouimet, Bill Herbert, Paul Barette, Benoît Lafleur, and Peter Stursberg. Halton and Art Holmes entered Caen with General Montgomery's troops and described its liberation, while with Ouimet both of them entered Paris with the liberating army and were involved in the street fighting there. Bert Powley supervised the program operation from London. Halton, Holmes, Ouimet, and Olive received OBES, the last for his work in establishing the overseas network for the Canadian troops. Dr. Frigon received a CMG. Later Olive was made a Fellow of the Institute of Radio Engineers, the first Canadian to be so honoured.

By the mid-'forties, the whole panorama of CBC programs had

become so vast that only areas of programming can be mentioned here. Sports College commenced in 1943. There were bursts of activity in news, special events, overseas coverage, talks and public affairs, women's programs, farm, religious, and institutional, international, schools, music, sports, drama, children's features ("Just Mary" and "Maggie Muggins" by Mary Grannan and "Kindergarten of the Air" with Dorothy Jane Goulding were two of many), and others followed one another in mounting volume and excellence.

"Stage," which began in 1944, reached and maintained an extraordinary standard of perfection under Andrew Allan with Lucio Agostini composing much of the music and conducting the orchestra. Jack Gould of *The New York Times* in frequent references to Canadian broadcasts spoke of "Stage" as being performed by "the best repertory group in this hemisphere." I still have many vivid recollections of these plays, the most vivid being that of Oscar Wilde's "Salome" which, for cold stark savagery and animal passion, could not have been equalled in any other medium. In the fall of 1955, the production of "Stage" was assumed by Essa W. Ljungh. During the previous year, the series included thirty-six plays, sixteen of which were original, and all of them Canadian. Some were repeated by request, one of them, *Burlap Bags*, a controversial play by Len Peterson, as frequently as four times.

Other dramatic productions included several series by Ljungh, "Great Tales of Imagination" by Caplan, and "Vancouver Theatre," "Request Performance," and the "New Arabian Nights" by Douglas Nixon. In Halifax, Stephen Appleby conducted the "Dramatic Workshop." During the year 1948-49, three hundred plays were presented, 92 per cent by Canadian authors. There were sixty from Vancouver, forty-seven from Winnipeg, sixty-five from Montreal, twenty-five from Halifax and 103 from Toronto. These figures do not include the many productions on "CBC Sunday Night," or any on the commercial programs. During the same year, more than twelve hundred scripts in English, mostly by Canadian authors, were read and reported on by Script Editor Alice Frick. Represented by original plays on "Stage" were: Marian Waldman, Joseph Schull, Robertson Davies, Alan King, Len Peterson, Lister Sinclair. Other contributors included: Tommy Tweed, Hugh Kemp, Gerald Nixon, Andrew Allan, Harry J. Boyle. In 1950-51, the goings-on in the mythical village of Crocus in Southern Saskatchewan were depicted in the humorous series "Jake and the Kid" (starring John Drainie) by the novelist W. O. Mitchell of High River, Alberta, who brilliantly mirrored and satirized many aspects of Canadian life.

Perhaps the most productive and interesting project to encourage talent ever launched by the CBC was "Opportunity Knocks." This began on the Dominion Network under the guidance of John Adaskin in 1947-48 and continued under him until 1956. There were three series of thirteen each season. During the first two years, more than twenty-five hundred hopefuls were auditioned—singers, instrumentalists, comedians, ventriloquists, impersonators, and forty aspiring announcers. Over 90 per cent of the announcers were successfully placed in stations across Canada.

In 1947, "News Round-up," "Capitol Report," "Week-End Review," and other commentaries produced a vast and varied diet of information and opinion. Many of Canada's best journalists had a part in these, including, among many more, J. B. McGeachy, G. V. Ferguson, Elmer Philpott, Norman Smith, James Minifie, Thomas Reynolds, Peter Inglis, Warren Baldwin, Wilfred Eggleston, Blair Fraser, and Robert McKeown. Arthur L. Phelps broadcast the series "This Canada."

Even in the difficult fields of comedy and light-variety entertainment, the CBC featured brilliant and resourceful performers. The first network comedians were Woodhouse and Hawkins out of the West, Alan Young from Vancouver, Wayne and Shuster from Toronto (who quickly graduated into international status), as well as that master of satiric impersonation and burlesquer of the news, Max Ferguson, as lovable "Rawhide."

"CBC WEDNESDAY NIGHT"

On December 3, 1947, an imaginative experiment was undertaken at the suggestion of Davidson Dunton, Chairman of the Board of Governors, which resulted in the creation of "CBC Wednesday Night." All commercials were cleared off after 8:00 P.M., and the entire evening was devoted to a varied diet for the discriminating listener, free of interruption. This Canadian equivalent of the BBC's "Third Program" quickly became a unique institution in this country, and the three hours a week of cultural entertainment provided an important outlet for the work of Canadian poets, authors and playwrights. It provided technicians with a chance for some radio experimentation as well. Many long and famous plays were first presented or revived on "CBC Wednesday Night": *Hamlet* and *Julius Caesar*, Tolstoy's *Power of Darkness*, Sean O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock*, a dramatization of the Book of Job,

Syngé's *The Well of the Saint*, *La Donation* by Le Cercle Molière, Leacock's *The Great Election*, Paul Hiebert's *Life and Works of Sarah Binks*, Shaw's *Man of Destiny*, Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*, Rostand's *L'Aiglon*, and Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* in an adaptation by Lister Sinclair which received a First Award at the Annual Exhibition of American Radio Programs.

"CBC Wednesday Night" continued until 1963, when the evening and the name were changed to "CBC Sunday Night." Responsibility for the program was placed on the capable shoulders of Harry J. Boyle, and a high degree of perfection was attained. Subsequently it was managed by a committee, out of which Robert Weaver, a talented and intelligent program organizer, emerged as the guiding spirit of the operation.

A full-length opera *Deirdre of the Sorrows*, with music by Healey Willan and a libretto by John Coulter, was commissioned by the CBC and presented in April of 1946, with the choir under the direction of Albert Whitehead and the orchestra conducted by Ettore Mazzolini. The producer was Ernest Morgan.

In 1948, the CBC Opera Company was formed. It presented three operas on radio that year and five the next. In the same year, the conventions of all three major political parties were broadcast. Social problems found a prominent place in the schedules that year, with "Citizen's Forum," "In Search of Ourselves," "Learning to Live," "What about Your Marriage," and "Mind Your Business." "John Fisher Reports" gave graphic pictures of Canadian life, while "Cross-Section" found continuing themes in the week's headlines, housing, employment, labour, taxation, cost of living, social security, and other vital subjects.

The Golden Age of Radio was also the Golden Age of Music. During this period there was a procession of programs featuring all varieties of music, with a multitude of artists, conductors, and composers contributing. Among the Canadian conductors there was Geoffrey Waddington, a pioneer in radio music, who headed the remarkable CBC Symphony, which was later disbanded as an economy measure. Other conductors included: Alexander Chuhaldin, Jean Deslauriers, Jean de Rimanoczy, Reginald Stewart, Douglas Clarke, Wilfred Pelletier, Alexander Brott, Eric Wild, John Avison, Harold Sumberg, Luigi Romanelli, and Dr. H. A. Fricker, Director of the Mendelssohn Choir. Among Canadian composers were: Dr. Healey Willan, John Weinzweig, Claude Champagne, Robert Farnon, Barbara Pentland, Geoffrey

Rideout, Robert Fleming, Oscar Morewitz, Gerald Bates, and many others. The list of distinguished artists would fill many pages.

Still to be touched on are an endless number of special events, school, and educational broadcasts. Even a perusal of the CBC's Annual Reports provides no more than a fleeting glimpse of the vast kaleidoscope of instructional programming. Moreover, an equally large, varied, and excellent schedule was produced daily in French. This necessitated more original productions, both commercial and non-commercial, than the English schedules. But possibly enough has been said to give a slight indication of the efforts of the CBC to set high standards, as well as to cater to a catholicity of tastes. Canadian radio broadcasting reached its apogee in variety, inspiration, and general excellence of programming in this period from 1940 to 1955. There were also fine commercial programs. The entire schedule of commercial and non-commercial programs was available to the listener at the cost of two-thirds of one cent per radio home per day.

In all this effort to encourage talent and maintain standards the name of Ira Dilworth of Vancouver stands high. Long notable in the field of education, Professor of English at the University of British Columbia and director of the Bach Choir, he was enticed into broadcasting by Gladstone Murray in 1938. Successively Regional Director for the Pacific area, head of the International Service, and Director of Program Production at Toronto, his contribution to both policy and programs was inestimable. From 1939 until ill-health forced his retirement, no other voice dissented so quickly, even violently, nor so ably and eloquently when it was felt that any of the basic principles of the Corporation were being violated. I can recall no one else who quite so accurately mirrored the conscience of the CBC.

Additional confirmation of the standing of the CBC in program production may be found in the remarkable record established at the Annual Exhibition of Radio and Television Programs held by the Institute for Education at Ohio State University. In 1952-53, the CBC won five "Ohio Awards" and five Honourable Mentions for programs heard nationally in Canada and the United States. The following year, it won six First Awards and three Honourable Mentions; in 1954-55, seven First Awards, eleven Honourable Mentions, and one Special Award for a superb production in all respects. The Corporation continues to set enviable records. Not long ago the CBC produced for New York University a series "Democracy in America," which was broadcast by 162 affiliates of the National Broadcasting Company. The

reputation of Canadian producers, designers, artists, and administrators stands high throughout the world, and it has enhanced the status of Canada everywhere. In 1962, senior employees were acting as advisers in Ghana and Malaya, and applications for their services were being considered from Cambodia, Morocco, Jamaica, Vietnam, and several other countries.

CANADIAN COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS

The CBC's efforts were far from confined to non-commercial programs. They were supplemented by a broad and varied schedule of commercial network programs, largely of the popular type, many of them scintillating. They added variety, colour, and balance to both the Trans-Canada Network and the Dominion Network. They filled time periods that the CBC would otherwise have had great difficulty acceptably filling, and they accounted for more than 20 per cent of the Corporation's revenue. At first commercials were confined entirely to the evening hours. But it was not long before Proctor and Gamble came in—about 1939—followed by Lever Brothers and Colgate-Palmolive-Peet with the "Happy Gang" under Bert Pearl, which ran for twenty-two years and was the most popular of all Canadian daytime programs.

Though the volume of commercials grew, it never exceeded 20 per cent of total time, and was usually less. Approximately one-third of the peak evening hours marked the maximum amount of commercial time permitted, and even this included NHL games and other important national programs. Commercial programs were considered in the light of listener-interest, quality of production, and value as part of the over-all network service. The place of commercials was defined by Leonard Brockington before the Parliamentary Committee of 1939, when he said:

That commercial policy, which has been carried out within the moderate and compromise limits which I indicated last year, has proved advantageous as prophesied. It has provided a number of highly entertaining programs which many of the more favoured centres listened to before. It has established most cordial relations between the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the great chains of the United States. It has also facilitated the procuring of a large number of sustaining programs which I think we all admit

are as fine as any in the world. A second advantage has been that when time has been occupied by these commercial programs it has to some extent released time and funds for our own sustaining programs. A third advantage is that it has provided us with moderate revenue. I think commercialism to the extent that we have allowed it has enabled us, by the additional revenue and by the release of both time and money, to improve our sustaining features.

The CBC was in the highly advantageous position of being able to select both commercial programs and sustaining programs from not one but four American networks. Among these features were an abundance of wonderful productions, almost all of which have long since disappeared. They included: the Metropolitan Opera, the New York Philharmonic, the NBC Symphony under Toscanini, and the Boston "Pops." The CBC also had the choice of many of the BBC's best programs. Combined with its service of non-commercial programs, Canadians received a network radio service, the variety and excellence of which was unequalled anywhere in the world. This continued until after the advent of television near the middle 'fifties, and provided more than fifteen years of what was undoubtedly the Golden Age of Radio—as far as this country or the United States is concerned.

In the late 'thirties and 'forties, most commercial programs were produced by advertising agencies, or by independent producers, sometimes in the studios of the networks, but increasingly in studios built and equipped by the agencies. This was particularly so in the United States, less so in Canada, because the Canadian agencies were smaller and budgets were more restricted. This relieved the pressure on the otherwise overcrowded studios operated by the networks.

What were some of the commercial programs? Though there were several on the French network, which in rating far outstripped anything on the CBC English network or any American network—like "Un Homme et Son Pêche" which sometimes reached an unbelievable 80 per cent of the potential listening audience—and though the schedules of the French network equalled and sometimes surpassed in quality non-commercial or commercial programs of the English network, only the latter can be dealt with here.

Among the most notable, besides NHL games and the "Happy Gang" (which had its French counterpart "Joyeux Troubadors"), both of which were often condensed and recorded for rebroadcast to Canadian

troops overseas, was "Singing Stars of Tomorrow" which began in 1943 under the baton of the very-talented Rex Battle. This program featured young Canadians from all parts of the country in competition for musical scholarships on Sunday afternoons. Three grand prizes of \$1,000, \$500, and \$250 were awarded to the finalists, following regional competitions. During the twenty-six broadcasts in 1945-46, a representative year, some forty-four aspiring young Canadians took part. The competitions lasted until 1956 and were sponsored first by York Knitting Mills and later by Canadian Industries Limited. Many famous names among Canadian singers took part in these competitions, including Maureen Forrester, Jon Vickers, Lois Marshall, Donald Bell, Louise Roy, Evelyn Gould, Claire Gagnier, Ilona Kombrink, James Milligan, Giles Lamontagne, June Kowalchuk, Elizabeth Benson Guy, Lesia Zubrack, Ernest Adams, Marguerite Gignac, Donald Garrard, Marguerite Lavergne, Marie Jose Forgues, and many others.

For many years this program had its French counterpart "Nos Futures Etoiles," but on an unsponsored basis. It was open to any Canadian singer under thirty, and it ran for twenty-six weeks. Auditions were held at any CBC radio station, with the CBC contributing to the travelling expenses of those singers brought to Montreal where the program originated. In the first season, there were 626 candidates from six provinces (564 were from Quebec), and six from the United States. Forty-four candidates were finally selected and put on the air. Five independent judges cast votes separately. The first contest was won by Louise Roy of St. Boniface, Manitoba, who also in that year won the "Singing Stars" award. Roy and Jean Pierre Comeau of Granby, who placed second, each received \$500 and a twenty-six week engagement on the French network. "Nos Futures Etoiles" continued for several years.

Among fifty-two performances of the "Canadian Theatre of the Air," between April 1, 1941, and March 31, 1942, no less than forty-three original scripts by Canadian authors were used. Sponsored by the Ironized Yeast Company, this series was also indicative of the contribution a sponsor could make to public-service ideals the CBC was founded to promote.

"Victory Parade," with Mart Kenny and his orchestra, originated as a sponsored show twice weekly in 1944 and 1945. It was held in army, navy, and air-force locations, as well as in numerous war plants, for the entertainment of the services and employees as well as the public. "Canadian Cavalcade" and "Command Performance" included drama-

tizations of incidents leading to Canadians being awarded the Victoria Cross; "L for Lanky," "Fighting Navy," "Voice of Victory," "Jolly Miller," "Soldier's Wife," "Curtain Time," "This Is Our Canada," "Share the Wealth," "Red River Barn Dance," "Rhythm and Romance," "Light Up and Listen," "Stardust Serenade," "Penny's Diary," "Harmony House," "Northern Electric Hour," "Treasure Trail," "The Liptonaires," "Sing-Along," "Burns' Chuckwagon" – these are all the Canadian productions that spring to mind, along with several day-time serials like "Aunt Lucy" and "Laura Ltd.," many of which ran year after year. The Toronto Symphony "Pops" Concerts were sponsored. "What's My Beef" under Don Sims was a sponsored unrehearsed interview show originating on the street, in service clubs, and among various gatherings. It excited much interest, but eventually its controversial nature brought jitters to the Program Department.

AMERICAN COMMERCIAL PROGRAMS

These were some of the Canadian commercial contributions to the schedules between 1938 and 1954. Commercial programs of American origin were still more varied, and the names of some of their artists evoke many nostalgic memories. Among evening features were "Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy," "Fibber Magee and Molly," "Lux Radio Theatre," Bing Crosby, Jack Benny, Bob Hope, Kate Smith, Rudy Vallee, Bob Burns, Fred Allen, Ronald Colman, Roy Rogers, Milton Berle, Edward G. Robinson, "Ozzie and Harriet," Dennis Day, "Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts," "Major Bowes Amateur Hour," "Information Please," the most intelligent of all the quizzes, "Carnation Contented Hour" conducted by Percy Faith, a former CBC musician, "Kraft Music Hall" with Al Jolson, Frank Munn in the "Album of Familiar Music," "Silver Theatre," "Waltz Time," "The Aldrich Family," "Radio Hall of Fame," "Ford Theatre," "Texaco Star Theatre," "National Barn Dance," "Twenty Questions," and many others.

Among daytime programs were "Don McNeil's Breakfast Club," "Fred Waring and His Pennsylvanians," "Club 15" and the soap serials including "Big Sister," "Lucy Linton," "Life Can Be Beautiful," "Ma Perkins," "Right to Happiness," "Pepper Young's Family," and "Our Miss Brooks." Though some of the personalities have survived in television, almost all the old programs fled the radio networks by the mid-fifties.

In the succeeding ten years, national radio underwent great changes. High-rating commercial programs disappeared, as did many of the stars associated with them. The broadcasting beaches were strewn with talent that could not adapt to television. Between the early 'fifties and the early 'sixties, network radio programs in the United States dropped from some four hundred hours a week to less than one-half of this, and the two hundred hours were largely made up of news, sports and the odd special. Up to 1950, some fifty American radio network programs, commercial and sustaining, found a place on CBC networks. Today none except such specials as the World's Series are imported. Network radio in Canada has become essentially Canadian. A notable exception is the radio.

The CBC Symphony under Geoffrey Waddington reached a high pitch of perfection, particularly in contemporary music. "The Beethoven Cycle," six ninety-minute radio programs, was broadcast in 1959-60. In 1963, "CBC Sunday Night" presented Igor Stravinsky conducting the CBC Symphony Orchestra, including the world premiere of one of the composer's best works. These were made available to foreign radio stations and were rebroadcast more than two hundred times in Europe, the United States, and other parts of the world. There were various other almost equally significant music broadcasts, including several commissioned works. Since the 1962-63 season, the musical aspirations of former years have been seriously curtailed. The advent of a CBC-FM network relegated much serious music to FM. It is also a fact that FM stereo can broadcast the finest recordings, and these are now being featured by many private stations. Unfortunately the CBC has not yet made the most of its FM facilities.

Over the last decade, the dramatic series "Stage," under the direction of Essa W. Ljungh, has continued on a high level. "CBC Sunday Night," under the imaginative guidance of Robert Weaver, commissions a vast array of original Canadian material and adaptations of the classics. A literary series devoted to poems and short stories, "Anthology" was occasionally scheduled on a weekly basis but has more recently been incorporated as part of "CBC Sunday Night."

Among the most important developments of this period were many documentaries, the "Project" series and "Assignment," both brain children of Harry J. Boyle, author, playwright, humorist (winner of the Leacock Medal in 1964) and producer for many years of "CBC Wednesday Night." His roots go deep into the soil of Canada. Gifted with a sixth sense, Boyle has had an immense influence on Canadian broad-

casting by the creation of a steady stream of truly indigenous Canadian programs. Probably more than any single individual, he has been an anchor man in CBC radio. Finally, in 1964, his talents were applied for the first time to television through the production of the genuinely indigenous series "Across Canada."

In radio, CBC farm broadcasts have continued to be well-conceived and well-executed, touching every phase of rural life and many phases of urban life. They continue to be a powerful influence in Canadian society. Unfortunately, during 1964, the daily farm serials, started more than twenty years ago, were dropped, and farm broadcasts still have wholly inadequate distribution. News, school, religious, public affairs, talks, and commentaries continued in an unending stream of dependable and inspired information, many of them also suffering from quite inadequate distribution.

INADEQUATE CBC PUBLICITY

The numerous groups and regions served by the CBC in two languages demand careful long-range planning, which in turn demands and merits a great deal of publicity to provide advance and follow-up information. During three years, from 1960 to 1962, Audience Relations, which functions as part of the Information Service, handled 6,380,000 letters. Although the bulk of these were solicited mail in reply to quizzes and commercial programs, more than a hundred thousand each year required considerable research and personal replies. More than 83 per cent of the spontaneous mail commended the Corporation's efforts. More than four thousand people were directly contacted daily by mail or telephone in 1962. In 1961-62, there were 60,844 visitors to the CBC's premises.

In 1960, a typical year, the CBC spent \$1,836,000 on various types of advance information, or about 2.5 per cent of its total expenditures. Of this, half was for necessary services: answering mail and telephone inquiries; servicing demands for listings, articles, and pictures for some eight hundred newspapers, affiliated stations, and miscellaneous inquirers; air-promotion announcements; finding live audiences for certain programs; providing for public tours through its scattered premises; developing necessary extension publications in two languages for listeners and viewers participating in such programs as school telecasts, "Farm Forum," "Citizen's Forum," and religious programs. Such un-

avoidable expenditures absorb one-half of the total publicity budget.

About 30 per cent of the CBC's budget for promotion is spent on *CBC Times* (in French Canada *La Semaine* serves the same purpose), an indispensable publication, unfortunately far too limited in size and circulation. Some such publication is imperative—to provide basic information for the press, numerous special-interest groups, and the staff of the Corporation itself. It was needed before television, but it became doubly valuable after. When the basic costs of *CBC Times* are computed, the Corporation prints copies for the press and an additional 56,000 for subscribers which brought in over \$105,000 in 1960. However, this circulation is a mere flea-bite among the great mass audiences for radio and television, even among minority audiences.

All this effort, in 1960, left the very limited sum of \$216,000 to be spent in paid promotion of various kinds after mailing, administration, and sundry lesser charges. In other words, paid advertising accounted for less than 12 per cent of all publicity expenditures, or .3 per cent of the expenditures on programs and their distribution in that year, a ridiculously small amount. Basic and miscellaneous publicity—but mainly the former—regularly consume entirely disproportionate percentages of the CBC's publicity budgets, which have always been inadequate. The result is that the Corporation has been far too conservative in publicizing its aims and accomplishments, to say nothing of its program service. For this failing it was explicitly criticized by both the Massey Commission and the Fowler Commission, and the charge is even more valid today than it was then. Proportionately too much has had to be spent on static forms of promotion and far too little in the complementary mass media. Publicity budgets are far too limited.

The piffling one-line program listings in the daily press, while useful in their way, give no idea of the importance and character of many significant programs. Press comments in the main are limited to what was broadcast *last night*, not what will be broadcast *tonight*, though there are the occasional exceptions. Many dailies now put out broadcast supplements, and the growing importance of broadcasting has been recognized by an increasing number of papers through the assigning of competent journalists to this work. Nevertheless, the amount of intelligent advance program-information is still woefully inadequate. Nowhere is it possible to obtain a clear picture from week to week of CBC productions, like the information on British programs available through the BBC's *Radio Times* (which has an average weekly sale of over five million copies). Important programs, which consume enor-

mous effort and great expense, are broadcast from day to day and week to week practically unpublicized. As Director of Press and Information from 1938 to 1946, I pleaded for years for an appropriation, for paid advertising, based on a small percentage of program expenditure. But time and again, when the project seemed certain, the money was gobbled up by some supposedly urgent need.

Twenty years ago, a national-program publication with regional editions, more or less in the style of *Radio Times*, was urged strongly within the Corporation. The chief promoter was Sven Blangsted, a capable and imaginative officer of the Press and Information Department, which was then under my direction. Blangsted had already laid the foundations for CBC publications and produced the first *Just Mary* book. He was an experienced journalist, an idealist, and an ardent advocate of nationalization. Though the project was encouraged in every way possible, it died still-born.

Following the strictures of the Massey Commission about CBC publicity, management asked me in 1951 to study the subject and make a recommendation regarding that section of the Massey Report. The gist of my report was that since the CBC would not father a mass publication of its own, it should carry paid space regularly in the national periodical press to highlight important programs, policies, personalities, and accomplishments, instead of leaving this almost entirely to the broadcast medium itself, which meant CBC-owned stations. It was also recommended that a definite and substantially larger percentage of the budget should be set aside for this purpose, instead of having so much of it dissipated in miscellaneous and relatively ineffective promotion. I also recommended that a national survey of the public's attitude should be made to pin-point those features of the CBC's operations that most needed emphasis. This survey proved very revealing. Among much other valuable information on CBC programming, it disclosed that of those who tuned to programs that were new to them, only 17 per cent of programs "not listened to previously" were heard as the result of radio promotion. Systematic press advertising was clearly indicated. This survey in 1951 also disclosed that French-speaking listeners learned about programs through printed media about twice as often as English-speaking listeners. French Canadians seek out and read news and advertisements about radio programs to a much greater extent than English-speaking Canadians.

In recent years, some swapping of time on CBC-owned television stations for space in certain local dailies and some weeklies has taken

place, each being billed at regular rates. Time slots made available for these contra-accounts do not interfere too much with potential revenue to the Corporation from spots sold on a cash basis. During the first nine months of 1962, contra-accounts totalled \$215,000 compared with \$27,000 spent in publications. Over 70 per cent of the former was in localized dailies, compared with 15 per cent in magazines. Contra-accounts in newspapers were limited to two areas, Toronto and Winnipeg. Very little could be done elsewhere. Yet it has been suggested that it is contra-accounts that enable the CBC to keep informing people of the content of its programs. Such promotion is obviously inequitable in both volume and quality of distribution, uncertain owing to fluctuations in the readiness of publications to co-operate, and far more difficult to organize effectively and correlate than a paid campaign.

To illustrate, here is an actual instance. On November 15, 1964, the CBC initiated a series of the most historic programming it or any other network has ever undertaken. "Flanders Fields" told in the most intimate and detailed manner the story of Canadian troops in the First World War. Seven hundred veterans of every rank were interviewed and taped. There were nearly one thousand reels of interviews. Much of the interviewing was done by Frank Lalor who was also responsible for the transcribing and condensation of this vast amount of material which ultimately ended up as some seventeen one-hour programs, produced by J. Frank Willis. Lalor travelled from coast to coast, and for nearly two years he spent three nights a week and all his weekends on this remarkable project. Though creditable publicity for a very small group of especially interested people was produced, advertising was limited to a little contra-account promotion in the Toronto papers, the only city in which any worthwhile contra-account arrangements have succeeded. There was no money for paid promotion. The number of fascinating, impressive, and often very expensive programs thrown on the air with almost no advance publicity except by radio or television is legion—an enormous and unwarranted waste.

Moreover, the need for systematized advance information has been accentuated in a curious manner in recent years. A few years ago, in radio and television, drama meant drama, music meant music, comedy or variety meant comedy or variety. Now few program classifications mean what they say. Schedules are almost an enigma. "Mr. Fix-It" is about the only title that means exactly what it says. "Festival" may mean *Julius Caesar*, avant-garde drama, comic or grand opera, a Glenn Gould concert, or the National Ballet. "Explorations" may mean a

portrait of the Governor-General, a visit to the Stratford Festival, the Calgary Stampede, or a discussion on architecture. "Close-Up" might mean an interview with Kosygin or a discussion of divorce. There is no means of telling for sure unless one subscribes to the *CBC Times*, and even then one may not know. And who sees the *Times*? Perhaps 3 or 4 per cent of the actual audience, a small percentage of the audience that could and should be generated by more systematic and intelligent advance publicity. Indeed, it is not too much to say that in no phase of its operation has the CBC been found so wanting as in its public information and public relations. After ten hectic years of television, the CBC instituted a national test of public opinion in 1962. It was the third such survey, the first being in 1941, the second in 1951. In this case it was confined to the visual medium. All three surveys were conducted by independent concerns, whose interviewers had no connection with the Corporation, were not even sure on whose behalf the interviews were being conducted. All parts of Canada, save the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and a few other isolated areas, were covered: 93 per cent of the population.

This survey clearly documented much of the criticism of both Massey and Fowler. In some of its most important areas of operation, the Corporation's objectives are still largely unknown, misunderstood, or unappreciated. Despite considerable broadcast promotion, which emphasized that it costs less than a penny a day per person in Canada to bring CBC television programs into Canadian homes, 45 per cent of those interviewed, who held opinions on the matter, thought it cost \$200 or more per home per annum. Twenty-four per cent thought from \$35.00 to \$50.00. Only 17 per cent were close to the mark. Almost one-half of those who held opinions thought the cost was nine to ten times what it actually was.

Opinions regarding the source of CBC funds were almost equally obscure. Most of those interviewed believed that advertising contributed much more to the support of the Corporation than was actually the case. Considering that almost 90 per cent of all expenditures on "artists and other talent fees" made by radio and television stations in Canada are made by the CBC, it was remarkable that only two out of five people credited the CBC with doing very well in this respect. Despite the Corporation's emphatic declaration that "commercial revenue must at no time be allowed to influence program decisions," the survey showed a pronounced impression that the CBC has lowered its standards in order to maintain and increase its advertising revenues. This opinion was

definitely more marked among the better-educated groups. CBC publicity regarding this report—like the surveys of private broadcasters—has been confined to the most favourable parts only, thus illustrating the need for wholly unbiased research.

The survey also showed that French-language viewers had a clearer insight into the basic purposes and a deeper appreciation of the accomplishments of the CBC than English-language Canadians. Appreciation of the CBC was at its lowest in Alberta and parts of Saskatchewan, and more particularly so in the Edmonton area—clear proof of the long-continued inadequate coverage of both CBC radio and television in Alberta.

CHAPTER 21

THE FOWLER COMMISSION

Three years after the commencement of television broadcasting—on December 2, 1955, in accordance with a final recommendation of the Massey Commission—the Government appointed the third Royal Commission to deal with Broadcasting. The Commissioners were R. M. Fowler of Montreal, an Ontario lawyer, formerly on the staff of the Rowell-Sirois Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations, General Counsel and Secretary of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board (1942-45), and President of the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association; Edmond Turcotte, Canadian Ambassador to Colombia, former editor of *Le Canada*, and member of Canadian delegations to various UNESCO conferences; and James Stewart, President of the Canadian Bank of Commerce. The Commissioners were primarily businessmen, since the government was particularly interested in having assessed the probable costs of its television policy over a period of years. The Group came to be known as the Fowler Commission.

The terms of reference were to examine and make recommendations upon: (a) The policies to be followed by the CBC in its television activities; (b) the measures necessary to provide an adequate proportion of Canadian programs for both public and private stations; (c) the financial requirements of the CBC for both television and radio broadcasting, in light of the development of the former and the growth of population in new areas; (d) the manner in which such financial requirements should be provided and managed; (e) the licensing and control of private television and sound broadcasting stations and other related matters.

The Commission approached its task in a well-organized and precise manner. A statistical expert, Dr. Dallas Smythe, a Canadian at the University of Illinois, was engaged, and with the co-operation of stations, both public and private, an exhaustive analysis of Canadian programming was made—though entirely on a quantitative basis. Forty-seven days of public hearings were held in nine of the ten provinces; the Commission flew to St. John's, Newfoundland, but was precluded by bad weather from landing. Two hundred and seventy six briefs were submitted, 245 of them from organizations; these were supplemented by over six hundred letters offering suggestions. In addition, hundreds of informal talks were held with interested Canadians, and with American, French, Mexican, and British broadcasters. The Commission was in no hurry, and an adequate opportunity was given everywhere for full and free expression of opinion.

The battle lines were quickly drawn. In one camp there were those who supported the existing system; and in the other, those who sought a fundamental change in line with the numerous presentations made by the Canadian Association of Broadcasters before the several Parliamentary Committees from 1942 to 1947, and later before the Massey Commission. The weight of evidence was offered by the CBC and its supporting organizations, plus certain private broadcasters who disagreed with the opinions of their parent group and by the Canadian Association of Broadcasters¹ and its supporters on the other. The latter included various Chambers of Commerce in towns and cities where private stations existed, and many that had been traditional enemies of nationalized broadcasting.

The existing CBC system was supported by more than eighty organizations from all areas of Canadian life, and—significantly—three important radio stations, CJCH Halifax, CFPL London, and CKVL Verdun.

CAB AND SEPARATE REGULATORY BOARD

Early introductory statements were presented by each side in the spring of 1956, after which followed meetings cross Canada, when local presentations were heard; then the summaries and rebuttals in October.

¹ From 1953 to 1958, CAB operated under the title Canadian Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters (CARTB). Otherwise these organizations were identical. For convenience and consistency, the designation CAB and not CARTB has been used throughout.

The first presentation for CAB was made by T. J. Allard, Executive Vice-President; for the final meetings, the private broadcasters added a panel of distinguished legal talent to assist him. Some twenty briefs, with supporting documents, were presented by CAB, much of it repetitive and some of it somewhat inconsistent. Allard opened with three reasons favouring a separate regulatory body: first, an operating body should not have regulatory powers, and a regulatory body should not operate; two, an operating body should not have the power to regulate another body with which it competes; three, executive, legislative, and judicial functions should not be combined in one body. Basically CAB's quarrel was not with the CBC but with the legislative situation. CAB advocated a Canadian Telecommunications Board appointed by Order-in-Council, answerable directly to the Cabinet rather than to Parliament. It would have a full-time Chairman and Vice-Chairman, the first a member of the judiciary, the second a competent engineer. Its term would be ten years. The Board would deal with all uses of radio waves, including sound and television broadcasting, ship-to-shore communications, and police radio. It would allocate frequencies, decide on the granting of licences, regulate and control networks, arrange the proportion of advertising and its character, etc. CAB's proposed Board would resemble the Federal Communications Commission, but with greater power and less isolated from politics than the Washington body.

CAB at first sought practically unlimited privileges in connection with the forming of private networks. It claimed that "in practice the conditions surrounding permission for such networks made the operation of these impossible." However, at the final hearings, the spokesmen for CAB were at pains to disclaim any submission to the commission seeking to establish private networks. None of the groups supporting CAB pointed to any existing regulations which they found burdensome or hoped would be removed by a new and separate board. After twenty years of regulation, they could not show any substantial evidence of unfair treatment, or any clear conflict of interest and duty in the operations of the CBC Board of Governors. Nor could they say how the form and content of broadcasting would be changed, except that it would be dealt with by a different board. They agreed that they had every confidence in the integrity and fairness of the CBC Board and that of the officials of the Corporation, but they hinted that different and perhaps less desirable persons might occupy their positions at some future time. They stated "that the control would be the same as today on the operator, but the method of control would be different." They

also "specifically agreed that there should be control of such matters as program content, import of programs, and the use of Canadian talent" (Royal Commission on Broadcasting, 1957, p. 82).

The complaints of the CAB regarding restraints placed on private stations were mainly such generalities as "the private broadcasting industry has not realized its potential"; that private broadcasters did not want to remain tied to a broadcasting system "still hobbled by philosophical concepts not appropriate to a forward-looking Canada." They felt it unrealistic that their pace should be limited by the CBC and claimed that, bound in the web of a power-hungry Corporation, they were in a "potato-sack race with a state broadcasting agency," and that they desired to "burst out at the seams" (Royal Commission on Broadcasting, 1957, p. 148).

THE CBC'S POSITION

The case for the CBC and a single national authority was presented by the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Davidson Dunton, and the General Manager, Alphonse Ouimet. They did not feel that the CBC should plead for a particular policy or law, or for specific financial arrangements or amounts. They preferred merely to set out the facts of development and operation of national broadcasting, as these were known to them, and leave the matter in the hands of the Commission.

In accordance with a long-established policy, all broadcasting stations in Canada were parts of a single over-all system. Responsibility was delegated to the CBC for the co-ordination of the whole and for the provision of a national service. The obligation was two-way: the private affiliated stations had to carry a national service, and the CBC had to bring it to them. Private affiliates were helped by a large amount of free programming, and assisted by revenues for the commercial network programs they carried. At the same time, their own programming had a wide latitude within which to work.

The Canadian system was a unique combination of public and private enterprise toward a national service: funds from public sources, with money and programs from commercial sources, under a single authority responsible to Parliament. All these resources and efforts were integrated to meet the challenges set by the nature of Canada—by its immense size, its relatively small population, its two languages, its

sharing of the continent with a big, friendly, and fabulously rich neighbour.

On a purely commercial basis, neither the CBC nor any other truly national organization could break even on the production and distribution of programs throughout Canada; if private enterprise could—and would—the CBC would have no real reason for its existence. Public funds voted by Parliament made possible the main operations of the CBC, but advertising also made a large contribution. Commercial operations by the Corporation opened the way for the use of television on a significant scale by Canadian business. It brought revenues to both the CBC and affiliated stations, and it supplied important and popular programs that assisted greatly in providing balanced schedules.

Those advertisers who had joined with the CBC in the effort to provide national programs had paid substantial sums toward the production costs of those programs—though in many cases only a portion of the costs. However, commercial network broadcasting was not a source of great net cash return to either the CBC or its affiliated stations. This condition was true even in the United States, where the networks made the major part of their net returns not from network operations but from their “owned and operated” stations. Most of the cash revenues from commercial activities in television came from “spot” or non-network advertising on individual stations. These admitted a vast number of advertisers who would otherwise be unable to take part.

Though the CBC had the necessary co-ordinating powers to enforce its time requirements on private stations, it preferred to work on a basis of mutual co-operation, to discuss matters of common concern, and to give weight to their views and needs according to circumstances, which varied greatly from one area to another.

Although there was extensive co-operation between public and private elements of the system, there was little or no competition in television. Practically all stations served different audiences. Moreover, there was very little competition for talent at any time; the economics of broadcasting did not make feasible much important program production by private stations using nationally known professional paid talent.

The Canadian combination of public and private facilities in one national system had advantages and disadvantages. One disadvantage was that the entire national service available was seldom transmitted by any private station to the public in its area. Such stations needed time for their local operations, and they had to carry programs from which

they received greater net returns than network commercial programs could bring. Problems of distribution through private stations would increase as television became more highly remunerative and as the volume of commercial spot business rose.

TELEVISION'S POPULARITY

Though Canadian television resources were limited, the appetites of Canadians for the best in television fare were unlimited. Nowhere else in the world were people more demanding or were tastes more lavish. Television in Canada would be vastly simpler if Canadians did not share so many common interests with their rich neighbours. But it would also be more difficult, for the nearness and friendliness of that neighbour made it possible to broadcast in Canada a great variety of programs produced at a cost that could never be met in this country.

In national programming, the CBC had to strive constantly with the problems of program balance, providing within its means a sensibly balanced pattern designed to give minority as well as majority interests a fair share. There were, in effect, two countries. One had some twelve million English-speaking groups, widely diversified in their origins and tastes, and another nearly six million French-speaking people with varying tastes, though perhaps less demanding and more reasonable in their attitude. There was no such problem in the United States, nor in Great Britain.

While popular entertainment was in demand, television had to furnish many other things that people wanted: reports on Canadian and world events; women's features; programs for fishermen, farmers, children; information and idea programs; religion and personalities of the day. The CBC could not be guided mainly by "ratings," or mass-popularity programs, though it had to pay attention to them.

In Canada, the cost of program production in television was extremely high, compared with the vastly greater populations and resources of the United States and Great Britain. Canadian production must compete in television with American programs produced at far greater cost than possible in this country, but available for use in Canada at a mere fraction of the original cost of much more modest Canadian productions. It was very doubtful if even book or magazine publishing in Canada faced such intense competition.

Economic pressure to use American syndicated programs at dumping

rates has always threatened television in Canada and always will. This pressure influences both public and private television, particularly the latter, for extended use of such programs could make the difference between heavy losses or large profits. The commercially easy—and most remunerative—way to set up a program schedule was to take on still another American program.

Canadian advertisers generally could not pay station-and-transmission charges as well as production costs. In many instances, Canadian sales simply did not warrant such expenditures. Advertisers using Canadian productions made very substantial contributions to the national system, but with many programs this commercial contribution was more than equalled by the CBC itself, to cover program costs. Without this, there would be very few shows sponsored by Canadian manufacturers. Indeed, if such subventions ceased, more than 80 per cent of sponsored programs would be lost.

It had still to be demonstrated that a television network operating on a straight commercial basis would be a practical proposition in Canada. National programming on an occasional basis was possible, but a comprehensive balanced service was another matter. A nationwide commercial network which on a regular basis carried any significant volume of Canadian programming was not a practical possibility even in terms of radio. It is suggested from time to time that private broadcasters requested and were denied a national radio network, but this was definitely not so.

Without an organization like the CBC, and apart from some local broadcasts, practically all programs seen and heard by Canadians would be imported. Television would communicate to Canadians from outside the country, and would provide little communication among Canadians. This would make a modest contribution to the national life at the very best. Television broadcasting would be received over much less of Canada, since a number of stations in smaller population areas could never have started into operation.

TELEVISION'S COSTS

The CBC had made a thorough study of the possibilities and costs involved in a national system. Its conclusion was that on the basis of \$15.00 fee per television home per year—slightly more than four cents a home an evening—together with commercial support, there could be

built up and maintained in Canada a system that would develop a reasonable proportion of Canadian programming in two languages, and would provide coverage for about 75 per cent of the population, from coast to coast, with a single service in each language. These conclusions were reached before the days of television. But this estimate of an annual \$15.00 fee was based on expected wide additional support from commercial sources, and on continued power to co-ordinate private stations in the system. It did not include the wide extension of coverage to the remaining 25 per cent of the population, the development of colour television, nor the duplication of service in some areas by either the CBC or private stations. (The cost estimates, which were made by the CBC before 1952, have actually been reduced. The estimates of the Fowler Commission also proved very close to the actual expense, although not all anticipated accomplishments have been carried out.)

Compared with the four cents a day to support the entire broadcasting side—programming, administration, distribution of television—the average cost per family to operate its receiving set, including amortization, was about twenty cents a day. Canadians in 1956 were spending close to two hundred million dollars a year to watch television, amortized cost of sets included. Because of tariffs, the Canadian public pays much more than the equivalent of \$15 per family to maintain certain other Canadian industries.

The real problem with television was not with capital expenditure but with operating cost. Interest and amortization of capital expenditures was a small percentage of yearly costs. The CBC had not followed the trend in some countries of planning and building pretentious facilities while leaving the costs of programming with them to be faced afterward. If the CBC continued its commercial activities, but was obliged to use only publicly owned facilities for the same coverage, instead of part-public and part-private facilities, the net cost of the system would be only 10 to 12 per cent greater. The CBC was limited in the establishment of facilities in six key areas, where the largest talent pools existed, but it originally asked authorization to establish stations in additional key areas to assure a firm basic structure of publicly owned facilities. It had been definitely restricted to the areas specified, but if "second" stations² were to be established—as was

² "Second" stations were first anticipated in a statement by the Honourable J. J. McCann in the House of Commons on March 30, 1953, when he said: "The principle of one station to an area is to apply only until an adequate

suggested in certain quarters—it was a corollary that the CBC should also establish stations in some of those areas being served by private stations. This would be an essential provision for good distribution of national service, and this is exactly what later happened.

At this time, the CBC pointed out that the main effect of “second” stations would be to intensify the pressure for American programming. This would inevitably increase the difficulty of attracting Canadian advertising money to Canadian programs. Advertisers would have additional outlets in important markets across the country for sponsoring programs from the United States, instead of associating themselves with Canadian productions. The duplication of stations would tend to reduce the commercial revenues or potential future revenues that came through existing CBC stations to the general support of the whole national service across the country.

The CBC was not opposed to alternative service as such. It recognized that in any given area the choice between two different programs was desirable. The question was what part of national income in the future would go into television; how much would be channelled directly into providing television to Canadians in all areas; and how much into added service to only a few heavily populated areas?

POSITIONS OF CERTAIN PRIVATE BROADCASTERS

Three important stations of CAB took sharp issue with the parent organization. Finlay MacDonald, Manager of CJCH Halifax, and Past President of CAB, said that the national system, with private stations operating as important extensions in the system, had provided a high standard and a reasonable selection of programs for minority tastes. He pointed up CBC achievements in the past and hopes for the future. As well as supplying a market for Canadian artists, the national network was a “nerve centre and backbone around which the national character has grown and will continue to grow.” If the CBC did not produce, distribute, and regulate its own product, it might become a producing service totally dependent on voluntary acceptance of its wares by individual outlets and “could be a manufacturer without a

national television system is developed. It is anticipated that, in due course, private stations will be permitted in areas covered by CBC stations and the CBC may establish stations in some areas originally covered by private stations.”

market." The CBC had been commendably fair and sound, and it granted protection to those stations it licensed because it took economic factors into consideration. According to MacDonald, "Broadcasting did not respond to free competition as did other businesses." The CBC had a general tendency to fear controversy and the clash of ideas, and it was rather too conscious of its status as a Crown Corporation. It had exercised its regulatory powers judicially, fairly, and flexibly. He had absolutely no fear of the CBC. In television, he visualized second-station operation along the lines of the Trans-Canada Network and the Dominion Network with the CBC conducting both networks and all stations having the same responsibilities, assuming CBC programs would be available to the second network. CJCH did not regard the CBC as a competitor.

The London Free Press, which operated CFPL and CFPL-TV, was represented before the Fowler Commission by Murray Brown. The Manager upheld the existing system of "co-ordination of public and private facilities under one responsibility to Parliament. The creation of a separate regulatory body would seem to be impractical and would duplicate the present system of national control." The CBC had enforced its regulations fairly; on matters of regulation, it was more realistic for broadcasters to deal with CBC personnel, who were familiar with actual broadcasting conditions, than with an independent regulatory board, whose members conceivably would have less knowledge of broadcasting problems. Affiliates had an obligation to produce some Canadian material for the network. "When markets could adequately support "second" stations, these should be obliged to reserve certain periods for Canadian programs produced by the CBC or themselves; 'complementary' was a better word to describe the place of private stations *vis-à-vis* the CBC than was 'competitor'."

The third important station to break ranks with CAB, and say so, was CKVL Verdun. Cory Thomson, the Manager, a veteran broadcaster, made the case that CKVL had no criticism of the existing system. In ten years of existence, it had been successively granted a daytime licence, a twenty-four hour licence, a power increase, and a provincial network. In that period, it had spent over two million dollars on live Canadian talent, and in January of 1956, CKVL had featured 172 live talent programs averaging four artists per program. CKVL made a strong bid for a customs duty on actual production costs of imported programs, films, or transcription, with the money to be distributed on a program-by-program basis by a Board in the interests of protecting

Canadian talent. Thomson urged that no television licences be granted without a firm guarantee to spend a handsome percentage on Canadian programming. When CKVL applied in 1953 for permission to feed a network of private stations a daily program service, the CBC not only authorized the request but assisted in building the necessary equipment.

These presentations were strangely at odds with those of certain other private stations and members of CAB, notably CFNB which, since 1923, had enjoyed a monopoly at the university city of Fredericton, the capital of New Brunswick. There the most contradictory opinions heard anywhere by the Commission were expressed. Malcolm Neill, the owner-manager of CFNB, maintained: The CBC should not be in the commercial business; it should produce programs for only five or six hours daily and for those listeners it was designed to serve—minorities—and should pay private stations to broadcast them. The CBC had done little for television other than retain for itself the most lucrative centres; CBC transmitters largely duplicated the coverage and programming of private stations, hence were needless; any threat to Canadian culture from the United States was a red herring. Private stations should be free to form networks without reference to any control body—and more in the same vein.

On the same day, the New Brunswick Council of Women maintained that almost one-half the population of that province did not receive adequate program service, and that requests to local New Brunswick stations to carry desired programs met with only a small measure of success. They gave a list of eleven programs, headed by "Trans-Canada Matinee" and children's programs, which they would especially like to hear. At the same hearing, the Fredericton Branch of the Humanities Association of Canada, the New Brunswick Federation of Agriculture, and the local Federation des Sociétés St. Jean Baptiste strongly emphasized their support of the existing system, while the Fredericton Branch of the United Nations' Association recommended the establishment of a powerful CBC station in Fredericton, as CFNB had a virtual daytime monopoly, and a wider range of choice was needed.

Other important CBC programs—notable for their absence from the schedules of CFNB and those of many other network stations—were the daily farm broadcast and the Metropolitan Opera which began twenty years ago on a Saturday afternoon and has been broadcast only by CBC-owned stations and a mere handful of others (12 out of 54 private affiliates in the 1962-63 season, and a similar number last season). Some stations claim that the musical tastes of their audiences

are not up to this standard, but the real reason is the length of the program, and the fact that much more money may be made on Saturday afternoons from local events and spot announcements. Many Canadians have yet to hear these wonderful programs of the world's greatest music by the world's finest artists.

Since the Fowler Commission, a power increase for CFNB from 5 kw. to 50 kw. has been authorized by the Board of Broadcast Governors, and given effect, apparently without conditions as to program service or standards. In the meanwhile, the CBC decided that it had to build its own radio outlet to give greater recognition to the talent and aspirations of New Brunswickers. It said: "Fredericton is a centre that should be receiving the complete national service of the CBC. Equally important, the intellectual and cultural life of this centre should be more fully reflected on the Corporation's regional and national schedules. The public demand for a CBC transmitter at Fredericton is a long-standing one."

OUIMET AND PRIVATE OPERATORS

The difference between the official attitude—represented by CAB—and the attitudes shown in the independent presentations of private stations was further accentuated by the remarks of the General Manager of the CBC during his rebuttal evidence on October 11, 1956:

What strikes us most at the operating level is what appears to be a day and night difference between the attitude of our affiliates and that of the body that speaks for them. The attitude of our affiliates has appeared to us to be an understanding one, a friendly one, whether they acted as individuals or as a group at our affiliate meetings. On the other hand the CAB attitude has appeared to be belligerent and nasty. Now while the CAB seems to be systematically, ruthlessly, and also without civility seizing every opportunity to discredit our operations as a Corporation and gives the appearance of wishing to weaken our system, I would say in all sincerity that it appears to us that our affiliates are working with us, that they are making real efforts to get along with us. It would be naive on my part to suggest that the CAB does not speak for its members, including most of our affiliates. The least I can suggest is that the private stations and the CAB suffer

from some sort of split personality and I am happy to say that we deal at the operating level with the pleasant side of that personality.

It would seem that behind the unremitting agitation of certain private broadcasters there lies a psychological problem extending far beyond ordinary complaints or even dollars and cents. National broadcasting is not only big business—it also constitutes a sort of national consciousness and a national voice. It provokes continuous public attention. Those who occupy places of importance in broadcasting live constantly in glass houses. It is difficult, risky, and demanding but also inspiring. Community broadcasting is as difficult and demanding but perhaps less inspiring, certainly less perpetually in the limelight. There are capable and ambitious men in private broadcasting, playing out their parts on a smaller stage, who are restive in their more restricted surroundings. Some would like to be in the CBC, where they could play more important roles on a bigger stage. But there is only one bigger stage in Canadian broadcasting, and its character is constantly more demanding.

No small part of the restiveness and agitation among some private broadcasters is unconsciously rooted in the desire of a few to play a bigger part on the national stage. It is an understandable ambition, and it transcends mere money-making. Status has been—and is—of consuming concern to some who feel that the CBC draws a disproportionate share of public attention, even if no inconsiderable part of it is critical. It is no exaggeration to say that some, at least, feel that they have been relegated to a lesser role, and that the level of local or community broadcasting has somehow or other been downgraded. This feeling surfaces very occasionally, and it is a mistaken one. It is none the less real, and has never adequately been taken into account by the CBC. As occasionally happens in large organizations which are somewhat monopolistic in character, individuals can become dangerously self-centred, even arrogant, without realizing it.

This undercurrent of feeling was evident to the Fowler Commission when spokesmen for the private broadcasters finally admitted that the creation of a separate regulatory board would make them “feel better.” The creation of the BBG in 1958 represented a signal step in this battle for status, and it accounts for much of their support for a dual system. CAB sought for years to create a public image of equal status with the publicly owned system; they sought to give the impression that private

broadcasters could perform a service of equal or nearly equal value without cost to the public. Having created that image, the Association is now faced with the somewhat unpleasant realization that to live up to it—without the means to do so—is impossible.

THE FOWLER REPORT

The Royal Commission's Report of March 15, 1957, was an exhaustive document of some five hundred pages, with two supplementary volumes totalling 742 pages of program statistics. Its basic conclusions and recommendations were succinct, and its appraisal of the probable costs set out under "Finances" in the Report of CBC national television service in the succeeding five years was remarkably close to actuality.

Like the Massey Commission, it viewed the entire Canadian radio and television establishments, both public and private, as parts of a single system. On that basis, its broad over-all conclusion was:

We have a good broadcasting system. The joining together of public and private ownership suits Canada and serves Canadians well. . . . We would be wise to keep it very much as it is but improved, strengthened, and tidied up where possible. . . . To do this we must be prepared to spend public money in quite large quantities. The Canadian economy is just not big enough to support a broadcasting system on commercial revenues alone. . . . The central factor in a Canadian system is the CBC, supported by money out of the public treasury for both its capital and operating needs. . . .

It is not difficult to deduce from historical records—recommendations of previous royal commissions, parliamentary committee reports, and statements by governments of different political persuasions—that the essential principle underlying the Broadcasting Act of 1936 is that there should be a single system in Canada, of which the private broadcasters are a complementary but necessary part and over which the Corporation, through the Board of Governors, has full jurisdiction and control.

Of CBC programming it said:

By far the greater number of witnesses, including a number of organizations which favoured greater freedom for private broadcasters, urged that CBC programming should be continued and expanded. . . . From many different parts we heard evidence that the Corporation had been effectively instrumental in raising the level of popular tastes in music. There was also a good deal of praise for the Corporation's farm broadcasts. There was virtually no complaint that CBC programming was too highbrow; indeed there was some demand for a greater proportion of the more serious types of broadcasts . . . a surprising amount of interest was shown in educational broadcasts. . . . The value of the existing school broadcasts was stressed. . . . It is clear that Canadians do not object to advertising as such. But many feel that some advertising is unduly lengthy, or vulgar, or in some cases actually misleading. There are also those who feel that advertising messages should not be allowed to interfere with the flow of a program and that they should be restricted to natural breaks in any broadcast.

The first and obvious conclusion is that CBC Trans-Canada and the French-language stations offer what appears to be better balanced programming than the other classes of stations. They have made a serious effort to provide a fare designed to satisfy as wide a range of tastes as possible.

CBC has given a good deal of tangible encouragement to Canadian creative and interpretative talent and much of that talent was of superior quality. This has been of decided benefit not only to the artists themselves, but to the general public as well.

The Commission added: "We found no examples of careless waste and certainly nothing that even remotely resembled fraud, neglect, or mishandling in the administration of CBC finances." On the services of private stations, the Commission said: "There was a good deal of warm praise for the quality of the news services provided, as well as for a variety of community-service broadcasts." Community or local service was one of the principal reasons why the Commission felt that the presence of private stations in the over-all system should be recognized and placed beyond doubt.

We have made it clear that private broadcasters are integral parts of a single system. We think that this relationship should continue to be a basic term of each television and radio licence now in force or to be issued in the future. . . . That is not to say that any individual private operator has any vested interest which entitles him, as of right, to continue in existence. Each private operator, as the holder of a valuable temporary right to use a relatively rare public asset, should justify the continued retention of that right—and should be required to keep on justifying it. . . . We recommend that in future the standards of performance of private stations should be more closely checked, that those who give inadequate service or shabby performances under their franchises should be warned and that the licences of those who fail to make substantial improvements after such warnings should be cancelled.

The Commission was definitely critical of the CBC's non-enforcement of its own regulations. It considered the regulations minimal, and that the CBC wished to avoid controversy with private stations, even "bending over backwards" to give them the benefit of any doubt. The legislation contained inadequate and impractical sanctions for such enforcement.

Both the Chairman of the Board, Davidson Dunton, and the General Manager, J. Alphonse Ouimet, were characterized—without qualification—as able, experienced, and competent. But it was suggested that, with the appointment of a salaried chairman in 1945, his duties had not been clearly defined, and that in the rather mad rush toward the development of television, with its multifarious duties and numerous undertakings, the lines of authority between policy-making, and the execution of these policies, had become somewhat blurred. The Board had become too exclusively a CBC Board, with the Chairman as the chief executive, concerned almost entirely with CBC administration. The direct lines of authority between the over-all governing body—particularly toward directing CBC policy as one part of the broadcasting structure, administering necessary regulations—and the overseer of private stations as a second part of the same structure should be more distinctly drawn. Responsibilities should be more clearly defined, though final responsibility in the case of the CBC must rest entirely with the Board. The blurring of responsibility had not resulted in any serious administrative problem; but it had caused some confusion in the public's mind as to the true role of the Chairman, a circumstance that

had made it possible for those who wished to change the existing system to magnify this confusion to an unwarranted degree.

NO SEPARATE BODY

The Commission dealt at length with the request of CAB for a separate regulatory body.

We do not agree with the proposal for an independent regulatory board of the type suggested by the CAB and recommend against it but we do envisage in our suggestions a separation and clarification of management and supervisory functions. . . . We disagree with it [the separate regulatory board] as being impracticable and unnecessary and likely to lead to administrative confusion. It is likely to prove unworkable and is certain to be cumbersome and inefficient.

The implications of setting up two boards were examined at great length. The examination concluded: "As a practical matter we do not believe you can have two administrative bodies appointed by the same government and with similar personnel involved in the regulation of broadcasting without having duplication of expense and effort, undesirable friction between the two and loss of efficiency" (Royal Commission on Broadcasting, 1957, pp. 130-35).

The Fowler Commission was no less critical of the CBC than the Massey Commission in 1951 in the matter of keeping the public properly informed with respect to its policies and operations. It urged a more aggressive policy and said: "The responsible agents of Canada's broadcasting policy owe it to the Canadian public to keep it constantly informed of the objectives to be reached in accordance with policy as laid down by Parliament." It concluded that this was all the more necessary because of its opinion that the Canadian Association of Broadcasters had been baiting the CBC, while the latter had failed to react because its executive officers felt that they were being gagged by the rule that Crown Corporations must remain passive under criticism.

What did the Fowler Commission recommend? It recommended nothing inherently different in function from that which had been in existence for twenty years. But it was at pains to make a slight

structural change seem different. It suggested the creation of an operating agency (the CBC) as a Crown Corporation, with some minor changes in its statutory powers and organization. A second public agency, a Board of Broadcast Governors, would be created, responsible to Parliament. This second agency would have responsibility for all phases of Canadian broadcasting, both public and private, including the direction of policy and supervision of the operation of the Corporation, all officers of which would be appointed by and be responsible only to it. The Board would report to Parliament on both its general supervision of private stations, and for the Corporation.

Previously the Board of Governors had constituted the Corporation. The proposed board would not constitute a corporation, though among its other duties it would supervise one. Thus Fowler hoped to segregate more clearly the functions of private station regulation plus the recommending or suspension of licences from day-to-day operations of the Corporation.

He suggested that the whole broadcasting system had expanded twenty times in expense and complexity over that of twenty years before and might therefore require some different kind of board from that which was adequate and proper in 1936. Expenditures of the existing magnitude called for a board of great experience and competence in business. Members should have a broad knowledge of Canadian affairs. The report did not refer to the most important qualification of all, and one in which the Board of 1936 has never been surpassed, if indeed equalled, by any board since 1936 namely the determination to frame policy and see it through, if necessary at the price of their own appointments. That still remains the priceless ingredient.

Though the suggested changes were sound enough they also were in a sense an exercise in semantics. At best the change set up little more than a paper partition. We shall see later how this proposal was distorted into something quite different.

In order that there could be no misinterpretation of its intentions, with respect to policy and the day-to-day operations of the complicated and comprehensive machine of national broadcasting, Fowler had a draft statute prepared setting out the lines of authority between the proposed Board of Broadcast Governors and the national operating Corporation which would function under its direction.

The Commission carefully reviewed the conditions surrounding the formation of the networks, and added:

Indeed the whole attitude of CAB on the subject of networks was confusing to us and after considerable questioning in the hearings still remained obscure. But at one final hearing the spokesman for CAB was at pains to disclaim any submission to this Commission seeking the right to establish private networks. No one suggested that a national network [private] was a practical proposition; no one seemed very interested in the subject, except as an example of some supposed restriction by the CBC. . . . The network operations of the CBC have been unprofitable and costly while individual private stations have generally been profitable and successful. The distinction is not between wasteful methods of public ownership and the efficiencies of private enterprise for we found exactly the same experience in the United States where both networks and stations are privately owned and operated. American networks in radio are struggling to break even and the large television networks, after many years of substantial losses, have only recently been able to show a small profit. The fact is that for any real variety, originality, and quality in programming a network is faced with serious economic problems. To operate a national network successfully at a profit is exceedingly difficult and for Canada practically impossible. The real reason why we have so few private networks in Canada is not, as has been contended, because of onerous restrictions by the CBC.

PRIVATE PROGRAM STANDARDS

On the matter of "second" television stations, the Commission felt that the time was near when the "single-channel" policy should be abandoned. But the Commission said (pp. 226-27):

It is important to determine to whom second licences should be granted and, most important of all, on what terms they should be granted. . . . The problem is to avoid duplicating in television the mistakes that were made in radio. We have today 167 private radio stations of which sixty-nine are not affiliated with any Canadian network. The poorest programming is to be found among the unaffiliated radio stations. . . . CBC regulations have been rather ineffective in controlling the performance of private station operators. This should not be allowed to happen in tele-

vision where the number of channels available for practical use are very limited and unevenly distributed across the country. . . . The most important question as to the operation of these second stations concerns their program performances. . . . Economic pressures indicate the necessity for clear-cut regulations defining the minimum standard program performance required of such stations. A private operator of a second television station cannot validly complain that the competition of the CBC is unfair. If he is not satisfied with that condition he should not apply for a licence. . . . A corollary of the proposition that licences should be granted in places where CBC stations now operate is that CBC licences might be granted in places where private stations now exist.

Five of the six specific terms of reference of the Commission dealt directly with finance. These were researched with the utmost thoroughness, and specific recommendations were made with respect to both capital and operating costs of the CBC projected over a period of ten years. It emphasized that the increasingly serious financial problems of the Corporation were due almost entirely to the rapidly mounting costs of carrying out a policy approved by Parliament, of establishing a Canadian television service without making financial provision that bore any real relationship to the needs of the service. The Massey Commission suggested that capital costs of facilities should come from Parliamentary grants, while operating costs should be paid from licence fees for receivers as well as statutory grants as necessary. Parliament followed neither suggestion. Capital payments took the form of loans, not grants, while the licence fee was replaced with a fluctuating and ultimately inadequate excise tax on the factory price of both radio and television receivers and parts.

Ten-year forecasts of the CBC's costs and revenues, for both radio and television, were made in great detail and carefully reviewed. Finding its projections for the last four years vague—because of the rapid technological changes taking place, and because the over-all costs were beyond what the commission was prepared to recommend at that time—it scaled down its estimates to what it regarded as clearly essentials and nothing more. It also calculated a greater increase from commercials through an increasingly vigorous policy and by the acceptance of local and spot advertising on CBC radio stations. These revised estimates were confined to a six-year period. Though the original ten-year forecast

was not based on any lavish scale of operations, and could easily be defended as desirable and similar to elements in the neighbouring American system the revised six-year forecasts showed a reduction of 25 per cent from the original estimates of public expenditure for television in the last year, with intervening years varying proportionately. For radio, the reductions amounted to approximately 10 per cent, radio costs being more readily and accurately forecast.

FINANCING THE CBC

The Commission estimated capital requirements of the CBC up to the end of 1963 (including projects in progress but not completed) at \$137,478,000. This included the consolidation of facilities at all locations, together with provision of plant and equipment to carry on the existing service, and the introduction of colour. Consolidation of facilities in Montreal and Toronto would account for \$71,326,000. No allowance was made for a new head-office building in Ottawa, nor was it even mentioned.

The Commission suggested annual grants for capital purposes, feeling that such developments should be subject to frequent review by Parliament. It discovered that the estimated yield from the existing 15 per cent excise tax on new television and radio sets and parts (the basis of government grants to the CBC in 1957) was almost identical with its estimates of capital requirements. It suggested earmarking the proceeds of the excise tax as a fund for capital purposes of the public broadcasting service. It seemed logical that the purchaser of a receiver at the time of purchase should make a contribution to the capital cost of the public system that would produce and distribute much of the program service he would receive. It recommended against any remission of the tax, and the Commission suggested that the increase in set sales did not confirm the contention of manufacturers that the tax had depressed the demand.

In considering new production centres, the Commission suggested that the best plan would appear to be to move somewhat away from the crowded downtown areas of large cities, by acquiring sufficient space in suburban areas within convenient commuting distance. This was more easily recommended than accomplished. In Montreal, civic, real-estate, and racial interests forced the CBC into the heart of the city. In Toronto, although a suburban site was acquired in neighbouring

North York, the civic authorities (who never had previously taken the slightest interest in the matter) suddenly thought they were going to lose out, and ever since have sought to bring the CBC within a small congested complex, the St. Lawrence Market area in downtown Toronto.

The vastly greater problem of operating finances was approached in a completely different but unique way. The Commission estimated the rapidly growing demands of the CBC year-by-year, for six years, from 1957 to 1963. It is a remarkable fact that this six-year forecast made in 1957 was almost identical with the actual expenditures from April 1, 1958, to March 31, 1963. The Report estimated public grants necessary during that period would total \$353,393,000. Public grants actually totalled \$347,269,000. It is true that not everything anticipated had been undertaken, but there were other unanticipated expenditures that balanced these.

Fowler suggested three methods by which Parliament should provide the amounts anticipated as necessary over the five-year period. In each of these years, paid to the CBC out of Consolidated Revenue would be an amount equal to a certain specified percentage of one of the components of the Gross National Product, specifically "Personal Expenditure on Consumer Goods and Services."

This formula (approximately one-quarter of one per cent in the first year, rising to about one-third of one per cent in the last year) would relate the accrued revenues of the CBC derived from public grants to the growth of population and the growth of the Canadian economy. It was urged with emphasis that the method should be applied by statute for the five-year period. By that time, the government should have given careful consideration to such a statute or to some similar basis for succeeding years. It was a sound system that would have stabilized the CBC's operating finances. Unfortunately the incoming government paid not the slightest attention to this or to any other of the carefully thought out proposals of the Fowler Commission but set out on an entirely new course of its own, one contrary to every recommendation that had preceded it.

Thorough and comprehensive as the work of the Fowler Commission was, its report nevertheless contained some recommendations that were debatable. It recommended that no governor should be immediately eligible for reappointment until one year following the expiry of his term of office. This would have meant a constantly rotating board of very largely inexperienced persons, who would have been little

more than initiated into the intricacies of the job when they would have to be replaced by another inexperienced group. There are not enough people of sufficient calibre available with enough experience to do this. Also, the Commission was unrealistic both as to the term of service and the salaries of the two chief executives. The Commission definitely overrated the capacity of prospective board members and underrated the complexities of the job.

A second questionable suggestion was that, in the matter of coverage of its own stations, the CBC should content itself with the status quo. It said:

Subject to certain specific needs for the establishment of new CBC stations to achieve a desirable extension of coverage, and subject also to the possibility that as Canada grows the CBC should compete for advantageous commercial opportunities as they appear, we feel that the present pattern of station ownership is a generally satisfactory one and should not be greatly changed in the foreseeable future.

A few pages later the Report stated: "There is no thought that the present pattern of CBC owned and operated stations should be frozen and remain static," and went on to suggest that as Canada grows, and as the CBC can present specific plans for new television stations to be operated on a profit basis, the CBC should not be excluded from competing for them. Significantly, every addition to CBC television-transmission facilities made or proposed since then has not been based on economic factors but primarily on the need for giving local and national expression to the several communities concerned.

Though station and not network operation is by far the most profitable end of broadcasting, as emphasized by the Commission, and though the CBC was strongly urged to put forth more strenuous efforts in seeking additional commercial business, even to the extent of going after local radio spots, additions to its owned and operated stations were not encouraged by the Commission, except where no one else could afford to build or where some very improbable commercial opportunity developed.

But the third—and in some respects the most debatable—recommendation of Robert Fowler and his colleagues had to do with commercial policy. The Massey Commission recommended a restrained approach to commercials—a continuation of the policy that had been

followed since 1937. The Fowler Commission, on the other hand, recommended 'greater vigour in commercial activities. . . . There is no longer any justification for the CBC voluntarily refraining from accepting and seeking local advertising on its radio stations—competition should be open and vigorous.' But in spite of this admonition, the Commission was cagey. While urging intensification of sales efforts it seemed to have reservations and added: "We should guard against the impression that we are recommending some abandonment of CBC policies or the sudden expansion of its commercial activities. . . . We have no desire to see the CBC become 'more commercial' or to have its program production slanted to attract greater advertising support."

Nevertheless there were reasons for the Commission's recommendation regarding commercials. Private broadcasters told the Commission that they no longer feared CBC competition, rather that they welcomed it. Fowler believed the CBC could do more commercially without adversely impairing its national service. However, it is doubtful if the Commission fully understood all the implications of an intensified commercial policy—that, carried to its logical conclusion, such a policy meant little short of a new orientation, much more than the mere addition of a few competent salesmen to the staff. It meant a subtle change in the approach of both administrative and production staffs to commercial programs. The salability of programs now became a prime consideration, and the thinking of the program staff consciously or unconsciously, but inevitably, was directed very largely to the production of salable programs. This was particularly so under the peculiar circumstances associated with Canadian television whereby the CBC sought to recover a substantial part of the production costs of network programs.

In radio up to the early fifties, commercial programs were produced mainly, though not exclusively, by sponsors through their agencies. The CBC Commercial Department, in addition to being a sales and service organization, was also a buffer between sponsors or their agencies and the CBC Program Department. When television arrived, commercial program production reverted to the networks, both in Canada and in the United States. The expensiveness of television in studios, equipment, and staff put such facilities beyond the reach of most agencies, particularly in Canada. Closer co-ordination of production staff and facilities became necessary. There was a period between 1953 and 1956 during which the CBC television production staff was striving hard to master the art and trying to find its feet. The Commercial

Department bridged that important transitional period. It had to satisfy sponsors with many films or imported programs until the Production Department had gained in understanding and efficiency and had produced something to sell.

As soon as this condition was met, the Commercial Department was merged with the Program Department as a sales division and ceased to exist any longer as a unit. Program executives assumed direct responsibility for meeting the steadily expanding monthly sales targets. Program producers and executives became directly exposed to the demands and pressures of agencies and sponsors. There has undoubtedly been a major slide toward commercialism within the CBC not with radio, but with television. The compelling drive for expansion of facilities to answer the incessant demands from areas not yet served, and the urgent need for money to keep the ever-expanding machine going, has brought a high degree of concentration on commercials, a condition extremely difficult to resist. The Fowler recommendation sparked this intensified drive and was notably reinforced by the specific recommendation of the Parliamentary Committee of 1959 which said: "Your Committee is of the opinion that increased efforts should be made to ensure the emergence of vigorous commercial policies."

Today the CBC's sales organization, though small, is intelligent, alert, and aggressive, missing few opportunities to implement its instructions. It has adopted all the paraphernalia of big business and thrives on charts, curves, and sales targets, a system of sales incentives, and finally commissions to all salesmen exceeding set targets which vary for the several departments. But it lacks centralized direction.

The emergence of second television stations and a second network in 1961 has also intensified the drive for commercial sponsorship on both English and French networks. On the latter, some programs have assumed some highly objectionable forms, which one writer describes as "junk" (*Maclean's*, February 23, 1963). More and more, the thinking has had to be what will please sponsors, what will get maximum audiences, what will sell. American networks long ago shunted minority programs into the least desirable times. The CBC has been, is being, and will be compelled to do the same, whether it wants to or not, as long as the present uncertain and even contradictory broadcasting policies are pursued in Canada. Commercial pressures are natural, persistent, inexorable, and those who have never been in the business have no idea how insidious and compelling they can be in the face of tightening budgets. As budgets tighten and production costs must be

reduced, there is less opportunity for experimentation, for new formulae, for the freer play of the most creative brains, for the development of new talent. The sure and certain pattern is stuck to, performers become restricted more and more to the experienced professionals who need less instruction and fewer rehearsals. As the talent pool grows smaller, the same names, the same faces, and the same voices multiply to the point of boredom, if not annoyance. The guests on panel shows are confined to tiny groups whose members appear and reappear with monotonous regularity.

CHAPTER 22

NATIONAL PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION

One of the most persistent and unsatisfactory aspects of CBC operations from 1936 to the present has been the inequalities in the distribution of its national service, both radio and television. The President of the CBC before the Canadian Club of Ottawa, December 5, 1962, said:

of all the factors of complexity, CBC's dependence on private stations for the distribution of its programs is the most basic. Because it does not have enough stations of its own, it must depend on privately owned affiliated stations for the transmission of the national service in most areas of Canada. This often creates a direct conflict of interest, between public service and commercial necessity. The system has always created unequal responsibilities as between private stations affiliated with the CBC, and independent private stations.

The Fowler Commission noted that from the year 1932, through successive changes in legislation and administration, the avowed purpose of nationalization had been to supply Canadian listeners with a "national broadcasting service." Although various generalized statements have been made regarding this service, nowhere was it ever defined, either qualitatively or quantitatively. The Commission sought clarification from the CBC as to its responsibilities, or what is sometimes called its "mandate." The gist of the Corporation's definition was (Royal Commission on Broadcasting, 1957, p. 28):

The CBC was created by Parliament to provide Canadians with a broadcasting service suited to the particular needs of their country. Its programs, principally Canadian in origin, have been concerned with entertainment and relaxation; the imparting of objective news and information; the vitality of the nation's democratic institutions and values—free speech, the rule of law, respect for the individual, freedom of worship, freedom of inquiry, the health of the nation, the efficiency of its economy and its good repute abroad; sport; the education of youth; and the creative arts, which are the lifeblood of its programs.

Its organization has been developed on a regional basis in order to tap for program material, the thoughts, aspirations, traditions, and the art of individuals, groups and communities in every part of the country.

Its regional policy is a three-way system of serving the particular needs of the people of the regions in such fields as schools, news, farm, and fisheries broadcasts; of fostering and sustaining talent in the fields of music, drama, and writing on a basis of professional competence in all regions.

Believing that the citizen of a free society is a complex of interests, tastes, and capacities for enjoyment, the starting point in the production of CBC programs is the conception of listeners and viewers as individuals, not as a mass.

The program spectrum of the CBC is made as broad as possible in order that tastes already formed may be sustained and new ones encouraged. The CBC cannot at any one time provide a range of programs wide enough for all listeners and viewers to find their choice immediately. But it can and does provide such a range during the course of the day, the week, or the month.

The CBC attempts to serve the largest number of listeners at the times most suitable for them by carefully devised patterns of scheduling and by its system of regional broadcasting; farmers at noon, housewives in the afternoon, children in the late afternoon, families in the early evenings, adults in the late evening.

In the furtherance of Canadian arts, music, drama, ballet, design—the CBC has set its sights at the international level. It is aware of its constant duty not only to maintain recognized standards, but to create new ones in keeping with the nation's growth and with scientific, artistic, and social advances.

The Fowler Commission next sought to ascertain how completely this national service was distributed across the nation, keeping in mind that the CBC, with its limited number of stations, was dependent entirely in some areas, and partially in certain areas, on the co-operation of privately owned stations. The method of assuring distribution on affiliated private radio stations was through "reserved-time" periods, during which network affiliates agreed to carry a certain cross-section of CBC-sustaining public-service programs. With radio, reserved time was confined entirely to non-commercial network radio programs.

The total operating hours on each of the CBC radio networks, the hours of national-service programming, and the reserved time required by the CBC from affiliated private stations to broadcast its national service are shown in the following table from the Fowler Report covering a sample week (January 15 to 21, 1956):

TOTAL HOURS PER WEEK			
<i>Network</i>	<i>Network Operating Hours</i>	<i>National Service Type Programs</i>	<i>Reserved Time</i>
Trans-Canada	113 hours 40 minutes	78 hours 45 minutes	8½ to 9 hours
Dominion	30 hours 35 minutes	17 hours 55 minutes ¹	5 to 5¼ hours
French	110 hours 35 minutes	76 hours 45 minutes	21 hours

On the Trans-Canada Radio Network, the maximum time required by the CBC from affiliated stations at the time was 1¼ hours daily, less than 12 per cent of the time occupied by national-service programs. On the Dominion Network, reserved time averaged only 45 minutes daily.

The Fowler Commission did not indicate what it thought the national radio and television service should consist of, nor the length of time it should occupy daily. But it did say most definitely that consideration of this matter should be one of the first and most important tasks of a Board of Broadcast Governors.

We do suggest that sixteen hours a day is too long and four hours [a day] too short, that not only national but also regional needs should be met in the new national service, and that national or regional as the case may be, programming should be as diversified

¹The Dominion network was an evening operation only. Affiliates did not desire daytime commercial networks, since local and national spot business was more profitable.

and designed to satisfy as many different tastes [minority as well as majority] as economics and practicability may allow.

Reserved time required from radio-network affiliates was clearly much less than the Fowler Commission thought it should be. Yet up to four years later—by 1960-61—reserved time on the Trans-Canada network was increased very little, to only 13½ hours weekly, varying slightly in the several regions. During the following season, reserved time was even less than in 1960-61, 11½ hours minimum up to 14 hours maximum, depending on various options available to stations. Of this total, about one-quarter was on Sunday afternoon, and the balance during evening hours, when television was most competitive and evening time on most radio stations had become very difficult to sell because of the small audiences. Affiliated stations had virtually all their entire daytime and early-evening periods free of any obligation to carry CBC programs, while the CBC helped them fill the later evening hours, now so notoriously difficult to sell either nationally or locally. For years, the CBC was regarded by many private affiliates as little more than a convenience, and the Corporation made no real effort to increase its decidedly minimal amount of reserved time.

INCREASES IN "RESERVED" TIME

When the 1962-63 season opened in October, the CBC finally dropped the Dominion Network, a move recommended at least seven years before by several within the CBC and also by the Fowler Commission. As a result of the consolidation of the Trans-Canada and Dominion Networks, twenty-seven Dominion affiliates were dropped, and twenty-two private stations, some of them from the Dominion network, were added to the new unified national radio network, making a total of fifty-four private and seventeen CBC stations. Many of the additions overrode interference and ensured better reception. No screams were heard from those stations that ceased to have network affiliation. Commercial network programs of any account had long since gone, and the sustaining service used by most of the private stations had been very limited, so that being dropped made very little or no difference to many of them.

At last the CBC realized it had dallied too long over "reserved" time, and if reserved time was to be increased, the time had now arrived. In a national canvass of stations, it sought thirty-nine hours of reserved or

compulsory time weekly for its non-commercial, national radio service, but met such opposition that in the end it settled for a package of twenty-four hours and thirty minutes. Of this, five hours were on Sunday, and the balance across the week. Of the latter, more than two-thirds was evening time almost entirely after 8:00 P.M., when television audiences are largest and radio audiences smallest. Once more there was minimal interference by the CBC with the most salable time on private stations. The new network arrangements were made contractual with specific obligations; these have been more than adhered to by most of the small stations, but by few affiliates in larger centres.

Though the new reserved-time periods did not bear any imprint of being an imposition on private affiliates, their acceptance was strenuously opposed by some eight or ten radio stations. Some objected to joining the network at all, and they carried their objections to the Board of Broadcast Governors which overruled them. At least one operator offered to build for the CBC a fully equipped small local transmitter in his community and care for its technical operation if the CBC would leave him alone to pursue his local activities without interruptions from the network. It was said there were others that were prepared to do the same.

In fairness, it should be said that the objections of affiliates were not confined to giving up the time requested. They were prepared to give almost any amount of evening time after 8:00 P.M., which they could not sell owing to the competition of television. But it was strongly contended that several of these obligatory programs—"Farm Forum," "Citizen's Forum," and "CBC Wednesday Night"—had grown hoary with age, that their formats were antiquated, their audiences minimal, and that to carry them was only to invite loss of audience to competitors, who rarely failed to put the most popular programs they could muster against them. This contention was so vigorously urged that the CBC exerted an effort to face-lift several of these long-standing educational and cultural features. This was difficult, for what the CBC regarded as a face-lifting was not by any means what many affiliated stations envisaged. Nevertheless, there seems little doubt that the continued affiliation of several stations may very well depend on the CBC's degree of success in lightening these parts of the reserved-time schedule.

What happens to the remainder of the national radio service of the CBC? Some of it is broadcast by network affiliates; much of it is not. Most of these programs go out only over stations owned and operated by the Corporation—sixteen radio stations out of seventy-one on the

English network, and four stations out of twenty-four on the French network. The total hours broadcast weekly of CBC radio network programs by Trans-Canada affiliates throughout the twelve-month period from October 1, 1961, to September 30, 1962, averaged twenty-four hours weekly, or three and one-half hours daily, most after 7:30 P.M. In November and December of 1962, after the new reserved-time schedule was established, and more small community stations added to the reorganized national network, the average number of hours of CBC service broadcast rose to thirty-one. But there were great variations. Ten of the smallest stations averaged forty-five and one-half hours weekly of the CBC national service; ten at the other end of the scale averaged twenty-two and three-quarters, exactly one-half the hours broadcast by the smaller stations, and less than reserved-time requirements. Five stations in the last group averaged four hours less than reserved time. One year later, in January of 1963, the ten smaller stations had increased their hours of CBC programming by more than one hour—to an average of forty-six and one-half hours weekly—while the ten at the other end of the scale had reduced theirs by one hour. Moreover, the five lowest reduced theirs by two hours and were averaging six hours less than reserved time.

CBC'S RADIO COVERAGE

Although the Annual Report of the CBC indicated that CBC-owned stations are able to reach 70 per cent of Canadian listeners, this is a most optimistic figure. Sixty per cent or considerably less would be much nearer; the addition of so many affiliates, indicated as advisable by the CBC Engineering Department when the present network was reorganized, if listeners were to be assured of a clear signal, was the surest evidence of this. Many CBC program officers travelling across Canada would confirm this. The apparent indifference of the CBC for many years to the setting and observance of a more substantial amount of reserved time for radio affiliates is difficult to understand, particularly in light of the Fowler Report. It was one of the points that troubled the Fowler Commission, and it led to some of its most searching questions and specific recommendations regarding the better distribution of CBC national service. Indeed, probably as much as anything else, it was at the root of the recommendation of the Fowler Commission for a Board of Broadcast Governors.



The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, 1932-36. Left to right:
Thomas Maher, Lt.-Col. Arthur Steel, Col. R. Landry, and Hector Charlesworth
(Allen Sangster, Ashley & Crippen)



Sir Henry Thornton



Dr. Augustin Frigon
(CBC)



Graham Spry
(Photo by Karsh of Ottawa)



Gordon Olive



E. L. Bushnell
(Photo by Page Toles)



Leonard W. Brockington, Q.C.
(Photo by Karsh of Ottawa)



Alan Plaunt



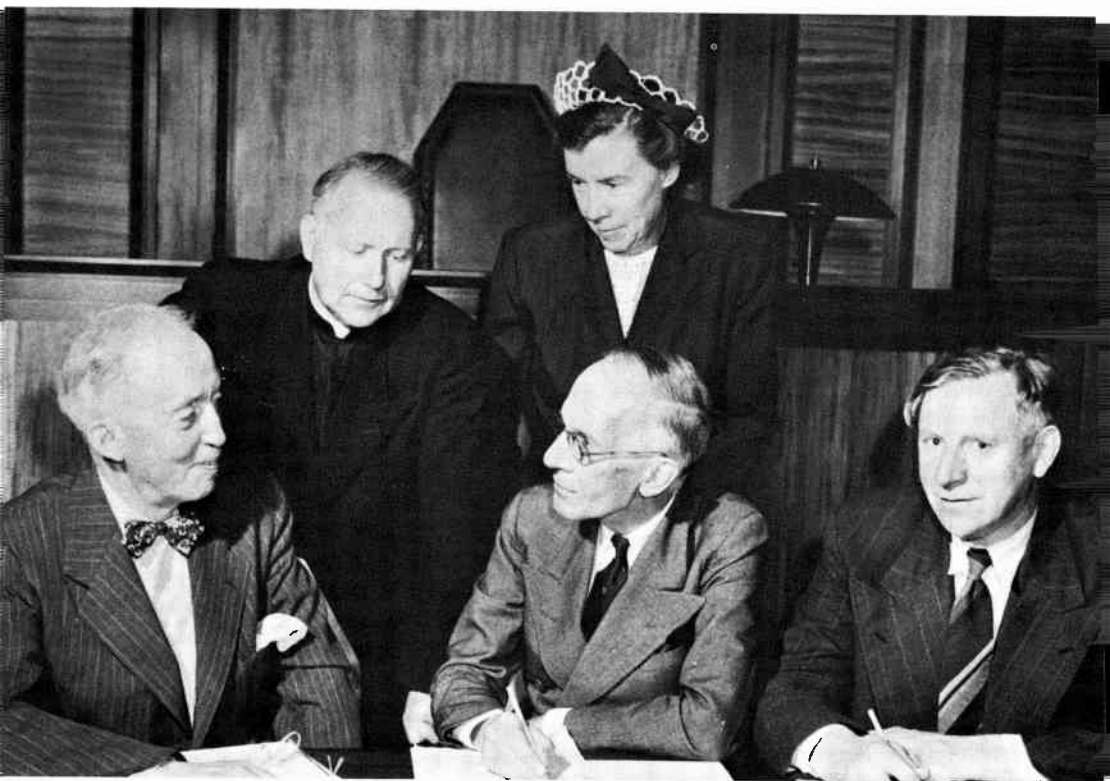
W. E. Gladstone Murray
(CBC)



Robert M. Fowler
(Photo by Gaby)



Donald Mawson
(Ken Bell Photographers)



Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, (Massey Commission) 1949-51. Left to right: Arthur Surveyor, Most Rev. Georges-Henri Levesque, Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey, Hilda Neatby, Norman A. M. Mackenzie
(Capital Press Photographers)

Conceivably the desperate pressures and allurements of television temporarily blinded the CBC to the virtues of radio. There were many who thought radio had had its day. In any event, radio affiliates, except for a few programs, were left to go pretty much their own way, and this suited their needs. They could help themselves to CBC programs, or they could practically leave them alone. The result was that, though the CBC was able to say that 97 per cent of Canadians could receive CBC radio programs, more than half or more of its national service is not received – and cannot be received – by more than one-third of Canada's population, because the CBC has no stations to broadcast these programs. The CBC has become increasingly dependent on the little stations for distribution, and the small stations have been using an increasing percentage of CBC national service. Their mutual interests are increasing rather than decreasing.

The facts are that radio's place in the whole broad field of communications is increasingly uncertain for many small private stations. Until 1955, radio-network revenue and service in Canada remained fairly constant. Then commercial radio networks – particularly during prime evening time – suddenly succumbed to the pressures of television. High rating commercial programs disappeared, as did many of the stars associated with them. The broadcasting beaches were strewn with the talent that could not adapt to television. Between the end of the 'forties and the early 'sixties, radio network programs in the United States dropped to less than one-half what they had been, and that was largely news, sports, and the odd special program.

With this shift has come a change in listening patterns. With evening audiences now a mere fraction of what they were – and these split among more and more stations – radio has increasingly become a day-time companion, reaching its peak audiences with the morning news and weather; rising again at noon and at supper hour with the substantial, though much smaller, audiences than in the morning. The many individual half-hour and quarter-hour programs of the Golden Era have disappeared. On most private stations, their places have been taken by a continuous stream of recorded music interspersed with musical commercial spots or, when the time is not sold, by service spots for various community projects. This is what constitutes a large part of the so-called "community service" of many private stations. Most of the time, on most stations, radio has quite definitely become the "atmospheric bill board" foreseen by Sir Henry Thornton nearly forty years ago. News, sports, weather, and recorded music continue to be the

dependable, never-ending menu of most private stations, just as they were twenty years ago, or ten years ago, only more so. The emphasis is more and more on cultivating local friendships and local support, not forgetting the local politicians of all parties. The truth is that private radio in Canada is barely distinguishable from most private radio in the United States. The prospects of it becoming very different are not good, and no separation of the administration of private stations as an independent unit under a special board will make the slightest difference.

With multiplied stations dividing the limited audiences left to radio, evening audiences have become minimal, often inadequate to justify any longer such expensive programs as the CBC Symphony. Nevertheless the CBC, in spite of the general trend—observed by a CBC program officer, Bruce Raymond, in *Mass Media in Canada*—has adhered to its original purpose of providing a national and comprehensive national radio service for a wide variety of tastes and interests.

IRREGULAR TV COVERAGE

When television schedules are examined, a quite different picture is found. The policy that served well the needs of industry in the receiver and construction fields fell short on equitable and complete distribution of the very product it was designed to create—or the most effective development and presentation of talent from many diverse areas.

By January 1, 1962, the population of Canada was estimated to be 18,435,000. Of these, 16,877,000 (or 92 per cent) were said to be within the *A* or *B* service areas of all Canadian television stations, and 91 per cent within the same contours of CBC network stations (public plus private). The *A* service area is that within which television reception is considered excellent; the *B* service area is that within which reception is good. Obviously reception is affected by topography, height of aerials, and similar factors. (These and other coverage statistics are from *CBC, Book of Facts* [1962] prepared by CBC Research and Statistics.) Of the total population, those claiming French as their mother tongue totalled 5,009,000 or 30 per cent. Of the remaining 11,868,000, a little over 85 per cent claimed English as their mother tongue, while the remainder (1,745,000) were of diverse origins. For the purposes of discussion here, all others than those claiming French as their mother tongue have been combined. Finally, 25 per cent of the total population was rural.

The English-language basic television network of the CBC (including

private affiliates) reached 76 per cent of the total population of Canada and included 92 per cent of all those whose mother tongue was other than French. The French basic network programs served 92 per cent of all those whose mother tongue was French. Of these 90 per cent were residents of Quebec, 5.5 per cent of Ontario, 4 per cent of New Brunswick. While the English basic network reached 85 per cent of all urban viewers (other than French), its coverage among rural viewers (other than French) was limited to 54 per cent. The French basic network did much better for most French rural viewers, reaching 90 per cent of the rural population of Quebec.

Carrying this a step further, an examination of the coverage of stations owned and operated by the CBC, and capable of distributing the entire national network service of the Corporation, showed that such CBC stations reached only 52 per cent of the entire population, and 60 per cent of those whose mother tongues were other than French. Similarly, CBC-owned French-language stations reached 69 per cent of all those whose mother tongue was French.

Since CBC-owned and operated stations are located almost entirely in the large population centres, rural viewers were again on the short end of total CBC program reception. This same situation pertains, but in slightly more exaggerated form, with the CTV network, which has been confined to eight of the largest cities. The relative percentages of the total—urban, rural population within the *A* and *B* coverage areas of CBC-owned and operated stations—is shown in the following tabulation, as at January 1, 1962:

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>
All Canada	52	63	27
Newfoundland	9	16	4
Prince Edward Island	—	—	—
Nova Scotia	53 ¹	61	42
New Brunswick	20 ²	22	18
Quebec	57	66	33
Ontario	60	68	33
Manitoba	61	85	19
Saskatchewan	—	—	—
Alberta	38 ³	44	26 ³
British Columbia	75	86	40

² CBC French-language stations.

³ Since these figures were compiled, satellites have been added in Grande Prairie and Peace River which have raised the percentage of rural viewers in Alberta reached by CBC-owned stations to 35.

It will be seen that CBC-owned and operated television stations reached no viewers in Prince Edward Island or Saskatchewan, and only 9 per cent of those in Newfoundland. Up to the end of 1961, the same situation held true in Alberta. While 63 per cent of urban viewers could receive the entire CBC national service, only 27 per cent of rural viewers could do so. Nevertheless, all participate on the same basis in the provision of public funds to support CBC operations. This does not suggest that in many of these areas viewers are deprived of television programs. They receive those CBC network programs that are broadcast by private stations as well as those produced or purchased by local private stations. But the CBC service is far from complete and will, in all probability, become even less complete as the system now operates, even though the CBC finally obtained licences for stations in Quebec City and St. John's.

TELEVISION "OPTION" TIME

The significance of this becomes more apparent when CBC reserved or obligatory time is examined. In television, this is known as "option time," and it sounds slightly less authoritarian. There is one very important difference between "reserved" time on the radio network and "option" time on the television network. The former includes no commercial programs. The latter includes almost all commercial programs on the network, and these actually constitute about 40 per cent or more of total option time. More than 90 per cent of television-network commercial programs fall within option time.

On the English CBC television network, option or reserved time is and has been thirty-six to thirty-seven hours weekly, which means that affiliated stations undertake to broadcast an agreed quota of programs or those designated by the BBG as compulsory. During a typical week (January 14 to 20, 1962) option time was thirty-seven hours. Of this, seventeen hours (fifteen³ evening hours and two on Saturday afternoon) were occupied by network commercial programs.

³ Twenty-three commercial programs (thirteen of them originating in the United States) made up the fifteen hours of evening commercials. One additional hour of commercials in the evening outside option time, and one additional half-hour in the late afternoon, made a total of eighteen and one-half hours of commercial programs during that week.

In the same week, there were twenty hours of non-commercial programs within "option" time. But the market demand for premium evening commercial time was such that, out of twenty-one hours supplied by the CBC to network affiliates between 7:30 and 11:15 P.M., only five and three-quarter hours of this time during the week was non-commercial. The national news at 11:00 P.M., in option time, accounted for a little over one and one-quarter hours, leaving a total of four and one-half hours for other non-commercial programs during peak viewing hours. In other words, the CBC's demands for evening time in which to broadcast programs other than commercial ones was limited to 16 per cent of the time available between 7:00 and 11:00 P.M.

Option time prior to 6:00 P.M., during the same week, totalled fourteen and one-half hours. Two hours of this on Saturday afternoon were sponsored sports. Of the remaining twelve and one-half hours in the afternoon option time, six were made up of children's programs between 4:30 P.M. and 6:00 P.M., and one other was a national school program. "Open House," a women's program, accounted for two and one-half hours, and there were six other programs, including "Country Calendar" and "Citizen's Forum," making up three hours. This was an average of one hour and forty-five minutes daily of non-commercial programs in afternoon option time, surely a moderate time-requirement from affiliates during their less salable afternoon hours, and especially as they were free to place a variety of commercial spots before and after them.

Total broadcast time was eighty-four hours, so there remained fifty in the week. Of the remainder, thirty hours of the most salable time—from approximately 12:00 noon to 2:30 P.M., 6:00 to 7:30 P.M., and 11:15 to 12:00 midnight—were left free to affiliates for local sponsorship. This gave all stations, including those of the CBC, time to identify themselves with the community and to expose local talent. Even CBC stations regard a certain amount of such local programming time as very important.

COMMERCIALIZED PRIME TIME

Thus there were left seventeen to twenty hours of additional network programs, mostly produced by the CBC, which were available to member stations if they chose to broadcast them. The additional time over and above option time actually used by private affiliated television stations averaged four hours each week, though there were naturally variations

among stations. This meant that the total CBC-network programs, broadcast on the average by network affiliates, was slightly over forty hours, of which eighteen and one-half were commercial and twenty-one and three-quarters (or three hours and ten minutes daily) were non-commercial. Of this, an average of thirty-seven minutes daily outside national news was in prime evening time.

The distribution of the CBC's television schedule of national service by affiliates is far more complete and equitable than with radio. The expansion of option time, and the inclusion of most commercials, has assured this. The best commercial programs help to attract and hold larger audiences, whose receptivity to public-service programs of importance is thereby enhanced. Moreover, the inclusion of commercial programs—with their demands for finish, even sophistication, within CBC schedules—also serves as a powerful stimulant in the production of contiguous or nearby non-commercial programs. Commercial programs help to provide a better-balanced schedule—at less cost than is obtainable anywhere else in North America.⁴ That the choicest evening hours on the CBC network are out of balance, however, is hardly beyond question. This is the result of an inexorable glacial pressure of agencies for choice time, sometimes to match time with American program schedules, and—above all—for funds to keep the vast organization going. Parliament's instructions, through its recent committees on broadcasting, have been to seek and find money from advertisers, and evening time is the most in demand.

It may be that a reasonable balance on the CBC's network has been struck between the time necessary for local programming, or for community identification, and what can best be given over to national programs. But creative regional programming still has much to offer, and there is little or no evidence to show that it can be delivered by more than a very few private stations under the present system, and then but spasmodically. The presentation of local personalities and events is vital to the existence of the small station, but this seldom rises above the status of animated radio, and is a very simple matter compared with the vastly more complicated and demanding problem of programming on

⁴ An increasing percentage of network programs on American networks are "repeats." This is particularly so on summer schedules, which broadcast many re-runs of winter programs, replacing what in earlier TV days was a time for experimentation. The use of "repeats" has been less practised in Canada until this year when their frequency has been stepped up, sure evidence of a strained budget.

the regional, much less the larger national, stage. Here local appeal ceases, and the demand is for ideas, research, perfection, polish, and sophistication which it is rarely possible to attain within the limitations of small units. The elements of interest, entertainment, and presentation are paramount. The failure of smaller stations to meet these demands is not necessarily any measure of reluctance or incapacity. National television network broadcasting, on the scale that will and should be increasingly demanded, is one of the most exacting and difficult jobs in the world. It requires adequate studios and much expensive equipment, highly trained production staffs, both program and technical, and the best writers obtainable, extensive research, and testing facilities presently far, far too inadequate in this country, and that association of minds through consultation and discussion that secures the best from all participating elements.

With rare exceptions this is utterly beyond the capacity and financial means of local broadcasters. It demands approaching programs from the standpoint of art rather than industry, sometimes at the price of economy. Much of it must set not only national but international standards. It must be imaginative and far-ranging. And the advent of colour television must make all this still more exacting.

The work of the CBC has really only begun. Scarcely more than a start has been made in the demanding task of communicating. Commercials in the peak evening time must be reduced if a better balance is to be maintained. An average of forty-five minutes daily, including news, of public service broadcasting is scant fare during prime evening time. Morning and afternoon time will gradually have to be filled. These are the major problems Canadian television must face. How can this be done?

CHAPTER 23

SCARCITY OF LOCAL LIVE PROGRAMMING

In the United States during the middle 'forties, there was a great deal of discussion regarding the imbalance of radio programming, the function of sustaining programs, and the responsibilities of holders of broadcast licences to their communities and the nation. This reached such a pitch that the Federal Communications Commission at Washington, which up to this point had been very reticent about becoming involved in anything more than channel-allocation and over-all regulation, was obliged to show some definite interest in programming. The pushing of public-service programs into undesirable time periods, the refusal of some stations to carry them, and numerous other aspects of the problem were studied and reported. On March 7, 1946, a Blue Book was published called *Public Service Responsibilities of Broadcast Licensees* which discussed these issues.

The interest aroused by the agitation in the United States contributed in part to a decision by the CBC Board of Governors to study the programming of all privately owned stations in Canada. The findings appeared as *Report of Performance 1949-50: Analysis of Activities of Canadian Broadcasting Stations Based on the Week Ending October 22, 1949*.

The survey disclosed that from 75 to 90 per cent of the programming of private stations consisted of either recorded or CBC-network programs, varying with one or other of six groups into which they were classified. The over-all total was 80 per cent. Out of an average of sixteen hours and twenty minutes daily on the air for 119 stations, ten

hours were recorded, three hours were network, while three hours and twenty minutes were locally produced live programs.

The time devoted by private stations to local live programming was broken down into artistic talent, community activities, talks and discussions, church and devotional periods, education, agriculture, sports, news, and "other" programs. The percentage breakdown of live talent under each of these groupings is shown in the Appendix to this chapter calculated to the nearest whole number.

Of the hours of local live programming produced by private stations, 57 to 67 per cent consisted of news, sports, and devotional periods, all the simplest to produce, requiring very little talent outside the regular salaried staff of news and sports announcers, plus church and similar pick-ups. In the case of French Network Supplementaries, such programs occupied only 45 per cent. Thus, out of an average of three hours and twenty minutes daily of live programming, one hour and fifteen minutes was devoted to agriculture, particular community activities, local talks, educational, or other local live programming. Most stations, of course, regarded their entire schedule as community service. The least time so devoted to specific community activities was among non-network stations in main cities, which were much more in the nature of regional stations.

The survey sought to ascertain the proportions of talent time for local live shows that was paid and unpaid, as well as that put on by station staffs themselves. These results are also shown in the Appendix.

CBC'S FINDINGS CONFIRMED

In the main the findings of the CBC Board of Governors were confirmed by the Fowler Commission which conducted an exhaustive quantitative analysis of station performance during the week of January 15-21, 1956. Though the station groupings were not identical with those of the CBC's survey, the findings were remarkably close. Of all programming by private radio stations during the sample week surveyed by the Fowler Commission more than 60 per cent consisted of recordings, while 22 per cent was supplied from networks. Less than 18 per cent originated as "local live" compared with an over-all average of 20 per cent in the CBC survey.

The Fowler Report showed that news and weather, sports and devotional programs accounted for 73 per cent of the local live programming

of Trans-Canada affiliates, 77 per cent of Dominion affiliates, 75 per cent of English unaffiliated stations, and 76 per cent of all English stations, slightly higher percentages than shown in the CBC survey. The same categories accounted for 75 per cent of the live programming of French network affiliates, 78 per cent on French unaffiliated stations, and 76 per cent on all French private stations. Local live drama was virtually non-existent. Community programs ("Canadian Activities and Heritage" was the classification) constituted one per cent, agriculture and fisheries three per cent, while children's programs made up less than two per cent of the time of all local live productions (Royal Commission on Broadcasting, 1957, Basic Tables, pp. 94-101).

The Fowler Commission reported: "In general private radio station operators have done extremely well financially. It is plain that generally, whatever the disabilities under which private broadcasters labour, they are not difficulties of financial distress and lack of profits." Regarding talent encouragement, it had this to say: "With some notable exceptions, the private stations have done relatively little to encourage Canadian talent. An examination of the financial position of these stations reveals beyond any doubt, that many could do more than they have done and yet be leagues away from anything resembling bankruptcy."

In October of 1964, the Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA), in its presentation before the Broadcasting Committee, examined the schedules of six Toronto private unaffiliated radio stations. According to their statement, 77.68 per cent of the total time of these stations was devoted to music, almost entirely recorded. News and music accounted for 91.7 per cent of their time. Less than one per cent was serious music. Drama, variety, youth education, agriculture and fisheries, political talks and controversy, social and human relations, nature and science, all put together totalled 1.18 per cent of their scheduled time. The same authority estimated that while total music on CBC radio stations had grown from 40.8 per cent in 1956 to 55.44 per cent in 1964, the percentage of serious music had dropped from 16.2 per cent to 8.28 per cent. Drama during the same period on CBC radio stations, the presentation said, had dropped from 11 per cent to 1.93 per cent.

However, it would be unfair to condemn all private stations. There have been many, and particularly so years ago, that made genuine efforts to encourage talent and started many artists on their careers. With others, profits have been almost the only consideration.

PRIVATE STATIONS AIDED

The Canadian Association of Broadcasters has long claimed that private broadcasting is one of the few non-subsidized industries. In 1961, before the last Parliamentary Committee, it said, "The private broadcasting industry is required to pay for the accomplishment of certain public policy objectives, yet pays all normal taxation and receives no subsidies!" The facts, of course, are that private stations are heavily subsidized. Almost every radio station licensed between 1937 and 1958 sought basic affiliation with the CBC network. If that could not be secured, they next sought supplementary status, which meant that transmission circuits were brought directly into their studios so that they, as well as the affiliates, could share in exceptional events and occasionally in commercial programs, if not in the regular network service, at no additional cost. In 1962, there were 80 private radio stations so affiliated. The entire cost of providing trunk transmission and local lines to these stations was paid for out of public funds and averaged more than twenty thousand dollars each annually. No station paid any part of this.

In the same year, there were forty-seven English stations (thirty-one basic and sixteen supplementaries) on the CBC national television network, and four basic and nine supplementary stations on the French network. Of the former, forty-seven were privately owned, and of the latter nine. The cost of furnishing microwave service to each of the English network stations was ninety thousand dollars, and to each of the French stations \$77,770. Again, the entire amount was paid out of public funds. Transmission circuits alone cost the CBC \$894,000 every month in 1964-65.

This did not take into consideration the cost of programs supplied by the CBC to stations as part of its responsibility. In 1961-62, the CBC spent \$1,492,000 on commercial radio network programming and \$16,219,000 on commercial television programming. In 1964-65 these totalled \$20,403,000. Only a small part was recovered from sponsors.

During the year 1961-62, the CBC spent \$11,610,000 on non-commercial radio programs, and \$38,150,000 on non-commercial television programs, which were available to all affiliates. During the first three months of the life of most private television stations, up to 85 per cent of their programs were supplied by the CBC without cost to them, and recently supplementary stations on the television networks came in for a pleasant little surprise. When they are not included in a sponsored network program, they nevertheless could broadcast the

program by cutting out the commercials; for this the Corporation has been paying them. It has been estimated that this cost the CBC in the neighbourhood of \$125,000 in 1964.

Between 1937 and 1956, there were complaints with respect to the CBC engaging in commercial broadcasting. Some regarded this as the special preserve of private business, forgetting that even the Aird Commission had anticipated that about one-quarter of the revenues of its proposed nationalized system would come from network commercials. At the Massey Commission hearings, the CBC was characterized by the Canadian Association of Broadcasters as a public corporation that was their commercial rival. Operators of some twenty stations also appeared individually before the Commission to support this and other contentions regarding suggested changes in broadcasting regulations. However, by 1956, when the Fowler Commission held its hearings, the attitude of many private broadcasters had changed, and CAB indicated that it did not object to competition. This change, no doubt, sprang from the certain knowledge gained from experience that CBC competition for commercial revenues was relatively unimportant in the over-all radio picture.

In 1957, a pilot statistical study of broadcasting, possibly inspired by a similar study carried in 1956 by the Fowler Commission, was undertaken by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics (DBS) covering the calendar year 1956, the first such survey undertaken by the Bureau. It was followed by similar but more detailed and highly informative studies for 1957, 1958, 1959, and 1960. The information contained in the reports from 1957 to 1960 inclusive was gathered through the voluntary co-operation of the CBC and private stations on the initiative of DBS itself. No information was divulged in the reports with respect to the operations of any individual station, and there were no ways of identifying the make-up of any single group of private stations.

EARNINGS AND PROFITS

According to DBS figures, the total net advertising revenues (network, national spot, and local) of all seventeen CBC-owned and operated radio stations for the four years 1957 to 1960 was 3.3 per cent of the total net advertising revenues of all Canadian radio stations. In the four years, the CBC's purely local business was .008 per cent of the total local business of all radio stations, while the CBC national spot business was .03

per cent of the total national spot. Private stations accounted for 96.7 per cent of all net advertising radio revenues. This indicated the degree of competition to private stations resulting from CBC commercial activities.

In the Appendix to Chapter 23, there are condensed tables prepared from the studies of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, from 1957 to 1960 inclusive. They show the average net revenue and the average net income after tax of various groups of private radio stations for each of four years. In 1957 and 1958, these groups began with stations having incomes under \$100,000, rising in stages of \$100,000 to half a million dollars, and after that in three stages to \$1,000,000. In the 1959 and 1960 report, the smaller stations were broken down still further. The first groups included those stations with incomes below \$50,000 and then rose in four groups to those with incomes under \$200,000. After that, the DBS followed the pattern set for the two previous years.

The Dominion Bureau of Statistics wrote in its report for 1960:

Only 2.2 per cent of the radio stations failed to report in 1959 and 1.5 per cent in 1960. For these careful estimates were prepared. Most of the stations which failed to report were quite small with the estimated portion of total revenues amounting to only 1.1 per cent in 1959 and .3 per cent in 1960. Responses of television stations was 100 per cent. Non-commercial stations have been excluded.

It will be seen from this that the Bureau reduced the margin of error in these reports to an almost irreducible minimum.

These figures show clearly that small community stations are going increasingly into the red. In 1957 and 1958, when the lowest group included all radio stations with revenues below \$100,000, the averages did not disclose any stations in the red, but by 1959 the average net deficit of seventeen stations with net revenues under \$50,000 was \$7,824. In 1960, fifteen stations in the same group had average deficits of \$4,842, and that year those with deficits were joined by forty-two other stations having net revenues between \$50,000 and \$100,000. The average net deficit of this last group was \$1,207.

In 1959, a good year, those radio stations with net revenues under \$500,000 numbered 160 out of a total of 181 and averaged net income after tax of \$8,780. Sixty-eight per cent of that year's total net income for all private radio stations went to twenty-one stations. In 1960, nearly one-third of all radio stations showed deficits, while average net

earnings of 172 stations out of 193 was \$3,642 after tax. This group of 172 stations divided 24 per cent of the net income (and deficits) among them, while 21 stations with total net revenues in excess of \$500,000 divided 76 per cent of the total net earnings of all stations among them. The percentage of take of the larger stations was steadily and rapidly rising. Moreover, in 1960, nine stations alone absorbed 57 per cent of the total net income after tax of all 193 Canadian radio stations. In 1962, more than 73 per cent of the net earnings of all 198 radio stations reporting went to fourteen stations.

What does this mean in dollars and cents? It means that those stations with net advertising revenues of \$1,000,000 or more had net incomes after tax averaging \$255,896 in 1957, \$266,792 in 1958, \$232,300 in 1959, and in 1960, the bad year, \$189,441. In 1962, six radio stations averaged \$334,642 in net earnings.

The steadily increasing problems of the little radio stations are not the result of an over-all decrease in radio revenue, but the result of intensified competition from additional high-power radio stations and television. During the four years 1957 to 1960, total net advertising revenue of private radio stations in Canada rose by 23 per cent from \$37,255,284 in 1957 to \$46,000,000 in 1960, despite the inroads of television which also rose from \$22,266,000 to \$36,014,000 net during the same period. Over the four years, local advertising accounted for 58 per cent of the net advertising revenues of private radio stations, national spot for over 41 per cent, and network for approximately one-half of one per cent.

A widespread opinion, which still persists, is that ownership of a broadcasting licence is a fairly certain road to prosperity if not affluence. Until a few years ago there was considerable truth to this, but there has been a rapid change in the financial status of many stations since television began, and increased power and dominance of regional private stations. Nevertheless, the demand for licences has continued, and there has been no great shift in the ownership of small stations. This is probably due to the fact that in many of the stations the owners and their families are also the managers and draw salaries which compare very favourably with those of other businessmen in their communities. Nepotism is prevalent. Employees of 193 private radio stations in 1960 averaged \$4,320, or about \$800 less than CBC employees in the same year. In television, the employees of forty-seven private stations in that year averaged \$4,150 compared with a CBC average of \$5,130 (*DBS Radio and Television Broadcasting 1959-60*, p. 19).

A STATION OWNER SPEAKS UP

One of the ablest of small station managers was asked recently, "What's the matter with radio?" "The agencies are what's the matter," he said. "They buy the top twenty and that means regional stations. As television grows and radio budgets are tightened, the little fellow is being squeezed out. A station that doesn't get in the ratings gets cut off."

"The big regional private station," he continued, "is mainly interested in maximum coverage and earnings. The owner is getting more and more of the revenues that properly should help to support the truly community stations, without shouldering any of the responsibility for local service which he cannot deliver any more than the CBC can. Nevertheless, he would like to keep the small local station in business so that the community job will get done, while he makes the money. The big regional stations, not the CBC, are the real competitors of the local community stations. If it were not for the CBC, things would be a lot tougher for us. We are having to depend more and more on strictly local business and less and less on national spot business which is being skimmed off by television and the big regional stations."

High power, greater coverage, lower rates per thousand homes reached is the real battle, and in this the little station is losing out. The pressure on the small community station is inexorable. If it were not for CBC-network service, the position of many small community radio stations would be infinitely worse than it is. There is a limit to the operating economies such stations can effect. In many cases the purely local business is inadequate. *Canadian Sponsor* (July, 1962), a well-known broadcasting journal, said: "In considering new radio applications, the BBG must decide between possible detrimental effects of increased competition as opposed to exploitation of frequency as a national resource and the right of the community as a 'voice.'"

The earnings of private television stations disclose the same general pattern. Television as a much newer medium has not yet settled and is subject to many varied and powerful influences. Duplication of stations and consequent splitting of advertising budgets, community cable systems bringing in numerous imported programs, pay television in the future and other problems make for uncertainty. Nevertheless, the drift in television, as in radio, is definitely to the big station in major cities. Moreover, it seems certain that, as commercial pressures rise, as they inevitably will, the CBC will be faced with increasing difficulties in maintaining its network structure intact, quite apart from any compe-

tion from the new CTV network. But network commercials still are a powerful lure for the network affiliate, and few are in a position to produce constructive audience-building programs of their own. If they were free to buy syndicated films without restriction, most affiliates would give short shrift to the CBC network, commercial or sustaining, or to any other network.

FEES FOR "ARTISTS AND OTHER TALENT"

For these surveys the Bureau of Statistics divided private television into five groups—those with net revenues below \$200,000, to \$400,000, then to \$600,000, between \$600,000 and \$1,000,000, and those over \$1,000,000. The Appendix to Chapter 23 includes a partial breakdown of these figures. It is interesting, in this context, to revert for a moment to the live programming of various groups of private stations, as shown by the CBC survey of 1950 and the Fowler Survey of 1956, particularly to the matter of paid talent. The 1962 Report of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics indicated that payments for "artists and other talent fees"¹ by private stations, radio, and television combined, totalled 5 per cent of total operating expenses, and approximately three-fourths of what was spent for telephones and telegraphs, or for advertising, promotion, and travel. These figures were also representative for other years as well.

The Fowler Commission examined statements from 144 private stations out of 153 then in operation. Of these, one hundred showed expenditures for "artists and other talent fees." The total during 1955, according to their statements, was \$1,797,000. Of this, \$937,000 was billed to sponsors, and \$860,000 was absorbed by the stations themselves. Returns for forty-four stations did not show any expenditures for artists' fees, although it is difficult to believe there were none. The highest expenditure by a single station was \$301,000, of which \$129,000 was billed to sponsors and \$172,000 was paid by the station. Per day the average spent by the 144 stations on "artists and other talent fees" was \$16.50.

In June of 1963, the Bureau of Statistics produced its report covering the year 1961. But in several vital aspects it was radically altered from the studies of the preceding four years. For this report, the Board of

¹ Exactly what is included in this category has never been defined, and even the DBS cannot say. A clearer definition of these expenses is needed.

Broadcast Governors, the Department of Transport, and the Dominion Bureau of Statistics pooled their information. A few additional details of expenditure were added, but this was of little real significance, particularly in view of the manner in which the new details were presented.

REPORTS OF DBS CONFUSED

This 1961 report of the DBS was a model of obfuscation; the definitive clarity of former reports had vanished. It was no longer possible to obtain such a clear—if limited—picture of the broadcasting situation, or to make such breakdowns as shown in the Appendix to this chapter. No longer were the figures for public and private broadcasting segregated. No longer were private radio or television stations so grouped that total revenues, expenditures, taxes, and net income were obtainable by groups. Though the number of radio stations included was 194, the number shown in groupings due to deliberate overlapping was 243, although there was no overlapping up to 1960 while the DBS was producing its reports unaided. Similarly, the overlap among fifty-five television stations raised the total to seventy-three. The totals for such single groups as had appeared previously were now securely hidden. Even in provincial breakdowns, the presentation was distorted, since all CBC figures, whatever their location or their language-origin, appeared under “Ontario,” because the CBC’s head office is in Ottawa.

In previous reports, the numbers of employees of the CBC and the private broadcasting companies were given separately. In 1961, they were lumped together. Likewise the wages. Previously income tax paid or not paid by various groups was shown. For 1961, only a single sum for all stations in Canada could be found. In former years, “artists and other talent fees” paid by sponsors and those paid by stations themselves were shown separately; in 1961, they were indistinguishable. Moreover, the final tabulations for private stations showed some strange results, inconsistent with former years and, as admitted by the DBS, inexplicable.

The reason for this sudden and radical departure from its standardized practice, the DBS said, was to supply protection to the CBC’s figures. To others seeking an explanation, the reply was to protect the figures of the CTV network. Inquiry from the CBC disclosed that the statement of the DBS was partially true. The wholly unsatisfactory nature of the correspondence with the DBS and the CBC was such that the only conclusion one can reach is that the DBS was the victim of pressures from

various sources to scramble its formerly intelligible reports and make them almost completely useless to the general public. Broadcasting in the 1961 Report was treated essentially as an industry, and the figures presented are no better than unintelligible summaries.

In March of 1964, the DBS published its report for 1962, slightly less obscure than that for 1961. But it contained this statement which confirms what was shown above: "Radio stations in the smallest income group suffered an average loss of \$3,200 while those with incomes of one million dollars and over had an average profit of \$334,600 for 1962." The DBS did not disclose whether this was before or after tax, but in view of previous reports, it could reasonably be presumed that these figures were after tax. Examination of the 1962 Report showed that over 73 per cent of the total net operating revenues of 198 radio stations went to fourteen stations. In the case of television, 85 per cent of the net operating revenues of all fifty-eight private stations went to fifteen stations. BBG Annual Reports are almost complete blanks, insofar as information of this nature is concerned. And from the contents of its last Annual Report, it would appear very unlikely that any worthwhile information of this kind will be published by the BBG in the near future. Indeed, students of Canadian broadcasting from outside this country must be dismayed by the array of inconclusive and even contradictory statistics on the subject of broadcasting which emanate from various departments of the same government.

RECAPITULATION

The Report of the Fowler Commission in 1957 ended a twenty-year period which began with the scrapping of the fumbling three-man Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (CRBC) and the substitution of a Board of Governors and a General Manager. The clear and independent stand of the first Board of Governors established policies and standards that have become permanent landmarks of national broadcasting. Efforts to confine the CBC to program production, leaving distribution to the whim and convenience of private stations, was challenged and thwarted by the Board from the very beginning. The dream of high power, unfulfilled under the Bennett regime, was revived, incorporated in a three-year plan of development, and a conspicuous beginning was made with the erection of four 50-kw. stations within two years. The conclusion of the Havana Treaty urged by the Board as soon

as it took office assured to Canada a fairer share of channels for both public and private stations.

But the forwardness of the Corporation, the restriction for a short time of power increases for private stations, and the declarations of Parliamentary Committees that stations had no vested interest in the channels they were licensed to use were not reassuring to private operators, particularly to those in major population centres. This feeling was intensified when the continued affiliation of some of the latter with American networks was questioned by one Parliamentary Committee. Despite marked improvement in the economic position of almost all private stations—and the absence of complaints of interference in their operations by the CBC—there continued an almost constant agitation to shift the control of channel-occupancy and broadcasting regulation to a separate regulatory body. Though smaller operators had few worries, the suggestion that the CBC was a competitor and a danger to private enterprise began to agitate them. Throughout the war, and despite a degree of co-operation between public and private operators never since surpassed, this agitation, fostered by a relatively small group, continued unabated.

In the meantime, the Second World War compelled the cessation of all capital construction. When efforts by the CBC to add to its high-power stations were renewed in 1948, they were short lived. Following the construction of CBW at Winnipeg and the utterly inefficient CBX in Alberta, nothing more happened for sixteen years, by which time local interference, the relative remoteness of CBC transmitters, and the increasing dominance of private stations—resulting from permissions to increase power in the main population centres—made CBC's technical-coverage position relatively worse rather than better; its dependence on private radio stations, too, was increased and not decreased.

Nevertheless, the war clearly demonstrated the essential nature of a national broadcasting system. Had a national network not existed, its creation would have been necessary. The Corporation quickly proved its readiness, competence, and adaptability. Stimulation from the war was immense: reserves of energy and enterprise, which would never otherwise have been called upon, were expended. Radio, which had accumulated listeners for entertainment by the millions, added millions more. It brought voices of new leaders, the noise of battle, the appeal, over thousands of miles, of sounds of people in shops, houses, and underground shelters, working, living, playing, sleeping under the

battlefront conditions. Radio came through the war with a greater sense of responsibility, as well as improved techniques.

The private broadcasters' demands for a separate regulatory body were renewed before the Massey Commission but were totally rejected. The Commission recommended that private stations should continue to be a part of one integrated system, whether aural or visual. There would be no segregation of public and private operations, nor of advertising revenues to private operators, as is the case in Australia. It was considered that the closeness of the United States made the exclusion of commercials from the national system impracticable.

But television loomed on the horizon. In 1949, the CBC was instructed by the government to establish production centres in Toronto and Montreal to provide a program service for its own and private TV stations. In 1952, four months after the first two CBC stations were opened, the government announced that the Corporation would establish four more regional production centres, one of which would be in the national capital. Transmitters would be added to serve the immediate areas surrounding such production centres with CBC programs, but the main emphasis was on the production of national and regional programs for distribution to private stations as they could be established. Basically this was the idea urged by C. D. Howe on the first Board of Governors in 1937. During the next nine years, only private operators were licensed to build additional television stations, and it was twelve years before a second CBC station was opened in other than the six regional production centres.

After 1953, the development of television through the sale of sets, the establishment of private stations, and the production of network programs were phenomenal. The CBC's radio programming by 1953 reached its zenith in variety and excellence. The demands of television were so exacting, the dreams of its possibilities so alluring, the arguments for its rapid expansion so insistent that radio was completely overshadowed. But it took nearly ten times as much to televise than broadcast and nearly ten times as many attendants to do it. Commercial radio networks, both American and Canadian, disappeared, and evening radio audiences evaporated. Early evening and noon periods became much less remunerative. With the virtual disappearance of commercial networks, CBC radio-network programming became less colourful but increasingly Canadian.

By 1956, the increasing costs and complications of television brought another Royal Commission, headed by Robert M. Fowler. The CBC had

estimated its costs with great accuracy but the government wanted both a confirmation and a blueprint for future development. Although the Commission commended CBC programming, it criticized the Corporation for non-enforcement of its own regulations with respect to reserved time, which enforcement it felt was inadequate. It also criticized private stations, with a few exceptions, for their lack of concern in the development of talent and the propensity of some to put profits before community service.

Before the Fowler Commission, private stations again made a determined effort to secure a separate regulatory board, though their effort was far from unanimous. Their contentions were again rejected in their entirety, the Commission recommending a continuation of a single administrative authority. This system withstood the examination of twelve successive Parliamentary Committees and the more searching scrutiny of two Royal Commissions.

Soon two years of careful research and appraisal of the entire broadcasting scene, as well as the opinions of earlier committees and commissions, would be scuttled by a new administration in 1958. This would put into effect the persistent requests of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB).

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 23

REPORT OF PERFORMANCE 1949-1950

ANALYSIS OF ACTIVITIES OF PRIVATELY OWNED CANADIAN RADIO STATIONS
BASED ON THE WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 22, 1949

(a) Hours of Local Live, Recorded and Network Programs in Each of Six Groups

<i>Group</i>	<i>Stations¹</i>	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Local Live</i>	<i>Recorded</i>	<i>Network</i>
Trans-Canada (13) Plus Supplementaries (10)	23	2762	15%	46%	39%
Dominion (29) Plus Supplementaries (6)	35	3733	23%	62%	15%
Non-Network Cities over 50,000	14	1842	24%	71%	5%
Non-Network Cities under 50,000	32	3520	23%	75%	2%
English Affiliates of American Networks	5	650	25%	52%	23%
French Network Supplementaries	10	1127	10%	40%	50%
TOTAL	119				

¹CKAC Montreal, although included in the survey, is not included in this summary. It had no Canadian network affiliation, and being French was limited in what it could take from the Columbia Broadcasting System.

(b) Breakdown of Local Live Programming into Nine Categories to Nearest Full Percentage Point.

	<i>Trans-Canada Network</i>	<i>Dominion Network</i>	<i>Non-Network Cities Over 50,000</i>	<i>Non-Network Cities Under 50,000</i>	<i>American Affiliates</i>	<i>French Affiliates</i>
Artistic Talent	10	14	22	15	9	16
Community Activities	7	6	4	5	4	14
Talks and Discussions	5	6	6	7	13	14
Church and Devotional	16	16	7	18	10	13
Education	1	1	2	1	1	1
Agriculture	4	4	3	5	3	3
Sports	11	11	14	8	8	12
News	40	37	36	35	43	20
Other Programs	6	5	6	6	9	7
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

(c) Percentages of Talent Time for Live Shows, Paid, Unpaid, and Produced by Station Staffs.

	<i>Paid</i>	<i>Unpaid</i>	<i>Staff</i>
Trans-Canada Affiliates	7%	27%	66%
Dominion Affiliates	9%	25%	66%
Non-Network Stations in Canada over 50,000	23%	17%	60%
Non-Network Stations in Canada under 50,000	7%	26%	67%
English Affiliates of American Networks	33%	24%	43%
French Network Affiliates	12%	35%	53%

AVERAGE NET REVENUES AND AVERAGE NET INCOME, AFTER TAX OF VARIOUS GROUPINGS OF CANADIAN RADIO STATIONS FOR EACH OF THE CALENDAR YEARS 1957 TO 1960 INCLUSIVE

PREPARED FROM REPORTS OF THE DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS

	<i>Under \$50,000</i>	<i>\$50,000 and under \$100,000</i>	<i>\$100,000 and under \$150,000</i>	<i>\$150,000 and under \$200,000</i>
<i>1957</i>				
Number of Stations		50		61
Average Net Revenue		63,221		145,534
Net Income after Tax		778		11,042
<i>1958</i>				
Number of Stations		53		59
Average Net Revenue		68,835		148,371
Net Income after Tax		580		9,324
<i>1959</i>				
Number of Stations	17	42	25	35
Average Net Revenue	33,893	74,604	125,523	171,419
Net Income after Tax	—7,824	1,145	4,700	10,734
<i>1960</i>				
Number of Stations	15	42	31	42
Average Net Revenue	37,679	72,432	122,673	175,022
Net Income after Tax	—4,842	1,207	6,050	7,555

PART III: RADIO AND TELEVISION (CCCC 345

<i>\$200,000 and under \$300,000</i>	<i>\$300,000 and under \$400,000</i>	<i>\$400,000 and under \$500,000</i>	<i>\$500,000 and under \$750,000</i>	<i>\$750,000 and under \$1,000,000</i>	<i>\$1,000,000 and over</i>
17	16	8	9	3	4
238,655	347,099	452,533	624,423	902,299	1,349,389
20,207	33,881	46,200	104,016	151,500	255,896
8	12	9	11	5	4
236,684	346,393	443,129	588,250	877,095	1,494,711
20,298	29,397	36,930	96,558	152,660	266,792
21	11	9	9	5	7
239,425	360,565	452,487	579,355	865,926	1,463,648
17,200	30,000	33,960	75,204	140,000	232,300
24	7	11	12	3	6
243,293	341,921	457,390	627,971	894,091	1,538,360
1,000	29,970	1,106	42,200	113,390	189,441

**TOTAL NET ADVERTISING REVENUES AND TOTAL NET INCOME
OF ALL PRIVATELY OWNED CANADIAN RADIO STATIONS WITH
PERCENTAGES OF TOTAL NET INCOME ACCRUING TO THOSE
STATIONS WITH NET ADVERTISING REVENUES OF \$500,000 OR
MORE AND \$1,000,000 OR MORE**

(FROM DBS REPORTS 56-502 AND 56-503 — NET INCOME AFTER PAYMENT OF
INCOME TAX)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Stations</i>	<i>Total Net Advertising Revenues All Private Stations</i>	<i>Total Net Income All Private Stations</i>	<i>Percent of Total Net Income Accruing to Stations with Net Advertising Revenues over \$500,000</i>	<i>Number of Such Stations</i>	<i>Percent of Total Net Income Accruing to Stations with Total Net Advertising Revenues over \$1,000,000</i>	<i>Number of Such Stations</i>
1957	168	38,993,908	4,381,952	55	16	23.3	4
1958	171	41,542,390	4,524,000	64	20	23.6	4
1959	181	45,693,293	4,408,604	68	21	36.9	7
1960	193	47,473,081	2,609,648	76	21	43.5	6

**NET INCOME OF CANADIAN PRIVATELY OWNED TELEVISION
STATIONS AFTER TAX BY GROUPS WITH NUMBER OF STATIONS
IN VARIOUS GROUPS**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Stations</i>	<i>With Net Revenues Under \$200,000¹</i>	<i>Stations</i>	<i>Net Revenues from \$200,000 to \$400,000</i>	<i>Stations</i>	<i>Net Revenues from \$400,000 to \$600,000</i>	<i>Stations</i>	<i>Net Revenues from \$600,000 to \$1,000,000</i>	<i>Stations</i>	<i>Net Revenues over \$1,000,000</i>	<i>Stations</i>
1957	31	—42,171	4	13,370	13	52,480	5	123,133	5	106,909	4
1958	38	—31,355	11	24,051	10	56,411	6	84,643	5	201,791	6
1959	43	—33,725	9	22,098	12	50,695	9	109,333	6	220,504	7
1960	47	—27,428	10	1,204	13	35,534	11	123,566	6	217,754	7

¹ Average defect.

PART IV))))))) BROADCASTING TODAY

CHAPTER 24

THE DUAL SYSTEM

With the federal election of June of 1957, the Liberal government, which had been in power for twenty-two years, was defeated. The new Conservative government, however, lacked a working majority. A second election in March of 1958 was held, and the result was an overwhelming Conservative majority, the greatest ever enjoyed by a party in the House of Commons since Confederation. Early in the 1958 campaign, the Honourable John Diefenbaker, for half a year Prime Minister of Canada, in a speech at Kenora, Ontario, on March 18, said (according to *The Globe and Mail*, March 19, 1958):

That the time was long overdue to assure private stations competing with the public broadcasting system that they would be judged by an independent body as the need arose, they should not be judged by those who are in competition with them and are, in fact, their judge and jury. . . . The next Parliament would be asked to approve the appointment of a semi-judicial body similar to the Board of Transport Commissioners to assure that development of radio and television in Canada would proceed with "that justice which is the essence of our way of life."

He was also reported as suggesting that one of the first tasks of the new body would be to ensure Kenora a television station. Few more blatant bids for support have ever been seen in a Canadian election. On September 6, four months after Parliament met Diefenbaker's promise to the private broadcasters was fulfilled by a new Broadcasting

Act, which departed completely from the concept of a single unified system despite the fact that one year previously the Fowler Commission, after two years of intensified research and appraisal, explicitly warned against the very step being taken. On July 1, 1958 Davidson Dunton resigned. That month Graham Spry resurrected the Broadcasting League and on the 18th, with a representative group led by Professor Donald Creighton, met the Prime Minister to oppose the dual system. But it was useless.

The year 1959, following the advent of the Diefenbaker government, was the most unsettled in the twenty-four year history of the Corporation. Although the Parliamentary Committee, appointed in April to study the CBC, BBG, and the private stations represented by the CAB, held thirty-three meetings and heard almost nine hundred pages of evidence, it never got around to examining anything but the CBC. Two of its most significant recommendations were: the adoption of a formula whereby limits might be set on the annual grants of the government to the CBC; and the increasing of efforts to ensure the emergence of vigorous commercial policies.

A second Committee in 1961 held forty-three meetings and heard almost one thousand pages of evidence, including the representatives of the private stations, but no more than the first did the second Committee get around to examining the operations of any of those stations. It discouraged capital commitments of the CBC, in spite of the Corporation's numerous fire-trap buildings in both Toronto and Montreal. Nowhere in the proceedings of either Committee was there any real indication of awareness of the great over-all purposes and issues of broadcasting. Robert Fulford in *The Toronto Star* (November 1, 1961) wrote: "To read the hearings of the 1961 Parliamentary Committee is to read a chronicle of mutual irritation. . . . It indicates that it is no less than a miracle if the executive of the CBC are not permanently nervous, irritable, timid, and mean-spirited men."

The Canadian Association of Broadcasters was delighted with the new legislation. Before the Parliamentary Committee on Broadcasting of 1961, it reported:

Supporters of the present government made public pledges to the effect that if elected to office there would be created a regulatory body not connected with any operating organism, and there would be licensing of alternative television in Canada. Both these pledges were implemented by the present government almost

immediately following its accession to office. We feel it is not beyond our province to compliment the government upon the fulfilment of its promises.

In the same presentation, the CAB sought to give a new interpretation to the words "national broadcasting service." It claimed that the concept should no longer be regarded as applying to the nation-wide distribution of CBC programs, but that it simply meant "owned and operated by the state." It claimed that the service provided by the sum total of the privately owned stations constituted a quite separate unit of the national broadcasting system. Some private operators even called the new Board of Broadcast Governors "our Board." And on the occasion of the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the CBC in November of 1961, Diefenbaker declared: "Four years ago Parliament provided for the setting up of a Board of Broadcast Governors and thereby freed the CBC from a rather awkward role of being a judge in its relations with private radio. Order was brought out of confusion and complaint, in the disagreements bound to arise between public and private systems." Note the plural use of "systems." The facts in recent years have demonstrated exactly the opposite.

THE NEW STRUCTURE

What then was the new legislation? The government disinterred the skeleton of the Fowler Commission's recommendation, used the same name, and clothed the new creation in verbiage somewhat similar to that of Fowler's draft statute. This created two quite separate bodies. First, a Board of Broadcast Governors of fifteen members (three full-time and twelve part-time), most of them loyal Conservatives, were charged with a regulatory responsibility over all broadcasting stations, public and private, and were to ensure "the continued existence and efficient operation of a national broadcasting system and the provision of a varied and comprehensive broadcasting service of high standard, basically Canadian in content and character" (Broadcasting Act, 1958). The BBG would regulate the establishment and operation of networks, the activities of public and private stations, and the relationship between them. It would regulate in the following areas: minimum time to be reserved for network programs by member stations; program standards; the character of advertising; the amount of advertising time

permitted; greater use of Canadian talent; terms and conditions for the broadcasting of national programs; require licencees of stations to submit information regarding both programs and details of their financial affairs. Full-time members were appointed for seven years, and part-time members for five.

Second, the Act established the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation as an entirely separate body under a Board of eleven directors. The President and Vice-President were the only salaried members of the Board. They were appointed for seven years at pleasure, their salaries set and their responsibilities determined by the Governor-in-Council. Nine non-salaried directors were each to hold office during good behaviour for three years. Provision was made for an Executive Committee (the number was not specified) to which could be delegated all or any of the powers of the Corporation. The office of "General Manager" disappeared, though the title was to appear later among several senior program executives.

This Board was given the power to operate and maintain broadcasting stations and networks and, subject to approval by the Governor-in-Council, establish such stations as the Corporation considered necessary or desirable. It could make agreements with stations for broadcasting its programs, but its powers of establishing stations were dependent on channel-allocations which were subject to the recommendation of the Board of Broadcast Governors. The CBC Board could control the funds placed at its disposal by Parliament, but both its capital and operating budgets had to be approved annually by the Treasury Board, the Minister under whom it operated, and the Minister of Finance.

PEARSON CRITICIZES THE ACT

The resolution introducing the new Act was proposed in the House of Commons on August 18, slightly more than two weeks before the House prorogued. In the debate on the resolution introducing the Act, and again on the second reading, the Honourable Lester B. Pearson, the Leader of the Opposition, clearly defined the position of the Liberal Party. He urged the continuation of a single system within which both public and private stations would constitute integral parts under one board. Regulations should ensure that both public and private sectors would meet the needs and desires of the people as a whole and not be used primarily as an industry to be exploited for

commercial ends. Any regulatory board would be responsible to Parliament and would report directly to it. Financial support for the CBC would be on a long-term basis.

While recognizing the need for private stations to operate at a profit, Pearson said:

We must bear in mind that an essential and clearly recognizable feature of that system was that these private stations had no special rights of their own. They had a privilege granted to them by the government and it was a profitable one, of being part of a national system. In a sense they had rights, but only as parts of that national system . . . over the years we have perhaps begun to lose sight of the initially accepted doctrine of public control through a national system and of the vital necessity of maintaining and strengthening that system. . . . What was once a privilege for private broadcasters has gradually become a vested interest and eventually has been invoked as a right. As soon as this privilege could be put forward in public discussion as a right, which, of course, it was not, then the position of the CBC, the public Corporation, could be attacked on the grounds that the public agency was at the same time a judge and competitor. . . . Strictly speaking the CBC was not a competitor with the private stations as those stations did not have separate rights to claim but rights which were merely an extension and complement of the national system. (*Hansard*, August 25, 1958, pp. 4048-9.)

Pearson emphasized the danger of building two systems, which would create confusion and uncertainty, and added, prophetically:

This new Board of Broadcast Governors, because CBC program standards will likely be above the minimum prescribed, will tend to become a regulatory body for private stations only, influenced increasingly by the financial situation of these private stations. More and more then, this board may be concerned with private stations rather than the control and regulation of a national system.

He emphasized that the demands on the proposed Board of Broadcast Governors by way of reports to Parliament were inadequate. Instead of requiring the Board to report on broadcasting in general, and on

the performance of the component parts in particular, the Act merely required the Board to report on its activities. Thus the Board could make an arithmetical recital of its activities, the number of meetings, what was dealt with, etc. This weakness has been completely demonstrated by the BBG's Annual Reports, which contain little more than what was predicted by Pearson. On August 25, 1958, the Honourable J. W. Pickersgill said:

I think the small detached and independent radio station owned by someone in the local community has performed an increasingly useful service over the years. There are a few stations in the great metropolitan centres that do not seem to perform a service that appeals very much to many of us in this House, but I suppose must be performing some kind of service or the people would not pay for the advertising. The stations in the smaller places, catering to local needs, supporting local causes, and giving a greater sense of community to those localities have proven to be a very valuable addition to our Canadian patrimony. . . . We did not wish to see a situation created wherein there would be two systems in this country, we wanted only one, and we, in our party, have always taken that view. (*Hansard*, p. 4068.) . . . It is fundamentally wrong because [the proposed Act] has two boards instead of one, and thereby threatens to establish two systems instead of one. It is also fundamentally wrong because it brings the Corporation directly under the control of a Member of the Government instead of under the Board which always in the past insulated the operating side of radio from direct intervention by the government. In the third place it is wrong because of the financial structure that is suggested. (p. 4087)

This was the stand of the two chief spokesmen of the Liberal Party which, in April of 1963, would claim once more the responsibility for broadcasting policy. Pearson and Pickersgill also condemned the principle of appointing the two chief operating officers of the Corporation, the President and Vice-President of the Board of Directors. This placed a disproportionate weight of authority in the hands of the officers, and it reduced the role of the remainder of the board to little more than that of advisors. It made the first responsibility of these officers to the Minister—not to the CBC's Board—to the government in power—not to Parliament. Since 1958, the situation has deteriorated, and

in 1965 is not unlike the days of the CRBC. Both policy direction and day-to-day operations are under the same personnel.

It soon became clear that the Act of 1958, in addition to departing fundamentally from former principles, was badly drafted, lacking clarity and definition. No one expressed this more clearly than the Chairman of the Board of Broadcast Governors on several occasions, in particular in a speech by Dr. Andrew Stewart to the Annual Meeting in Toronto of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters on May 3, 1963. The Act of 1936 stated clearly: "No person shall be deemed to have any proprietary right in any channel heretofore or hereafter assigned, and no person shall be entitled to any compensation by reason of the cancellation of the assignment of a channel or by reason of the assignment of a new channel in substitution therefor." This principle had been repeatedly emphasized. It was a stipulation long opposed by private broadcasters, and it was quietly dropped from the Act of 1958.

"FAVOURITISM GOVERNED KISSAGE"

The warnings of both the Massey Commission and the Fowler Commission were unheeded, but their predictions came true all too soon. The policies and edicts of the Board of Broadcast Governors began to vacillate. Two of its ablest members resigned over its indecisiveness; its authority was finally openly challenged after calculated consideration in the fall of 1962, by the Board of Directors of the CBC.

Briefly, the operations of the BBG fall into four fairly distinct but closely related fields: first, the institution of "second" television stations in eight principal markets, as well as the authorization of the CTV network; second, the establishment of a "Canadian content" ruling to govern the programming of all television stations; third, the expansion of commercial time; and fourth, the licensing of new radio stations, raising the power of many others, including several to 50 kw. What was accomplished?

The first important move of the BBG, following the promulgation of the regulations, was the licensing of second television stations. Whether rightly or wrongly, selecting licencees from among the numerous applicants, the Board of Broadcast Governors came under considerable public criticism. The suspicion of partiality was voiced, in as much as certain licences went to political friends of the government. It was

openly suggested in the press (by, for instance, Pierre Berton in *The Toronto Star* on April 1, 1960, and in *The Globe and Mail* on June 18, 1963) that the recipient of the Toronto licence had boasted in advance that he had the licence in his pocket before the applications were even heard. If this is true, several unsuccessful applicants lost between \$30,000 and \$40,000 each in preparing their cases. One highly esteemed lawyer and critic, Joseph Sedgwick, Q.C.—though not an entirely disinterested one—after reviewing apparent inconsistencies in certain previous licence awards (Toronto was the last of the eight) said in a letter to *The Globe and Mail*:

The decision of the Board of Broadcast Governors . . . will be for some of the disappointed applicants a tragedy; some will view the whole show as a drama, some as a comedy, some as a farce, but all will agree that it was quite a performance. . . . It is all over, and it was a great show. We shall not see its like again, and if the result is not to be explained by any ordinary process of thought or reason, a clue may be found in some lines from Kipling:

'Ere they hewed the Sphinx's visage
Favouritism governed kissage
Even as it does in this age
And it will do ever more.

This did not sit well with the Board. When Sedgwick appeared before it seven months later, on behalf of a client, he was chided by the Chairman, who said: "This is the first occasion that Mr. Sedgwick has appeared before the Board since last March and the appearance in the press of a letter which Mr. Sedgwick will remember. My colleagues felt we should mark the occasion, if not with a fanfare of trumpets, at least with a welcome. . . . We take this to mean that since his regrettable lapse, his confidence in the integrity of the Board has been restored." To this Sedgwick responded: "I had expected no more, no less." *The Globe and Mail* commented in a scathing editorial and republished Sedgwick's letter.

The Board next authorized the joining of the eight new private stations into the CTV network, which commenced operation in October of 1961. CTV owned no stations or production facilities; to a considerable extent it made use of the studios and facilities of its member

stations. An alternative television-network service was a pet project of the BBG. There was only one applicant for the risky undertaking, so there was not much room for choice. Nevertheless, the management of the new network was in the hands of experienced and thoroughly able broadcasters. It was headed by Spencer Caldwell, an energetic and very successful former CBC employee. Whether, in the light of American experience, which demonstrated the inability of that country to support more than three networks, the decision to support the same number (CBC English, CBC French, and CTV) was well taken remains to be seen.

The CBC said publicly it would welcome the development of network programs from another source with which it might compete in terms of program production. But it foresaw the possibility of misunderstanding, and at public hearings of the BBG in 1960, the Corporation asked that in the public interest the role and responsibilities of the second network be clearly defined.¹ The BBG at first required a minimum of six stations on the CTV network and ten hours weekly of programming. The applicant for the network franchise stated that the network would carry only commercial programs unless the members were willing to pay all costs for any sustaining programs they might want. Caldwell also expressed a wish to use some CBC affiliates as outlets for his network. The Corporation vigorously opposed this, insisting that the integrity of its national network must be maintained. However it did not object to its affiliates carrying taped Canadian programs from the second network, if time were available, since that would provide a further measure of support for Canadian productions.

It was but a short time before the CBC's fears of commercial encroachment were justified, when CTV, the purchaser of the television rights to the Big Four football games, sought to add selected stations from the CBC network to supplement the CTV network broadcasts of the games. Although the Corporation steadfastly refused to split its network, there were signs that additional efforts would shortly be made to compel the CBC to do so (CBC Annual Report 1961-62).

¹ The second television network in Canada is essentially different from that in Great Britain, where a second governmental body, the Independent Television Authority, owns and operates the stations which it leases to production companies who produce the programs. Between the latter there is a certain measure of competition. The last Royal Commission on broadcasting (the Pilkington Commission in 1961) recommended that the ITA board should itself participate more closely in the production and scheduling of programs.

In December of 1961, the BBG, despite CBC opposition, authorized "cross-programming," whereby stations affiliated with the CBC might carry programs supplied by the new CTV network, or stations affiliated with CTV might carry programs supplied by the CBC. Under this arrangement, a CBC affiliate might carry several hours per week of programs from the new network. But the CBC regarded cross-programming as a dangerous precedent that struck at the very vitals of its network. It objected so strenuously that the BBG reversed its decision.

THE FOOTBALL FUMBLE

In the spring of 1962, the question of football rights and the broadcast of the final Grey Cup Canadian Championship Game became a live issue. The CBC offered the Canadian Football League \$125,000 for the rights to the final game on a non-exclusive basis, or \$175,000 for exclusive rights. In the end, the rights were awarded to CFTO-TV in Toronto together with the new CTV network. The CBC claimed that John Bassett, President of CFTO, offered the broadcast of the game by letter to the Corporation on an unsponsored basis, and that after his offer, which was made in June, had been accepted by the CBC, it was withdrawn. There were misunderstood interpretations placed on the letter, or someone had second thoughts about carrying out what had been offered. Early in July, while negotiations were still going on between CBC and CTV, the BBG stepped into the picture. It proposed a regulation that would have meant the CBC would have no option but to carry the Grey Cup game under the sponsorship obtained by CTV. For this event, the CBC would in effect become a supplementary of the competing network, thereby assuring maximum distribution to a sponsored program already arranged by CTV. The CBC once more objected and said:

The practical effect of this [regulation] has been to put an end to negotiations and to make any further discussion futile. We contend that the action taken by the Board [BBG] to date and the regulation proposed by the Board have had the effect of favouring CTV's commercial interest to the disadvantage of the national interest. Our legal advisers, the Department of Justice of Canada, have advised us that the proposed regulation is *ultra vires*, beyond the powers of the Board.

The details of the wrangle are too long and involved to be dealt with fully. But the longer the argument raged, the more convinced was the CBC that this was a well-conceived attempt to use the Corporation as a supplementary network to the CTV network, and that any agreement by the CBC to co-operate in sponsoring the game, as sold on the CTV network, would only be encouraging additional—more or less similar—arrangements in the future, thereby undermining the integrity of the CBC network. It dug in and refused to carry the game on any basis other than an unsponsored one.

The Board of Broadcast Governors made various efforts to persuade the CBC to co-operate and carry the game on a sponsored basis. Completely unsuccessful, in November, shortly before game time, it finally ordered the CBC to broadcast the game as carried by the CTV network with commercials. This was more than the CBC could take, and it fell back on the advice of the Deputy Minister of Justice. An independent legal opinion by a Toronto authority coincided with that of the Deputy Minister. However, the CBC did offer to give two “credits” to each of the four sponsors of the game. These were not advertising messages but brief acknowledgements of thanks for making the game available. Gradually the sponsors agreed to this, and on the eve of the game, the crisis was averted. The BBG could do nothing more than rescind the regulation ordering the CBC to carry the game. This it did at its next meeting in January of 1963.

This succession of events did nothing to smooth the relations between the two Boards. The CBC felt itself the defenders of a beleaguered city; the Governors were scarcely much more comfortable. There was strong and wide press support for the Corporation’s actions, and a great volume of voluntary commendation for the firm stand of the CBC Board of Directors in this inept affair. The futility of a competition that put both networks at the mercy of sports promoters became so apparent that, after the crisis had passed, both the CBC and CTV put into effect an agreement for “sharing” rights for a five-year period—until January of 1968—of all Canadian professional football, including the Grey Cup. The basis was satisfactory to both parties. Actually, some such arrangement was in process of negotiation before the game, but the CBC Board of Directors refused to recognize arrangements of this sort until after the 1962 game had been played and the issue before the two bodies came to a head.

The next contentious issue the BBG inevitably found itself facing was one of even greater significance than football coverage. This was

no less than the struggle of the CBC to break down long-imposed restrictions that confined its production centres to only six cities. It had taken one very important step to this end when it sought and obtained the second licence in Edmonton; but this was only a step. Its subsequent efforts were to meet with prolonged delays and far more determined opposition.

THE QUEBEC LICENCE BATTLE

The CBC had long hoped to establish a television station in the capital of Quebec. The city of Quebec was the second French city in Canada in terms of population and talent resources. There were two stations in Quebec City, both controlled by the same group, in which Famous Players, the Canadian subsidiary of Paramount Pictures Corporation, was a dominant shareholder.³ A third television channel for Quebec City still remained unoccupied, and the CBC applied for the allocation in January of 1962. At the same time, a private operator applied and made a prolonged and bitter fight for the channel. The CBC felt that a transmission and production "presence" in Quebec City was essential if it was to reflect properly their capital to the people of French Canada. For some years it had tried to fill this gap by occasionally producing programs from Quebec City. But the shifting of staff and equipment proved too expensive, and production was spasmodic at best. Although the local affiliate broadcast a large proportion of the CBC French service, there were many programs it would not carry—some fifteen hours a week, or over thirty individual programs—all wasted as far as the area was concerned. The CBC planned to spend \$1,500,000 the first year at Quebec. Approximately thirty per cent of this would be on talent.

Unfortunately the CBC could not guarantee at the time that the necessary money would be available to fulfil its obligations, and the BBG was unable to reach a decision. Two of its ablest members, Dr. Guy Hudon, Dean of the Law Faculty of Laval University, and Dr. Eugene Forsey, of the Canadian Labour Congress in Ottawa, felt much as the CBC did. When the Board could not decide whether or not to reserve the channel for the use of the CBC, both resigned on June 8, 1962. In their letters of resignation, they said that the licence should go to the CBC, and added: "The majority of the members of the Board,

³ See p. 371 for explanatory footnote.

for reasons totally unacceptable to us, are of the opposite opinion." Public criticism of the BBG over this issue was severe.

A second area of prime importance to the CBC was Newfoundland. As early as 1954, even before the island was part of Canada, the CBC had unsuccessfully sought a television licence in St. John's. It believed that the peculiar conditions of that isolated and newly federated province merited special treatment. After bitter controversy and two national referenda, Newfoundland decided on April 1, 1949, to merge its destiny with that of Canada. As late as 1949, 48 per cent of the Newfoundlanders were still bitterly opposed to union. It was not easy for them to think of themselves as Canadians, or for Canadians to think of Newfoundland as an integral part of Canada.

The island had a state-owned radio system at the time of union with Canada. It was a necessity, for nowhere on this continent—perhaps in the world—was radio as indispensable as in Newfoundland. To the normal schedule it added instructions to doctors, nurses, railway-telegraph linesmen, lighthouse and fog-alarm keepers. There were announcements about persons adrift on ice floes, lost in the woods, or missing in schooners, about the availability of fish bait, ice and salt, police messages, and so forth.

The Newfoundland Broadcasting Corporation was merged with the CBC, not without some resentment over the new radio schedules. These brought a flow of programs from Canada, many of them very different in character and not always as highly valued in Newfoundland as in Toronto or Montreal. On the other hand, beginning with the very first week of union, CBC radio started to tell the story of the new province and the story of its people to the rest of Canada in a great variety of productions that sounded—almost "smelt"—more like the sea than Halifax had some fifteen years earlier.

POLITICS IN NEWFOUNDLAND

However, when a television station was finally licensed at St. John's in 1955, it went not to the CBC but to the enterprising owners of the locally owned private radio station CJON. Politically, they were closely identified with the party in power in Ottawa and also in St. John's. At least one of them was said to have been active in the organization and promotion of the Liberal Party's interests. However, since the licence was in the final analysis recommended by the CBC's own Board

of Governors, there was nothing that could be done about it. This award was not inconsistent with the general system of political patronage all too prevalent in this country. The CBC swallowed its disappointment, extended its microwave service to St. John's, and put CJON on the national network. CJON remained the exclusive outlet on the island, until a new CBC transmitter was completed, in October of 1964.

Confining the CBC to six centres and leaving the remainder of the country to private exploitation, whatever the original excuse, was short-sighted. Nowhere else was it more myopic than in Newfoundland. The local private TV station in St. John's broadcast as much of the CBC's national service as reasonably could be expected, but CJON has been unable to meet the challenge of its own people for self-expression, for an adequate interpretation of Newfoundland to the rest of Canada. Whatever programs have been broadcast on the CBC television network from St. John's have been almost entirely originated by the CBC through the sending in of staff from outside at considerable expense.

As a result, early in 1962, there was strong public agitation for the establishment of a CBC-owned station in St. John's. Business, professional, educational, and labour groups insisted on another station. On July 31, 1962, the CBC applied to the BBG for a second television licence in that city. The application was filed by the BBG for hearing at its October meeting.

Though the "alternative" CTV network did not commence until October of 1961, within little more than one year the BBG decided that the establishment of "second" stations had gone far enough and called a halt to recommending additional licences. On December 20, 1962, it issued a very significant public policy statement entitled "The Extension of Alternative Television Service." The statement noted that, since the establishment of competing television stations in eight main population centres, advertisers confronted with two outlets tended to split their appropriations and concentrate their expenditures more than ever in these major centres. This significantly reduced their expenditures in the smaller "single-station" markets. (This result was clearly forecast by the CBC before the Fowler Commission.) Progress was slower in these areas, and stations were experiencing greater difficulties than anticipated. In most cases, capital costs of new stations exceeded estimates; in all cases operating costs proved higher than expected; and in only two instances were revenues up to anticipations. In short, both the applicants and the BBG had been overly optimistic.

These difficulties should have reduced interest in the establishment

of new stations, but this was not so. Several established stations were now seeking to augment their coverage and revenues by adding relay or rebroadcasting stations in neighbouring areas. CJAY-TV of Winnipeg wanted to establish a rebroadcasting station at Brandon (the second largest population centre in Manitoba) which already had a private station. The CBC maintained that a combination of the already established local station, plus a CBC station, would offer a far more diversified and complete service for viewers in the Brandon area. It asked the BBG to delay any extension to Brandon until it was in a position to open its own outlet there. Moreover, it contended that, faced with the certainty of a second station, private operators almost invariably preferred to see the second station in CBC hands. Situations similar to Brandon were developing in other areas. In its 1962-63 Report, referring to rebroadcasting stations, the CBC had this to say:

These stations originally filled a need in bringing service to remote communities. There are now indications that some broadcasters are seeking to use such stations for an entirely different purpose. There is also the danger that in some areas the extension of rebroadcasting stations could have the effect of blocking future establishment of full-fledged stations.

BBG LIMITS STATION EXTENSION

The BBG's statement in December also noted that "single" stations, faced with the possibility of the intrusion of alternative service, had begun to explore other arrangements. Some proposed that, in single-station markets, the second licence should also be given to the holder of the first licence to be operated in conjunction with the existing service, thus reducing overhead costs. The second station would carry the new independent CTV-network service. However, the BBG rejected such proposals and reaffirmed its decision that in extending alternative coverage through second stations the basis of that service must be that the local station should provide local service as well as being affiliated with a network. It said: "The ultimate pattern of the second service should duplicate closely the facilities established to provide the primary [CBC] service." The BBG stated emphatically that it did not intend to be diverted from this policy, and said: "With one or two possible exceptions, conditions in the smaller markets do not offer prospects for further

'second' stations at this time." Thus it appeared from the BBG statement of December 20 that the end of the road had been reached in licensing additional TV stations until an expanded economy made others feasible.

The BBG also set out its opinion with respect to the licensing of additional CBC stations. Although it was not prepared to state a long-term policy on this matter, the BBG believed that it was within its competence to extend the principle of one CBC station in each of six regions to the establishment by the CBC of at least one station in each province, preferably in the capital city. On that basis, it was prepared to consider applications from the Corporation, following public hearings, for the reservation of television channels for its use at four points: St. John's, Newfoundland; Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; the Fredericton-Saint John area of New Brunswick; and at Sudbury, Ontario. Should the Corporation fail to apply in time for the reservation of a channel in the specified areas for a public hearing to open on June 4, 1963, the Board would not undertake to delay recommendations on applications by private applicants in those areas. It added, significantly, that while the Corporation might at any time choose to apply for a licence in any location, recommendation of a licence would be denied unless the Board was satisfied that the existing private station could survive and maintain its service.

Immediately after the CBC had applied for a "second" television licence at St. John's, on July 31, 1962, a crisis arose in Canada's finances, resulting in the sudden devaluation of the Canadian dollar, the imposition of additional taxes, and a definite austerity program. Dependent entirely on government advances, the CBC had to call a halt to its expansion program. On September 14, it asked that the hearing on its St. John's application be deferred until the financial position cleared. Action at Quebec City also had to be postponed.

THE ST. JOHN'S LICENCE HASSLE

Fortunately, some three months later, on December 11, 1962, the CBC was able to advise the BBG that funds would be available to proceed with the application for stations at both Quebec City and St. John's. The BBG scheduled the St. John's application for its meeting on December 20, but on that date it issued the public announcement, already referred to, which included the statement that it could not concede "that the potential normal advertising revenues and local conditions justified

alternative service by any means in any of the remaining single station markets (other than Quebec City).” In the opinion of the BBG, this could only be established after the submission of briefs and public hearings, which meant that the St. John’s application of the CBC must stand over for the Board’s meeting on January 15, 1963.

When the President of the CBC came before the BBG at its January meeting, he did not mince words, but emphasized that the CBC’s prime reason for being there was not to discuss the extension of alternative television service, but the establishment and development of the national television service—that the CBC was seeking to establish a full-fledged station and a Newfoundland production centre. In stating that it could not concede that an alternative service was justified in St. John’s, the BBG gave only two reasons: potential national advertising revenues, and local conditions. The CBC emphasized that these commercial factors could not be considered in isolation but only in relation and in subordination to the more important factors of public interest and public need. Ouimet said:

We know the commercial aspect must be considered, but we do not believe that it should be the determining factor. This is an application to establish a publicly owned national voice in the national television service. It is an application to change gradually what is now a one-way street into a two-lane highway of ideas, events and entertainment. It is an application for the furtherance of national unity.

Ouimet added that the time factor was important. Even if the Board recommended favourably at once, it would be at least two years before the CBC could start its studio operation.

In replying to the CBC’s application, the owners of CJON-TV expressed no opposition to the principle of alternative viewing. They suggested this should be available to as many Canadians as possible, in Newfoundland and elsewhere. But they contended that a second station would cripple and probably ruin their investment, that their profit in the last fiscal year before taxes was less than \$20,000, that present CBC-network revenues of approximately \$100,000 a year would disappear, that rates would be reduced, and that their annual revenue would fall by at least \$350,000. Other serious problems would have to be faced. They concluded: “The inevitable fact at the present time is that Newfoundland simply cannot support two competing services.”

The CBC application was recommended by the BBG for deferment, but following several weeks of consultation between the CBC and CJON-TV, a licence to the CBC was unanimously recommended by the BBG on April 5, subject to four conditions: that the CBC would not commence broadcasting before October 1, 1964; that for the first two years of its operation, the CBC would refrain from engaging in either local or national selective business; that the CBC would endeavour to assist CJON obtain the use of microwave facilities so CJON would be supplied with programs by this means; that the CBC would co-operate with CJON in ensuring the extension of alternative television service in Newfoundland generally. Such were the requirements laid down for the CBC before it could open its production centre in St. John's. The CBC agreed to them before April 5 rather than delay the project longer.

INTERMINABLE DELAYS

If the CBC expected permission to proceed immediately, it was due for a disappointment. Three days after the application was recommended to the Department of Transport for approval, there was a federal election, with a new government and a new minister. Less than one month later, at the Annual Convention of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters in Toronto, the new Minister, the Honourable J. W. Pickersgill, indicated that the Chairman of the BBG and the President of the CBC had suggested to him that there should be some form of inquiry into broadcasting in the near future. Before instituting any form of inquiry, he had decided to ask the Chairman of the BBG, the President of the CBC, and Don Jamieson, the President of CAB, who happened to be co-owner and Manager of CJON and CJON-TV, to join in a series of discussions. These would be held with a view to preparing, for the consideration of the government, a statement of those areas of public policy on which all three were in full or substantial agreement, and those points on which there was a divergence of viewpoints. He added: "I would hope that such differences would be clearly and fully set out as they would inevitably be an essential part of the subject matter of any subsequent inquiry." What progress was made by this advisory but unofficial Consultative Committee will be noted later.

On April 17, before the new Liberal government actually came into power—and two weeks after the unanimous recommendation of the BBG—the Department of Transport (the licensing authority) asked the

BBG for further details of the conditions attached to its recommendation regarding the St. John's licence for the CBC. It indicated that all the particulars had not been forwarded promptly to the Department. On April 30, the Chairman of the BBG wrote to the Department of Transport: "I shall as soon as possible write you further on the other conditions which the Board recommended in the case of the St. John's station." On June 28, he wrote to the CBC: "We are reluctant to spell out more precisely at this time the general conditions attached to the Board's recommendation in this case." Apparently this decision was on the grounds that the general policy involving problems of CBC expansion – and the consequent disaffiliation of certain private stations from the CBC network – were under discussion by the Consultative Committee. Thus the St. John's case was shunted into the over-all national problem.

On August 6, Carlyle Allison, Vice-Chairman of the BBG, visited St. John's while attending the Atlantic Conference of Broadcasters. He was interviewed at length by the Citizens' Committee of St. John's, which supported the CBC application and sought an explanation for the delay. According to this Committee, which on August 19 published a full-page statement of the interview in the St. John's papers, Mr. Allison's explanation was that Andrew Stewart, Chairman of the BBG, in view of "the general uncertainty about the future of broadcasting, and when there was a change of government, wanted to see which way the cat would jump."²

The publication by the Citizen's Committee provoked J. W. Pickersgill to make a statement in the St. John's papers on August 31. He said:

The Chairman of the BBG, Dr. Andrew Stewart, has advised me that he proposes shortly to inform the Department of Transport that the clarification of the conditions on which the Board recommended the licence for a CBC-TV station has reached the point

² During his visit to St. John's, Allison broadcast from CJON-TV. As a result of this broadcast, and of the interview with him, the Citizens' Committee, in their extended statement in the St. John's press on August 19, charged Allison with bias, belittlement of the benefits a CBC station would bring, and with misquoting facts regarding the hours of CBC programs not carried by CJON. They quoted from a long editorial in *The St. John's Telegram* of August 8, which condemned the delay, and they suggested that there was a conviction, firmly held by many, that the CBC station had become a political football. *The Telegram* also quoted Pickersgill as saying that he believed areas without television should be "taken care of first" before there was duplication in areas already served.

where a licence could now be issued. Once that is done, I am sure the government will approve the recommendation of the BBG without delay so that CBC television broadcasting can begin on the date originally proposed.

The Minister added that soon after he became a member of the government, he was convinced that a CBC station should be established in St. John's to provide alternative television service on conditions that would permit both the public and the private stations to operate successfully.

"THE MONTREAL STAR" AND PICKERSGILL

Still the recommendation did not come through, and on September 16 *The Montreal Star*, in a rewrite of the St. John's interview with Allison, revived the controversy. The paper carried a long editorial charging that the St. John's instance had all the earmarks of political interference with the BBG:

In this case the application of the common sense and the drawing of a few simple inferences will bring most people to the conclusion that a Liberal Government in 1954 blocked a recommendation of the CBC Board of Governors that it should establish a TV station in St. John's, Newfoundland, and that a Liberal Government in 1963 is again equivocating over a recommendation of the BBG that the CBC should establish a TV station there. It would be a sensible precaution for Prime Minister Pearson to keep an eye on developments so that the independent judgment of the BBG can be independently carried out without further delay or equivocation.

This brought Pickersgill to write a letter to *The Montreal Star* which suggested that, before going as far afield as Newfoundland for a story, it might have inquired closer to home, and he enclosed a copy of his statement of August 31 to the St. John's papers. Both of these the *Star* published on September 19.

Authorization for the CBC to proceed finally reached the Corporation on October 3, almost six months after the recommendation of the licence was unanimously endorsed by the BBG. It would appear that protecting the investment of the local private station was of paramount

consideration, and that if the CBC had not made what the St. John's Citizen's Committee called "quixotically lavish" concessions, the Corporation would still not be able to go ahead there.

A perusal of the CBC's brief to the BGC makes the Corporation's case infinitely more compelling than has been indicated. Surely this illustrates the folly of rigidity, of attempting to restrict the vital matter of talent, expression, and interpretation even to capital cities. It may take time, but the only logical and ultimate outcome will be to have a CBC production and distribution unit in every tolerably economic population centre throughout the entire country. In other words, where there are two television stations, one should be owned by the CBC. There is no sound reason now for preferring Saskatoon to Regina, Edmonton to Calgary, Halifax to St. John.⁴

³ Though the Broadcasting Act of 1958 limited foreign ownership in broadcasting stations to 25 per cent, those holding licences prior to the passing of the Act could be exempted from this restriction by Order-in-Council. Under this provision Famous Players continued its ownership of approximately 50 per cent of CFCM-TV (French) and CKMT-TV (English), both in Quebec City. An Order-in-Council in 1959 also extended the same privilege to RKO Distributing Corporation and Esses Productions Inc. with respect to their interests in CKLW-Windsor.

⁴ Since the above was written, the CBC has advised the BGC and the Department of Transport of the Corporation's wish to have channels reserved for its use in Victoria, British Columbia; Saskatoon and Regina, Saskatchewan; Fort William and Sudbury, Ontario; Sherbrooke and Three Rivers, Quebec; Prince Edward Island, and the Fredericton-St. John area of New Brunswick.

CHAPTER 25

“CANADIAN CONTENT”

The Broadcasting Act of 1958 granted the Board of Broadcast Governors the responsibility “for promoting and ensuring the greater use of Canadian talent by broadcasting stations,” to require the broadcasting service to be “basically Canadian in content and character.” During the hearings before the Parliamentary Committee of 1961, the Canadian Association of Broadcasters sought to have the interpretation with respect to talent use broadened by having the words “Canadian production” substituted for “Canadian talent.” Experienced broadcasters will appreciate the implications of such a wider interpretation.

Following public hearings in the latter part of 1959, the Board indicated that as from April 1, 1961, all television stations in Canada would be expected to provide a minimum of 45 per cent of “Canadian content” in their programming. This was increased to 55 per cent in April of 1962 but was modified to permit a continuance of 45 per cent throughout the summers of 1962, 1963, and 1964. The 55 per cent ruling was reinstated in October of each year and this seems now to be a fixed pattern.

After the regulation was in effect for some time, it was found that programs of “Canadian content” were being mainly scheduled by some stations in hours of minimum audience so that maximum-audience evening time could be reserved for imported American programs, which were almost entirely syndicated film shows. In an attempt to correct this, the BBG amended its regulations to require that, between 6:00 P.M. and midnight, stations should schedule at least 40 per cent “Canadian content.” It was suggested (somewhat wistfully) that this might in-

crease revenues from Canadian productions, and enable producers to improve quality through greater expenditures on Canadian productions.

“Canadian content” was given a wide interpretation. The regulation included any program produced by a licensee in his studio or at some outside point and broadcast initially by him. It included Canadian programs received from a network. It included newscasts, commentaries, events taking place outside Canada, in which Canadians were participating, programs featuring special events outside Canada but of general interest to Canadians (World’s Series baseball games, presidential speeches, etc.). It also included the full program-time on any English station or network, over a four-week period, of twenty-eight hours for programs produced in Commonwealth countries, and one-half the program-time for such programs exceeding twenty-eight hours. A similar concession was made regarding programs from French-language countries. For programs produced outside Canada—in countries other than the Commonwealth, or French-language countries if the audio portion was converted to either French or English by a process of lip synchronization done in Canada—one-quarter of their duration was allowed. Clearly, the Board was anything but restrictive in its interpretation of what constituted “Canadian content.”

Stations were required from January of 1962 to file statements within sixty days of each fiscal year showing how they had provided and ensured the greater use of Canadian talent. Programs fell into four basic categories: Information and Orientation; Light Entertainment; Arts, Letters, and Sciences; Sports and Outdoors. The first category included: news, news commentaries; road, weather, and market reports; sports scores; religious, public affairs, talks, discussions, interviews, documentaries; education, formal and informal, including kindergarten and adult; agriculture and fisheries. Light Entertainment covered quiz games and contests too. Arts, Letters, and Sciences was very broad but included cultural and scientific programming.

Talent as such was not defined. But talent was taken to include any Canadian who could appear before cameras—whether football, hockey, or bingo players; symphonic orchestras, stars of opera, dramas, or comedy; freelance or staff employees. The Board said:

Insofar as local live programming is concerned, much the greater proportion is devoted to Information and Orientation. . . . The second category most in evidence is Light Entertainment. The third category in terms of proportion is Sports and Outdoors

which varies a good deal from station to station. There is a minimal proportion of programming in any of the groups of stations which qualifies under the "Arts, Letters, and Sciences" category which rarely struggles above two per cent of the total weekly schedule and less than one per cent for many private stations. . . . The over-all Canadian program content shown on television stations across Canada varies but slightly among the different groups of stations, whether they be "second" television stations, privately owned stations affiliated with the CBC, or stations owned and operated by the CBC. . . . The over-all "Canadian content" of the "second" television stations ranged during a sample four week period in the winter of 1963 from approximately 56 per cent to 67.5 per cent. The range for English-language stations on the CBC network was from 55 to 66 per cent. The range for French-language stations affiliated with the CBC was from 63 to 76 per cent. . . . You will see that the over-all average is above the Board's minimum requirement of 55 per cent of the total broadcast time in a four-week period. Of this total somewhere between 5 and 6 per cent of the average is program material of Commonwealth origin. French-language programs from French-speaking countries abroad approximates from 10 to 12 per cent of the broadcast schedule of the French-language stations. The remainder of the programs—ranging from some 25 per cent of the total of French language stations to about 45 per cent on some English language stations—stem entirely from American sources.¹

A MEANINGLESS PHRASE

The "Canadian content" regulation meant very little, if anything, insofar as CBC-owned and operated stations were concerned. The same applied to its affiliates. The CBC's television programming had substantially exceeded the "Canadian content" requirements of the BBG years before the latter had been established, and continued much the same afterward. On the basis of only twelve hours operation daily—12:00 noon to 12:00 midnight²—CBC affiliates have been broadcasting

¹ Private letter from the BBG, March 5, 1963.

² Most are now broadcasting more hours. "Second" television stations have been on the air ninety-eight to one hundred or more hours weekly, and CBC stations in 1963 have been from ninety to ninety-eight hours.

slightly over forty hours a week supplied by the CBC English network. Of this, thirty hours weekly have been produced in Canada, while approximately ten hours have been from the United States. The BBG's summer requirement of 45 per cent Canadian content meant thirty-seven hours and fifty minutes in a week, or approximately eight hours more per week than could be obtained directly from the CBC network. This time was mostly filled with local news, weather, information, commentaries and other local programs, with additional CBC programs, with Commonwealth films, even with a certain proportion of other adapted films. Little additional direct expenditure on talent outside station staffs was necessary for CBC affiliates to meet the "Canadian content" requirement. Even with the requirement at 55 per cent, the time that must be filled by CBC affiliates with their own productions did not exceed two hours and twenty minutes daily. Many stations exceeded this, of course, otherwise they could not have made money. But this was done with the simplest sort of programming involving the minimum of talent outside regular station staffs.

"Second" television stations naturally enough have no access to CBC network programs. Yet, according to the BBG, "during a representative week this winter [1963] the second television stations averaged approximately 33 per cent of local live programming; in their total broadcast period the CBC stations, whether affiliated or owned, averaged approximately 16.5 per cent of local live programming in relation to their total schedule." Obviously this situation requires some explaining, and the schedules of one of the "second" stations should be examined to dramatize the differences.

THE "SECOND" STATION

Because of its location in the most populous English-speaking centre of Canada, with the largest pool of talent in the country—certainly one of the largest by North-American standards—and perhaps because originally it was the most strongly financed, CFTO-TV (Toronto's Channel 9) was chosen for examination. It is the child of *The Toronto Telegram*, and there exists a close working relationship and advantageous promotion arrangement with this daily newspaper. CFTO-TV began operations in January 1, 1961, and joined the CTV network when it commenced in October that year.

Nine applicants appeared before the BBG seeking the Toronto licence, four from newspaper or periodical publishers. The successful applicant

projected his programming plans in great detail. Programming would range from news to monthly specials, featuring the National Ballet, the Toronto Symphony, the Canadian Opera Company, and the Stratford Shakespearean Festival. Other programs would include a thirty-minute weekly drama, a noon-day variety refresher to be called the "Goofy Gang," a thirty minute weekly show from Toronto's hospitals, a weekly screen test for both promising new talent and established artists, a search for teenage talent, a nightly religious feature "Epilogue" to close off the day, elaborate plans for farm and women's interests and sports. There was no guesswork on CFTO's schedule. Program time was worked out to the second decimal point, right down the line: community events, 6.49 per cent; news, 5.51 per cent; weather, .97 per cent; farm, 3.42 per cent; religion, 1.84 per cent; education, 5.8 per cent; sports, 8.6 per cent; etc. Of the station's 86½ hours weekly, nearly 42 hours would be devoted to live studio programming, 39½ to film, and the remainder to "remotes." Of the station's first year's expenditures, 27.13 per cent would be for live talent. Great emphasis was laid on thorough rehearsal, on the featuring of personalities. John Bassett, chief owner, spoke feelingly of his appreciation of the French language and the nobility of the French tradition. He said he hoped to use some top French-language programs from the "second" Montreal television station. CFTO-TV opened with the widely advertised slogan: "Television as it ought to be."

To demonstrate these plans at the BGG's hearing in Toronto, a closed-circuit production was staged before the Board during that memorable week in 1960. Ecstatic at the occasion, *The Telegram* said (May 17, 1960): "The twelve Governors licked their lips as they watched the cooking demonstration. They tapped their fingers to the beat of the "Swingin' Shepherd Blues," and a group of pretty singers threw kisses toward the board members as they closed the act."

CFTO-TV opened on January 1, 1961, with a splendid physical plant, and a large and enthusiastic staff. But it soon ran into heavy weather and disagreements. There was an ousting of the President, Joel Aldred; then drastic reductions in staff; finally the need for refinancing. Only prompt action by the BGG prevented the sale of a substantial block of its stock to the American Broadcasting Company.³

³ The outright sale of a 25 per cent equity in the station, with a voting interest of 18.9 per cent, to the American Broadcasting Company was stopped by the BGG, but a very substantial loan was said to have been negotiated through the American network. The whole operation provoked a new regulation (on March 28, 1962) whereby licence-holders must

In March of 1962, *Canadian Saturday Night*—the temporary title of the highly reputable journal *Saturday Night*—subjected CFTO-TV's program operations to a searching analysis.

Of the peak-time programs originally outlined by CFTO-TV, 44.55 per cent were Canadian, but of its actual peak-time programming just 17.34 per cent are Canadian. In almost every program category—and especially in those which the examining Board seemed to weigh most heavily—it has delivered considerably less than it offered. . . . Where are the programs to warrant these grandiloquent sentiments in the brief to the BBG: "We believe that skill and invention can enable truth, culture and the free exchange of ideas to be communicated to all levels of society through entertaining presentation. Because of this, we are making long-term plans for the building and development of a drama department that will bring to our viewers fine theatrical fare. We look forward to establishing our station as a foremost Canadian stage for the telecasting of the entertainment arts."

Perhaps the intentions of the owners were good; at least they were not inconsistent with promises made by any number of radio stations over the years, and perhaps a few other television stations as well, although experienced operators among the latter were much more conservative.

CFTO'S PROGRAMMING REVISITED

Nearly two years later, when CFTO-TV settled down and worked out many of its pressing problems, I made a breakdown of its schedule during a full week of programming (November 3-8, 1963). The station with the motto "Television as it ought to be" was on the air 102 hours during that week between 9:00 A.M. and 12:00 P.M. As nearly as could be calculated, 55¼ hours were Canadian (or of British origin) and 46¾ were American. Of the "Canadian content," only five hours out of 55¼ in the week fell in what is usually known as prime or peak evening

report, within sixty days after a request from the BBG, any agreement on loans or advances, with copies of debenture issues, trust deeds securing any debentures and agreements under which any management services are required. See *The Globe and Mail*, March 28, 1962.

time, that is, between 7:00 and 11:00 P.M.,⁴ and of this 1½ hours were British films, which count as Canadian. During the week, Canadian productions between 7:00 and 11:00 P.M. averaged thirty minutes a day. Of this, on a weekly basis, one half-hour was sports comment, two half-hours were guessing games or quiz shows, one half-hour was a semi-amateur hootenanny, and one hour was a popular musical, "The Jerry Lester Show," produced in co-operation with an American production firm and featuring American talent. Only the last two could be said to involve any serious production efforts.

But it was the balance of CFTO's "Canadian content"—from 9:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.—that was most interesting. There were some very capable people on these day-time programs, particularly in the mornings. Iris Cooper is one of the most impressive and competent personalities seen anywhere on television. Also good were: David Devall, Uncle Bobby and his little menagerie, the French and Science lessons produced for general distribution to stations by META, the Metropolitan Educational Television Association of Toronto. In the afternoon, there was a women's advice show hosted by an American commentator, more of Uncle Bobby, a children's show, and a network feed from Vancouver called "People in Conflict." All these shows ran from Monday through Friday. All except the last were almost entirely one-man or one-woman shows, with interviewees from various public-service institutions, art galleries, charities, or other organizations, most of which welcomed this opportunity for promotion which was free in both ways—free to the organization and free to the station. Some were brief interviews interspersed liberally with bits of film, mainly of American origin. News, weather, and sports at 6:30 P.M. and 11:00 P.M. added more of the same. These were essentially low-cost programs requiring a minimum of paid talent, outside regular interviewers and commentators. The one exception was the twenty-minute interview five days weekly at 11:40 P.M.—"The Pierre Berton Show." Of the remaining 50¼ hours of "Canadian content," forty hours (including news, weather, etc.) was of the type mentioned; 6½ hours was sports or sports commentaries; three hours were CTV network programs ("People in Conflict," "Telepol"), half an hour was "Educated Guess," and one quarter-hour was in Italian.

This is the general pattern among "second" television stations. The

⁴ The BBC's time classifications do not coincide with those outlined. The BBC makes one time classification of the period between 6:00 P.M. and midnight. This makes it much easier for stations to meet its requirements.

schedules fluctuate a little—but not greatly—from one city to another depending on management and revenues available.⁵ But is it really television? Private television is falling into the same general pattern as radio—news, sports, weather, local church or other similar pick-ups; quizzes and prize contests, with prizes contributed by groups of sponsors; one-man interviews; a few network shows; but very, very little that could be considered creative or requiring any marked production efforts. This is not meant as a reflection on either the abilities of private broadcasters, but as a not unfair representation of their overall programming.

After examining the CFTO-TV schedule, I examined that of CBL-TV for the same week (November 3-8, 1963). The CBC station in Toronto was on the air 97½ hours, 60 per cent of which was Canadian in origin, and 40 per cent American. The CBC had sixteen hours of Canadian productions between 7:00 P.M. and 11:00 P.M. during the week, made up mostly of its public-service programs, though this was also partially accounted for by placing news, weather, and sports in prime time. Exclusive sports events accounted for 8½ hours a week.

CBC programming was vastly more varied than that of CFTO. Larger groups of paid talent, more pretentious shows, more educational, children's, and public-service programs—as would be expected of an institution largely financed from public grants—these were features no private station could possibly undertake. Some single CBC programs cost from \$25,000 to \$50,000 or more, depending on the talent used, the amount of travelling, the number of participants involved. A half-hour taped documentary, employing limited talent, runs to \$10,000 or more. A top drama may cost between \$30,000 and \$40,000, a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta \$100,000, while rights to such events as the Olympics and world hockey run into very large sums. For French programming these figures can generally be duplicated.

⁵ A detailed examination of other private television stations is beyond the scope of this book. However, an exhaustive examination of the schedules of several of them was set forth by the Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists before the Fowler Advisory Committee in October of 1964, and appears in the monthly *ACTRA News Magazine*, September 1964 to March 1965.

REGULATION MOSTLY FACADE

The "Canadian content" regulation, until proven otherwise, appears to be a façade, totally ineffective insofar as improvement in the quality of Canadian programming is concerned. It may have created some additional jobs, largely for those of less than top standard, but it has not raised standards. In the case of "second" TV stations, it can be credited with preventing the use of a still larger percentage of American films by any one station, although in the aggregate the total use of such films has been substantially increased through the opening of new markets. The definition of "Canadian content" is too broad, and the BBG will not narrow it appreciably for fear of putting private stations in the red.

There is no short-cut—by regulations or otherwise—to quality programming. Program standards cannot be legislated. One of the most significant comments concerning "Canadian content" was made by Ken Soble of CHCH-TV Hamilton, the only television station in Canada that operates in a most competitive market without network affiliation. In an interview with Dennis Braithwaite in *The Globe and Mail* (on February 25, 1963), Soble said:

All Canadian programs [under BBG regulations] no matter how inferior in quality get the same rating.⁶ I believe that quality programs, like live drama, should be given a point rating, above, say a quiz show or panel. It seems to me that I, or any other broadcaster, should be encouraged to produce a small number of good Canadian programs instead of a larger number of mediocre ones. A broadcaster cannot afford to make a large investment in a single program because he still has to meet the quantitative quota, day after day, throughout the year. There is no incentive for the station to produce good shows. Why spend \$3,000 or \$4,000 when you can get the same credit for having a piano player? I don't see how the present rule is helping Canadian talent at all, and isn't that what it was intended to do?

Officials of the CTV network have also expressed their doubts concerning the effectiveness of the Board's "Canadian content" regulation. *Maclean's* (February 23, 1963) referred to the "junk" programs as the "carnies of the picture tube," and said: "In Canada there is an added

⁶ "Rating," as used in this context, does not refer to the number of viewers but to the program's evaluation by the BBG.

factor, the Board of Broadcast Governors' insistence on 'Canadian' programs. Quiz shows and give-aways are the easiest, cheapest, and most time-consuming Canadian programs that can be produced."

PRESSURE FOR AMERICAN FILMS

The Annual Reports of the BBG provide no indication whatever of the real impact of the "Canadian content" regulation on either the quantity or quality of encouragement given to Canadian artistic talent. The most significant characteristic common to the schedules of both private and publicly owned stations is the large percentage of American films, particularly between 7:00 and 11:00 P.M.—85 per cent with CFTO-TV, 43 per cent with CBL-TV. Neither CFTO nor any other "second" private station could survive long without syndicated American films, and even the CBC's schedules would be utterly decimated without them. French Canada has been influenced much less directly but to no small degree, and this tide of Americanism sweeping over television, radio, movies, and in other ways, is undoubtedly responsible for Quebec's anxiety to conserve French language and French-Canadian culture on this continent.

American films are made for the domestic market, and what is recovered from Canada and other foreign markets is largely velvet. Canada is the largest market outside the United States for television films, which are sold at a discount, if not actually dumped here. A film that costs \$500 for a Toronto run would bring from one-third to one-half more in a city of similar size in the United States, although the latter price might include one, or possibly two, re-runs, since American stations are being increasingly forced to use repeats.

In a curious and unintentional way, the CBC has given an indirect but important impetus to the sale of such imported films. Most American organizations producing television films maintain sales representatives in Toronto or Montreal, and the CBC is the largest single buyer. If the film representative can sell the CBC without travel or other additional expenses, he is well on his way, and to accomplish this he makes every effort. To cover private stations, especially those in remote or isolated areas, is much more expensive. Moreover, stations in such isolated areas often have exclusive audiences and are in a better position to be particular and set their own prices.

The greatest beneficiary of the "second" television stations and the

CTV network has been the American film-maker. These outlets opened a whole new market. Moreover, it set the CBC and the second stations bidding against one another for the best films, and this competition assisted the film-makers to maintain better prices. Dennis Braithwaite made this comment (in *The Globe and Mail*, May 6, 1964):

This is the time of year our two television networks, the CBC and CTV, get out the news of their schedules for next fall. Behind the announcements lie two or three months of cloak-and-dagger scurrying back and forth to Hollywood and London in search of film programs that reflect what is expected to be the viewing trend next winter. For, sad to relate, both national chains depend on foreign shows, mostly U.S., to give their prime-time hours glamour, interest, and drawing power. Therefore, what's new in Canadian TV usually means what U.S. shows went well last year and whether we can get something like them for next year. As usual, there have been reports of bitter backstage rivalry and even skullduggery; one private operator alleges the CBC is not above buying shows it doesn't need in order to keep them out of the opposition's hands. Possession of vast public funds, so goes the story, puts the Corporation in an unassailable bidding position.

ADVERTISING-CONTENT REGULATION

When the BBG assumed the regulatory powers of the CBC, the Board inherited radio regulations and amendments developed and promulgated over the preceding twenty-five years, which basically concerned radio. No special regulations applicable to television were ever promulgated by the CBC. Hence the first regulations issued by the new body, on July 8, 1959, were virtually identical with those formerly in effect.

On November 2, 1959, these were replaced by new regulations. Similar to those in effect, the new regulations contained notable additions which mainly concerned "Canadian content" and the percentage of commercial time permissible on programs of various durations, from five to sixty minutes. Under the CBC Board of Governors, the time allowed for commercial messages was less after 6:00 P.M.—approximately 20 to 35 per cent less, depending somewhat on the length of the program. The new regulations adopted the maximum, or daytime, scale and applied

it uniformly to both day and night programs, thereby lifting substantially the time allowance for commercials after 6:00 P.M. Radio stations were limited to five paid spots or flash advertisements—four minutes total advertising time in any fifteen-minute period—approximately 26.7 per cent.

In November of 1961, after prolonged consideration followed by public hearings and examinations of the logs of a representative group of stations, new BBG regulations reduced the commercial time allowed weekly to radio stations between 6:00 A.M. and 12:00 midnight to a maximum of 1,500 minutes (approximately 20 per cent), and a maximum of 250 minutes in any one day (approximately 23 per cent). This change was opposed by private broadcasters on the grounds that it would restrict their earning power. So when amendments were again promulgated on May 9, 1962, the allowance was restored to what it had been—sixteen minutes (or twenty commercial messages) in one hour, or 2,016 minutes over seven consecutive days, as compared with 1,500 minutes previously set. Thus the arguments for more commercial time have prevailed.

The amount of time permitted by the Board for commercials that were within programs was set out in the regulations of July 1959. These have remained constant, except that since 1962 an additional allowance has been added for programs that qualify as Canadian in content and character. These times stand as follows:

LENGTH OF ADVERTISING MESSAGES

<i>Length of Programs in Minutes</i>	<i>Regular Programs</i>		<i>Programs of "Canadian Content"</i>	
	<i>Actual Time</i>	<i>Percent of Program Time</i>	<i>Actual Time</i>	<i>Percent of Program Time</i>
5	1:15	25	1:25	28.3
10	2:10	21.6	2:30	25.0
15	3:00	20.0	3:30	23.3
20	3:30	17.5	4:10	20.8
25	4:00	16.0	4:50	19.3
30	4:15	13.75	5:15	17.5
40	5:00	12.50	6:20	15.8
45	5:45	12.70	7:15	16.1
60	7:00	11.70	9:00	15.00

It will be seen that the BBG has been generous and accommodating, first by increasing the evening commercial time, and second by adding to the allowances at any hour should the programs qualify under the "Canadian content" rule. These allowances are somewhat more generous than the CBC allows under its commercial policy. CAB has expressed satisfaction with the BBG's regulations—a far cry from the earlier days, with 5 per cent program content, no spots on Sundays—which even CAB endorsed in 1931.

Very little distinguishes Canadian standards of commercial content, as laid down by the BBG's regulations, from those practised in the United States and occasionally decried by Canadians. It is significant that American commercials are finally being criticized by the last people one would expect would voice disapproval, the advertising agencies themselves. In a speech before the Eastern Annual Conference of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, on November 13, 1962, President Marion Harper, Jr., decried the rising decibel level of advertising, and added: "I am convinced the public will not extend unlimited tolerance to advertising in order that competitors may outshout each other to the point of acute ear-ache. . . . We're faced with the alternative of accepting a limit on total advertising volume, or consenting to a ceiling on advertising noise level."

THE GROWING "CLUTTER"

Another notable figure in the advertising world, William B. Lewis, Chairman of Kenyon and Eckhart, Inc., spoke before the Broadcasters' Promotion Association on October 29, 1962, at Dallas, Texas, in these terms about Washington's Federal Communications Commission:

The main body of complaints the FCC receives from viewers about radio and television concerns commercials. There are too many of them. They are too loud and strident (and this complaint has been verified by H. H. Scott, Inc., engineers, who found that, on 65 per cent of forty television programs monitored, the commercials were louder than the programs they inhabited). Many of them are nauseating. Much too often they interrupt programs without thought, taste, or common courtesy.

Still another advertising authority, David Ogilvy, of Ogilvy, Benson, and Mather, Inc., spoke before the Empire Club in Toronto on November 7, 1963:

It is television advertising that has made Madison Avenue the arch-symbol of tasteless materialism. If governments do not soon set up machinery for the stricter regulation of television, both commercials and programs . . . I fear that the majority of thoughtful men will soon agree with Arnold Toynbee that the destiny of our western civilization turns on the issue of our struggle with all that Madison Avenue stands for. The vast majority of thought-leaders now believe that advertising promotes values that are too materialistic. What thought-leaders think today, the majority of voters are likely to think tomorrow.

The intensification of commercials is not all due to increased time allowances for messages but to the increased number of stations and the expensive nature of television. Exorbitant costs mean very few advertisers can afford to sponsor whole programs, so multiple sponsorship has become the rule. Sponsored programs could never accommodate the numerous applicants, large and small, anxious to use television. More "availabilities"⁷ must be found to accommodate them. To meet this need, programs are shortened, and spots and flashes, often two or three together, are inserted at the tail end of a program. Sometimes it seems as if the buyers of spots and flashes actually share sponsorship of the programs that immediately precede them. Often it appears as though programs not intended for sponsorship are being sponsored—so involved is the great *mélange*.

CBC spots are limited to sixty seconds and twenty seconds, with very few as short as ten seconds. Most private stations also carry five-second flashes. A week's television schedule of CBLT in Toronto, in November of 1962, showed 230 "availabilities" for sixty seconds, and 160 for twenty-second spots, between 12:00 noon and 12:00 midnight—in addition to "messages" within commercial programs. Almost half of these "availabilities" occurred between 6:00 P.M. and midnight. Such spots are the real meat of station revenue; without them, the entire

⁷ An "availability" is a vacant or potentially vacant one-minute, twenty-second, or ten-second time-segment at the end of a program. A commercial message, usually unrelated to the program, may be placed here. A five-second spot is known as a flash.

structure of commercial television would collapse. Although daytime availabilities have never been sold out on any CBC station, evening-spot availabilities are nearly always sold in the larger cities.

Selective spots, messages within commercial programs, together with capsules of shows (brief vignettes or "come-ons"), capsules of coming shows, promotion spots, credits to artists, writers, producers, technicians, costumers and opening and closing billboards (a brief program identification, or curtain announcement, at the very beginning and end of commercial programs) —many of these spoken at elevated decibel levels—all this builds up to that seemingly endless series of interruptions known as "clutter," which is mainly responsible for the swelling tide of criticism against the over-commercialization of evening time. On many private stations this situation is still more aggravated by five-second flashes and a large percentage of ten-second notices which spread the "availabilities" to additional advertisers. Spots or flashes are not sold on networks but are disposed of entirely on individual stations at selective or spot rates.

In March of 1963, owners of private stations once more met with the BBG to discuss commercials. As the result of complaints from listeners, the Board proposed to reduce the plugs for commercials from sixteen minutes to twelve minutes per hour. But there was no immediate change. Dennis Braithwaite put it succinctly in *The Globe and Mail*:

Despite the stately ritual dance performed by the Board of Broadcast Governors and the station owners in Ottawa, this week there is not going to be any crackdown on TV commercials. . . . It should be well understood by this time that the BBG was not set up in order to preside at the liquidation of the industry, or even to seriously interfere with its profit-making. Everybody was going around looking holy.

In July of 1964, renewed complaints from viewers regarding interruptions and over-commercialization resulted in the BBG once more deciding to revert as from October of 1964 to the slightly smaller allowances permissible in 1959 and early 1962. Finally, in May, 1965, the BBG removed all restraints on the number of spot or flash announcements so long as the total time used for them fell within the regulations. Thus the pendulum swings, depending on the weight and persistence of clamour and pressure from one group or another.

POWER INCREASES

The fourth activity of the BBG, occupying the greater part of its time and effort, is the hearing of applications for new stations, power-increases, and changes of location or ownership. Between the time the Board took over, in 1958, and 1962, the power of private radio stations has more than doubled from some 651,280 watts to 1,264,000 watts. In November of 1958, there were four 50-kw. private radio stations. Now there are twelve, with a thirteenth approved and more applications pending. Nearly all are in strategic areas, and none of them on CBC networks. Many of the 10-kw. increases were desirable and made for better reception in the battle against interference. Few, if any, of the 50-kw. increases were either necessary or desirable. They intensified the battle for survival among the smaller stations. Moreover, many major power increases were granted with little more than indefinite and hazy promises with respect to standards of program service. Any references to such requirements are conspicuous by their absence from BBG reports. It is not without significance that the agitation for a separate regulatory board, supplanting the CBC's authority, stemmed largely from such stations anxious to maintain and expand their dominant coverage and earnings.

Six years of experiment, uncertainty, and tension associated with dual control, far from lessening the problems, have only served to accentuate them and compel their review as predicted by the Fowler Commission. The BBG cannot push private stations appreciably beyond what many of them—though by no means all—are now doing in the use of live talent or original productions, without putting still more of them in the red. Its chief aim seems to have been to ensure the profitability of the private television stations which it has recommended for licences and co-ordinated into the CTV network. At best, the BBG has maintained an uneasy and uneven balance between public and private broadcasting. It has been decidedly over-optimistic in accepting the promises of public-service programming from private applicants. Its Annual Reports to date have consisted almost entirely of a mere recital of its activities, particularly in the approval of applications for licences. These reports have been far from notable for specific or interpretive information on the condition of broadcasting in general, or on the performance of private stations. Indeed, in some respects the BBG's reports indicate a degree of health in broadcasting not justified by the facts.

CHAPTER 26

TELEVISION AND BUREAUCRACY

More than twelve years have elapsed since television was introduced into Canada, and ten since the first microwave electronic skyway bridged the nation from Vancouver to St. John's. What have been some of TV's accomplishments? This very brief summation must be confined to the network programming of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, mainly those programs occupying the evening hours from 7:00 to 11:00 P.M. Local programming on the affiliated stations remains little more than radio with pictures. Indeed, everywhere on this continent, local television has risen little above this level. Nor is it possible here to do more than make occasional references to the regional creations of the CBC.

The first few years of Canadian television were frantic with the double duty of providing facilities and constantly expanding the hours of network broadcasting. There was little time for the calculated planning that settled conditions would permit; nor has there been since. Trial and error, internal pressures for this or that have been dominant; calculated experimentation has been hit-and-miss. Getting the feel of television, training producers and artists, producing programs that could be sold—all took time. There were high hopes, plenty of disappointments, signal accomplishments. Many who had been successful in radio could not adapt to the new medium, and more than a few distinguished people left broadcasting forever.

In radio, all production and distribution costs of commercial network programs had been borne by the sponsors, with a small margin left over for the CBC. In television, the situation is much different. Commercial-

network television programs produced by the CBC for individual sponsors have had to be heavily subsidized. Production costs, plus the cost of facilities in this sparsely settled country, plus intense American competition in main market areas such as Vancouver and Toronto, have put severe limits on what sponsors would or could pay. And particularly when they could import proven programs from parent companies in the United States, or import films that would serve equally well—often better—as a merchandising medium. In Canada it requires fifty television stations and over four thousand miles of microwave network connections to reach the same population that can be reached by one or two stations in New York or London.

In 1958, the average cost of ninety-minute dramas in the United States was \$135,000. In Canada, the cost was less than \$42,000. For one-hour productions, the comparison was \$81,000 for United States network productions, and \$29,000 for Canadian productions. In half-hour dramatic productions, the American average was \$41,400 compared with \$11,350 in Canada. One-hour variety shows had an average cost of \$112,000, compared with \$47,750 in Canada, and half-hour quiz shows across the border averaged \$28,200 compared with \$6,500 in Canada. (For further figures, see Appendix A, page 131, of the CBC's submissions to the Parliamentary Committee of 1959.) These submissions also show that, in a representative group of ten sponsored Canadian productions, the sponsors paid 43 per cent of the actual production costs with the CBC paying 57 per cent. The benefits of this subsidization were extended to all stations on the network. Since the above figures were compiled, production costs have risen in both countries. These facts have to be kept in mind in assessing sponsor-contribution to Canadian television programming. The CBC reported the 1963-64 cost of programs with advertising, nearly all of which would be for television, at \$20,597,000 or 28 per cent of the cost of all CBC programs. The CBC does not disclose the contributions sponsors have made, but their share of programming costs is considerably less percentage-wise now than it was in 1958.

In this review of the present state of television, it is not possible to refer more than occasionally to French programs. But it is important to note that generally Montreal's French telecasting has equalled the standards of the English network and has been more consistently good in the field of music. Certainly it seems to have met with a high degree of appreciation among French viewers.

In the CBC's first year of English television, the leading features were

"The Big Revue," "Sunshine Sketches," and "Tabloid," twenty minutes of news, commentary, weather, and interviews with Dick McDougall, Elaine Grand (now producing distinguished documentaries in England), Percy Saltzman (still the premier weather man in North America), "Court of Opinion," numerous classical plays, and "The Leslie Bell Singers."

WHY LESLIE BELL LEFT TELEVISION

The distinguished Dr. Leslie Bell, founder of the finest girls' choir in the country, after six years of radio sponsorship by Canadian General Electric, ventured into television, but after two years he left it never to return. His reasons (in *Maclean's* on April 30, 1955) were a reflection of the jitters and uncertainty that has pervaded so much of television.

I left it partly because I was not doing anything for it and partly because it was not doing anything for me. I left it because I saw how rapidly it burns up talent and how little security it offers. I left it because I am a musician and because the only part a musician can play in tv is second fiddle. Security is rare in any kind of show business but in television it is practically non-existent. tv performers for the most part fall into two groups—those who have been dropped and those who are going to be dropped soon. Why is the mortality rate of tv performers so much greater than that of radio stars? If a complete impasse is to be avoided, those connected with tv should sit back and do some relaxed thinking. Unfortunately relaxation is a foreign word in tv.

First there are the sponsor's jitters. His jitters spread to the planners who in their anxiety to please the client frequently jump from one idea to another without giving any one of them a chance. Half the ulcers in tv are the result of frantic efforts to create in a few hours the kind of show that in vaudeville days would have been given weeks of rehearsal. Unfortunately rehearsals cost money. Granting the difference in population between Canada and the United States, the fact remains that the CBC is working on a shoe-string. For budget reasons orchestras and choirs have been whittled to chamber groups. The present orchestra on "Showtime" is half the size it was in radio, and its original chorus of twenty-five now consists of eight voices. "Mr. Showbusiness" uses only an

octet and "On Stage" employs a vocal unit of six. We generally think of a chorus in terms of at least sixteen voices.

If more money is not available, one solution would be to have simpler programs. Would the public accept simpler programs? Personally I think they'd stand up and cheer. If there is one thing the Canadian public wants, it is a simpler, more direct approach to television programming. Why does so much have to be happening all the time? Why all this eternal choreography and all this running around? Can't anything or anyone stand still? I think television is trying too hard to be subtle and clever.

So far TV with a few notable exceptions, has not done much for music. Opera and ballet are naturals for the screen, but when television runs up against other forms of music it doesn't seem to know what to do. If television is here to stay, it must assume the responsibility that radio did in raising the level of Canadian taste. Entertainment is a splendid thing but when it becomes a complete substitute for culture it is a prelude to catastrophe.

EARLY CBC TELEVISION DRAMA

Highest among CBC television accomplishments stands drama. In 1953, "General Motors Theatre" began as a CBC production. Of eighteen plays, fifteen were originals by Canadian writers. It continued to present for nearly ten years a great array of Canadian actors, writers, and producers, until it was replaced entirely by "Bonanza" in 1962. "La Famille Plouffe," extended later to the national English network, gave English viewers for almost the first time the feel of French working-class life and humour. The following year, dramas increased 80 per cent, with thirty-four one-hour plays (eleven originals and eleven adaptations by Canadians). Included were "The Picture of Dorian Grey" adapted by John Bethune, "Lies My Father Told Me" by Ted Allan, Alexander Ross's "The Closing Door" adapted by Alan Pierce; Rebecca West's "Salt of the Sea," Henry James's "Garden of the Sea," "Ashes in the Wind" by Mac Shoub. There were also fifty-eight half hours with twenty-four originals by Canadians. Outstanding among these were plays by John Lucarotti, George Salverson, Leslie MacFarlane, and Joseph Schull. In 1955-56, drama on "CBC Sunday Night" included *Hamlet*, a two-hour production starring Lloyd Bochner with original music by Louis Applebaum, *Macbeth* starring Barry Morse

and Katherine Blake, Ibsen's *Ghosts*, *Juno and the Paycock*, *Candida*, and others. There were additional original Canadian plays by Jacqueline Rosenfeld, Lister Sinclair, and *The Black Bonspiel of Willie McGrinnon* by W. O. Mitchell.

In 1954, the National Script Department was organized (according to the CBC Annual Report for 1956-57) "to project a new and far-reaching plan for the development of original Canadian writing for radio and television." It was to work in close collaboration with producers and supervisors in attracting "a greater volume of work from Canada's best writers, and to facilitate the discovery of talented young writers." The CBC said that, during 1956-57, representatives of the Script Department crossed Canada "making useful contacts with 111 writers in nine cities. There was experimentation with a new idea for contract writing. Its aim—to enable promising young writers to find freedom to become playwrights in the broadcasting field without being held down by other jobs."

The same year the English television network service was broadcasting forty-eight a week. More than one-half was Canadian in origin; in French Canada, three-fourths was Canadian. The CBC said: "Our native talent has developed its standards to a point where Canadian performers in many fields rank with the best of any broadcasting service in the world." By this time the great majority of the plays on CBC television were either written or adapted by Canadians. "Folio" scheduled twelve plays; six were originals by such Canadian writers as W. O. Mitchell, Tommy Tweed, and Joseph Schull. "General Motors Theatre" presented eighteen one-hour plays including *Flight into Danger* by Arthur Hailey. "CBC Television Theatre" provided an additional twenty-six week series of hour-long plays. Twenty-three of twenty-nine half-hour plays in the series "On Camera" were Canadian originals. Ten of them were sold to the British Broadcasting Corporation, and five plays commissioned by the Drama Department were sold to American networks.

During 1957-58, some 5,070 scripts were purchased from Canadian writers, 3,057 for radio and 1,213 for television. Eighteen half-hour and ten one-hour plays, as well as one ninety-minute drama were sold to the BBC, while the Australian Broadcasting Commission bought fourteen half-hour dramas.

A FUTURE FOR WRITERS

The 1959-60 CBC Annual Report noted:

It was a year in which surges of truly excellent television began to appear with increasing frequency. CBC programs contained a far greater proportion of outstanding television than ever before. In just seven years our artists, producers, technicians, and other staff have achieved a production proficiency and polish which is not surpassed in any other country. The Corporation believes the next big stride in television program production will be in the writing field. Canadian writers, like those in other countries, have been inundated by a quantity demand which they could not possibly meet in terms of sustained quality. They have been working with the Corporation toward solving this problem, and there is every indication that the next few years will bring marked results.

To what extent these predictions were to be fulfilled will be seen later.

In 1961, "Festival" under Robert Allen was dominant with a new series of Canadian-produced dramas, operas, and musicals. It was the highlight of the CBC fall and winter season, and opened in October with a ninety-minute version of *H.M.S. Pinafore*. It featured the Stratford Festival Company with Norman Campbell as producer. Two-hour productions on "Festival" included *Julius Caesar*, *Great Expectations*, and two operas, *Electra* and *Falstaff*. Also scheduled in ninety-minute productions were Eugene O'Neill's *The Great God Brown*, a new play *Royal Gambit* about Henry VIII and his wives, Anouilh's *Ring Around the Moon*, and an original Canadian play *The Kildeer* by James Reaney, which won the Dominion Drama Festival's Award. Sixty-minute shows included *Night Must Fall* by Emyln Williams, *The Pupil* by Henry James, Anouilh's *Colombe*, Ansky's *The Dybbuk*, and Oscar Wilde's *Lord Arthur Saville's Crime*. Practically all starred Canadian performers.

"Close-Up" in its fourth season included an hour-long report on the Canadian Indian; interviews with Mike Wallace following a survey of the United States' political scene, with Red Skelton by June Callwood in his studios, with Lawrence Durrell by Elaine Grand and Daryl Duke. In Yugoslavia, Duke and Sir Fitzroy Maclean revisited Tito, while Barry Harris for producer Harry Boyle confronted Henry R. Luce.

Allan King interviewed Peter Sellers in his garden. Malcolm Muggeridge interviewed the playwright Arthur Miller, while Hugh Kenner, the Canadian-born American critic, discussed the philosophy of the poet Ezra Pound. Allan King produced the documentary "Calcutta Rickshaw." Nathan Cohen, the drama critic, and Sydney Newman, now head of CBC drama, were active participants in script-writing and production at that time.

The autumn of 1960 also saw a new venture under the direction of the bright and versatile Ross Maclean, the producer and founder of "Tabloid," "Long Shot," "Living," "Let's See," and "Close-Up." The new show was "Q for Quest." Andrew Allan was the host and mentor. "Quest" was to be "an outlet for writers, performers, composers, painters, poets, and personalities to do what they want to do and can do best;" clearly experimental and concerned with the arts. "Quest" featured "A Canvas for Conversation," three Canadian painters discussing their art, "An Evening Without James Reaney," "Yosef Drenters," son of a Belgian blacksmith who works his father's farm near Guelph by day and sculpts by night; Maureen Forrester, the famous Canadian mezzo-soprano; *Burlap Bags*, a TV adaptation of Len Peterson's immensely successful radio play; *For the Information of Husbands* by Chekhov; Theodore Bikel, folk singer, starring with Mary Martin in *The Sound of Music*; *The Great Scholar Wu* by Bertholt Brecht; "The World of S. J. Perelman;" the vocal group of Lambert, Hendricks, and Ross, with producer Norman Sedawie; Mordecai Richler, viewing his own writing; "A Standard of Dying" starring Charmion King and Budd Knapp; "Death in the Barren Ground;" *The Human Voice*, a world-premiere in English of Jean Cocteau's drama, and many other productions of unusual imagination and stature.

REVIEW OF CBC DRAMA

In November of 1961, during the CBC's Twenty-fifth Anniversary celebration, Herbert Whittaker, the distinguished *Globe and Mail* drama critic, wrote:

For the past twenty-five years, the CBC has supplied most of the dramatic intake of Canada. No other country has had to rely so heavily on one single source for its theatrical knowledge, experi-

ence, and expression. It is undeniable that the CBC has been the major employer of playwrights in this country. For the past twenty-five years how many people would have been able to earn a living acting except through the CBC? In short, the CBC has subsidized a whole theatre for us for a quarter century.

How good has it been? In the field of drama, its taste has been high, its approach both serious and creative. The world playwrights may not have had a very good showing on our stages, but they certainly have been heard on our network. Before Stratford drew its first million to watch Shakespeare, the works of the Bard had been played again and again over the CBC, and most commendably. From the Greeks to Beckett, the other great dramatists have had a good hearing. Perhaps Samuel Beckett and Jean Anouilh are still avant-garde in our theatres, but to the CBC they are part of the bill of fare. The native playwright has been given heavy representation.

Andrew Allan, Esse W. Ljungh, John Drainie, Tommy Tweed, Budd Knapp, Ruth Springford, Jane Mallett, Lorne Greene and a dozen others were the theatrical gods of the country. Although television has not always matched the stage standard, it has brought forward a score of other actors to match these in talent. . . . The Canadian theatre can celebrate the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of its greatest single benefactor this week. Let it be done whole-heartedly. For an organization that is part of a civil service, it has done better than any untrammelled body you can name. In the field of drama, battling a quarter-century of complaint and criticism, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has done a gallant job for theatre in Canada.

MUSIC ON TV (1953-1962)

In music the CBC's accomplishments from 1953 to 1962 were almost equally impressive as those in drama. Outstanding for several years was "L'Heure du Concert" from Montreal. *Faust*, *The Barber of Seville*, *The Consul*, *Don Giovanni*, the Prom symphonies and ballet performances from Winnipeg and Vancouver were noteworthy in 1953. The next year there were more full-length versions of operas, concerts, and ballets. Seven of thirteen operas were produced complete, with *La Bohème* as a highlight in November. Twenty-two of twenty-seven

conductors, sixty-one of seventy-four vocalists, and twenty-six of the seventy-eight instrumental soloists employed for concertos and recitals were Canadian. In 1956-57, "L'Heure du Concert" highlighted the scene with fourteen operas, eight televised for the first time in Canada. These included: *The Old Man and the Thief* and *The Telephone* by Menotti, *Prima Donna* by Benjamin, *Master Peter's Puppet Show* by Manuel de Falla; *Oedipus Rex* by Stravinsky; *Mireille* by Gounod, *Lord Byron's Love Letter* by Banfield; eight scenes from *Wozzek* by Berg, and the television premiere of *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* by Ravel. Six notable ballets were also premiere performances. A performance of the four-act version of the ballet *Swan Lake* by the National Ballet Company was outstanding.

By 1955-56, variety or mixed musical shows occupied an important place in the CBC's schedules and included a number of stars. Heading English shows were: Denny Vaughan with Joan Fairfax, who with her own orchestra was later to succeed Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York, "Cross Canada Hit Parade," "The Jackie Rae Show," and "Billy O'Connor" with Juliette, who was later to succeed with her own program. In 1957-58, some 750 Canadians were auditioned for light-entertainment shows on television, and 120 of them appeared at least once during the year. Jack Kane's "Music Makers 1958" was voted the best variety show. There were two-full-length performances of Gilbert and Sullivan. "Show-Time" was a Sunday night feature; "Pick the Stars" was popular, but "Holiday Ranch" then had the largest audience of any Canadian show. "Country Hoe-Down" and "Don Messer" were successful features. The last two, along with "Red River Jamboree" from Winnipeg have become hardy perennials with consistently large audiences. "Lolly Too Dum" from Vancouver was another popular show. Wayne and Shuster, who learned early the dangers of over-exposure, and have since become international stars, had an important role to play from the beginning. "Parade," a variety program of 1961, required a vast amount of planning, since it had a different cast, different musical accompaniments, and different dancers for each program. The producer was Norman Sedawie who is now in Hollywood.

In 1961, "Junior Magazine" on Sunday afternoon offered an hour-long series of six concerts featuring a symphony orchestra with young professional musicians and youthful guest artists of exceptional calibre. They were under the direction of Louis Applebaum, CBC's newly appointed TV consultant to the National Music Department. The first

concert under Mario Bernardi featured a youth choir from grades nine to twelve. For several weeks these were followed by "Concert" at 3:00 P.M., a one-hour symphonic program featuring distinguished artists and eminent guest conductors. That year was also one of the most distinguished in all CBC history for music on radio.

In January of 1962, a similar "Concert" series ran for thirty-seven weeks on both French and English television networks. It was the most ambitious series of its type ever produced on North American television. Twenty originated in Montreal, eleven in Toronto, four in Vancouver, and two in Winnipeg. Brilliant conductors and equally brilliant artists were featured. The series included six youth concerts, with Louis Applebaum as host and commentator, and could not be praised too highly. Unfortunately "Concert" was not in "option" time, so despite its distinguished character, was not broadcast by more than one-half the affiliates.

CBC Times (for October 28, 1961) said:

During a quarter of a century of broadcasting, it is naturally difficult to single out a few highlights, but there have been three which have greatly contributed to the Canadian serious music scene. The first was the formation of the "CBC Light Opera Company" in 1948 which provided live operas to CBC radio for four years and helped in the forming of the "Canadian Opera Company." Another highlight was the formation of the "CBC Symphony Orchestra" (eighty-six pieces) which has drawn the acclaim of many of the distinguished musicians who have conducted it in guest appearances. Having to accommodate itself to a variety of conductors, the orchestra has become unusually pliant, responding instantly in top form to many highly personalized conducting techniques.

The CBC Symphony was unsurpassed in its ability to sight read and render with a minimum of rehearsal any music set before it, particularly contemporary music. Even the great Igor Stravinsky was loud in his praise of it. The third highlight was the amount of musical fare being made available to Canadians through the CBC International Service. CBC music reached its apogee in 1962.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Information and documentaries in the beginning included "Press Conference" and "Exploring Minds." "On the Spot" and "Window on the World" were National Film Board contributions. Down the years the National Film Board has contributed many distinguished creations to CBC schedules. Gradually "Cross Section," "Ottawa Today," "Citizen's Forum," "The Nation's Business," and "Provincial Affairs" were added to the list. "Fighting Words," with Nathan Cohen as moderator, was a provocative and successful program for several years. "Profile" was a series of interviews with eminent and thoughtful people. "Open House," a women's program every week-day afternoon, brought many personalities and much informative material. Since 1956, "Country Calendar," with its regional editions, has been particularly aimed at farmers. "Maggie Muggins," "Small Fry Frolics," "Magic Music," "Puppets are Fun," "Junior Magazine," and "The Friendly Giant" were all wholesome and fascinating shows for children and youngsters. Among religious programs "Heritage" was outstanding. "The Lively Arts" featured live and filmed interviews with personalities in music, theatre, visual arts, films, literature, and sculpture. It started in 1961 and continued until June of 1964.

Since 1951, the National Advisory Council on School Broadcasting actively explored the classroom-potential of television. During 1954, the CBC, at the Council's request, carried out two experiments in this field. The first explored the use of educational telecasts presented outside of school hours to supplement school broadcasts heard in school on the same day. The second investigated the value of television as a classroom teaching aid. In the latter experiment, eight programs were presented in the fields of social studies, art, traffic safety, and literature. These were aimed at two levels of students, Grades V and VI, and Grades VII and VIII. Teachers of 17,800 students in over five hundred classrooms assessed the programs, and their findings were reported in a CBC publication *Television in the Classroom*. More than 90 per cent of the teachers favoured presentation of further programs on either an experimental or a regular basis. Since that time school broadcasting has become a permanent and growing part of the CBC's educational efforts.

NEWS, PUBLIC AFFAIRS, SPECIAL EVENTS

Television news became established in all regions by 1954-55, and has steadily grown in importance. As a news medium, TV is second in speed, conciseness, and flexibility compared to radio. However, the urge to see people, places, and things has given it disproportionate importance. The CBC has vastly expanded its national and international news coverage and made Canadians less dependent on foreign news sources. In recent years much more attention has been given to purely local news wherever it has stations of its own. This is a direct reflection of local competition where there are "second" television stations. This is overdone, at least in the Toronto area where the petty squabbles reported from the City Hall are a continuing irritation. This growing emphasis on local affairs was well expressed by Michael Hind-Smith when he became manager of CBLT: "As the production centre for the CBC-TV network for eight years, CBLT has really belonged to Canada. Now as Channel 6 we want CBLT to belong to Toronto, its home town." After four years, CBLT, with its inadequate transmission facilities, and its growing localization, has become increasingly an ingrown Toronto product.

From its inception, CBC-TV has met the challenge offered by special events and has done a distinguished job. The World Scout Jamboree at Niagara-on-the-Lake, the opening of the Stratford Festival, Cliff Lumsden's swim over Lake Ontario, Marilyn Bell's across the English Channel, and the Winter Olympics at Cortina, Italy, were important sporting events of 1956. The following year, the Spring Hill mine disaster, six provincial elections, the American political conventions, the Monaco wedding of Grace Kelly, and the fighting in Algeria were well covered. A CBC team was also sent to Indo-China and to Ghana.

In October of 1957, Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip visited Ottawa when Her Majesty opened Parliament. On October 16, as Queen of Canada, she delivered a broadcast to the Commonwealth. It was the first time she used live television to speak directly to her subjects. More than 4,500,000 Canadians from coast to coast watched the opening of Parliament. Estimates of the audiences in the United States watching the Queen ranged from forty-five to seventy million. The CBC called these events—twenty hours of television and radio coverage, in two languages, over five networks—the "Everest" of twenty-one years of national broadcasting. The CBC's presentation of Her Majesty's visit was given enthusiastic commendation both at home

and abroad by public and press alike. *Variety*, the "Bible" of the entertainment world, said: "It's doubtful if any chore this big has been done by television anywhere or done so well as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation did it." Very few people have the slightest appreciation of the problems, both in organizing and budgeting, created by an important and often unanticipated event like a Royal Visit. The special preparations, the numbers of staff involved, the dislocation of both budgets and normal schedules—these result in strains and stresses that sometimes take years to overcome.

On June 26, 1959, Canada again welcomed Her Majesty. At the same time President Dwight D. Eisenhower was greeted when the St. Lawrence Seaway was opened. Six weeks of continuous coverage of the Royal Visit engaged the services of more than one thousand staff members from all regions. Other events that year included the Newfoundland loggers' strike, the Avro "Arrow" events at Malton, the Cuban revolution, and the start of construction of the South Saskatchewan Dam. In May of 1960, the CBC arranged for Vulcan bombers to fly the videotapes of the royal wedding of Princess Margaret. The English-language transmission provided by the CBC was picked up by all three American television networks. The same year the Kennedy-Nixon debates and the American elections were carried on Canadian tv. The flights of the astronauts, the Prime Minister's visit to Japan, the Governor-General's tour of the north, President Kennedy's visit to Ottawa, and the CBC's own Twenty-fifth Anniversary on November 2 were all highlights of 1962. Four times between 1957 and 1963, the CBC had to meet the challenge of federal elections.

High among the visual accomplishments of the CBC have been several one-hour programs, under executive producer Thom Benson, exploiting the great Canadian outdoors. These included: "Ah, Wilderness," "Big Country," "The Ironmongers," and others that mirror well the majestic expanse, the scenic grandeur, and the illimitable resources of Canada. Filming "Ah, Wilderness" in the foothills of the Rockies, three CBC men—Norman Caton, Len MacDonald, Charles Riegler—after close-ups of Canadian wild life lost their lives in a plane crash. The "Wilderness Award" is given annually in their memory to the best program of the year. "The Ironmonger" in January of 1965 was a vivid and almost overpowering picture of Canada's gigantic steel complex.

There were many other notable programs, sponsored and sustaining. Among the most successful commercial programs were "Front Page Challenge," now in its ninth year. In 1959, at the Ohio State University

Competition, CBC programs won ten First Awards and nine Honourable Mentions. The CBC also received the National Safety Council's award for "exceptional service to farm safety." CBC farm-broadcast commentators won nine of eighteen awards presented at the Annual Convention of the Canadian Farm Writers' Federation. The annual Canadian Film Awards, the Alfred P. Sloan Award, seventeen Liberty Awards, two Medal Awards at the Art Directors Club, the Ontario Safety League Public Safety Award, and the Sylvania Award came to the CBC. To this could be added a series of distinguished awards for French programs. CBC producer John Reeves was awarded the 1959 Italia Prize for his play *A Beach of Strangers*, which was later published. In 1963-64, the CBC won twenty awards in national and international competitions. Ten were from the twenty-seventh Annual American Exhibition of Educational Radio and Television programs sponsored by the Institute for Education at Ohio State University. One program, "Democracy in America," won two awards.

EMPHASIS ON TOPICALITY

By 1961, there were signs of a significant change in CBC programming. In its Annual Report that year, the Corporation said: "Students of the television scene in North America during the past year have noted a gradual but definite trend on the part of all [American] networks toward increased public affairs and information programming." It was prophetic of a trend that would accelerate. Its 1962-63 Report added: "No aspect of CBC programming received closer and more critical attention than programs in the broad field of information, ideas, and opinion." The CBC dealt with this responsibility during 1963 with such programs as "Close-Up," "Inquiry," "Premier Plan," and "Actualities Politiques." Five programs studied Canada's defence arrangements. Six programs were devoted to the African revolution. World events, the Cuban crisis, the United Nations' debates, the Common Market, and many issues were aired on all networks. A staff of CBC correspondents in Washington, London, Paris, Bonn, Moscow, the Far East, and every major Canadian city channelled an unending stream of information and interpretation into production centres in Montreal and Toronto.

This has been a sketchy outline of a few of the CBC's efforts and accomplishments in television programming up to 1962. The trend

to more public affairs, information, and discussion has been accelerated by the inadequacies of finances within the organization. With rising costs, expansion in any one direction can only mean contraction in another direction. What changes have these trends brought about in the schedules? Serious music, light music, and variety programs—except for such indigenous programs as “Don Messer,” “Country Hoe-Down,” and “Red River Jamboree,” all of which are sponsored—have suffered. Some suggest that television is not a suitable medium for music, that programs of straight music should only be listened to, not seen. While this may be true of certain types, especially if badly presented, it does not hold true of opera, operetta, ballet and musical comedy, which deal in movement and colour, elements that attract the TV producer. A few musical efforts are still to be seen on “Festival,” but not many. By and large, good music on the English television network has been relegated to limbo. “Parade,” a long-standing variety program, was dropped entirely in 1965. Gone are the fine Sunday afternoon programs, the Youth Concerts of 1961 and 1962. Gone too are “Reflections” from Halifax, and the “American Theatre of Music” which was an unusually entertaining and informative show.

Instead, on Sunday afternoon, the CBC broadcasts National Football League games (which, with their growing audiences, have even had the debatable effect of dimming the prestige of the Canadian game), championship golf, and other sports and films, which are more competitive and more easily sold. Saturday afternoons and evenings are mainly given over to sports. Sunday, traditionally the best viewing day of the week, is now a desert, as far as music on television is concerned. Sunday evening viewing is now devoid of culture. In October of 1964 *CBC Times* announced: “One of the most impressive serious music seasons begins on radio and television this week.” Though the series proceeded on radio, it never appeared on television. Nor is the decimation of music confined to television. It extends to radio as well. Musical programs are shunted to times of minimal audiences, when time is largely unsalable. Gone too is the CBC Symphony Orchestra and the fine plans announced for it. Even on FM, CBC musical programming is definitely second to that of many private stations.

THE DECLINE OF DRAMA

Drama of distinction has also been decimated. According to the Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists in Toronto, Canadian drama has been reduced by at least 50 per cent of that four or five years ago. The many fine dramas sponsored by General Motors and subsidized by the CBC have been replaced by "Bonanza." During 1963-64, drama on "Festival" was cut about one-third, while "Play-date" was cut down by thirteen programs. Particularly hard hit have been English programs out of Montreal.

In its presentation to the Fowler Advisory Committee, in October of 1964, ACTRA analyzed the origin of drama (including features, adventure, comedy, and westerns) broadcast on CBLT and CFTO Toronto, CFCF-TV Montreal, and CHAN-TV Vancouver.

TV DRAMA INCLUDING FEATURES, ADVENTURE, COMEDY, WESTERN, ETC.

WEEK OF OCTOBER 10 TO 16, 1964

Station	CANADIAN		COMMONWEALTH		IMPORTED	
	Minutes	Per-centage	Minutes	Per-centage	Minutes	Per-centage
CBC (CBLT)	120	7.14	0	0	600	35.71
CFTO	30	1.78	60	3.57	1,050	62.50
CFCF	30	1.78	0	0	1,260	74.50
CHAN	30	1.78	0	0	1,200	71.43
Private Station						
Average	30	1.78	20	1.19	1,170	69.64

The ACTRA brief added: "An interesting fact is that, despite their promises, not one of the private ["second"] television stations in Canada has produced a single drama since they began programming more than three years ago." A nationally known writer, with extensive experience in writing for both radio and television, told me as late as April of 1965 that in more than thirty years he has not sold a single script to a private station. I asked him if he knew of any competent writer who had; his reply was that he knew of none. Even within the CBC, the dreams of the late 'fifties for writers has not materialized. Remuneration for good writers has been inadequate. None can support themselves with their earnings from the CBC alone. There is a crying need for a broadly based, long-range plan for the development of truly

indigenous Canadian drama of real merit if progress is to be creative and continuous. There is a feeling among responsible writers that programs already successful, or on the verge of becoming so, are abandoned in favour of the new merely because it is new. Truly indigenous drama is more difficult to find among English writers who almost without exception have one eye and one ear attuned to the American market in the hope that acceptance there might result in a "killing." This not infrequently robs scripts in English of truly Canadian character. In French Canada this is not so; French-Canadian writers can explore quite complex problems which have no immediate counterpart in the United States.

THE AMERICAN FILM

ACTRA's brief to the Fowler Advisory Committee also pointed out the danger of youth receiving highly coloured and exaggerated accounts of the way of life through films from other countries, notably the United States, while Canada and her traditions lay neglected. The consequences to the Canadian writer and actor are disastrous. Large numbers of competent Canadian actors remain unemployed, while others leave the country, or support themselves—and subsidize their CBC work—by accepting New York and Hollywood assignments.

In Great Britain there is no British-content regulation. Imports of foreign films for television are limited to 14 per cent of the total hours of programming. Neither the British Broadcasting Corporation nor the Independent Television Authority (the private operators) come near this allowance.

Television and the film business would seem to be inextricably intertwined. Film production in Canada has so far been confined almost entirely to documentaries produced by the National Film Board, and by some independent producers, many of them excellent. The larger field of film production has scarcely been touched, owing to the necessity of invading the world market on a substantial scale.

Aroused by the decadence of commercial broadcasting, and the flight of native talent, the Parliament of Australia in December of 1962 instituted an intensive study of broadcasting. The Committee entrusted with the task reported in October of 1963. It found that more than one-half the total time of Australia's commercial broadcasting stations was filled with so-called drama, and that drama comprised eighty-five

out of every hundred hours of peak viewing time. Eighty-three per cent of this "drama" originated in the United States. The percentage produced in Australia was too minute to warrant a statistical place, according to the Report of the Australian Broadcasting Control Board. The Committee concluded that the state of television drama in Australia was closely connected with the development of the film industry, including production for export, and maintained that, in spite of apparent handicaps, successful film production in that country was feasible. It rejected completely the contention that Australia could not compete in world markets.

Undoubtedly the same is true of this country. Some plan of coordinated and subsidized activity among film—and television—production agencies is essential, with a far more intensified sales effort in export markets for both television and other films.

PROGRAM EROSION

But the erosion in CBC programming has not been confined to music and drama. "Close-Up," "Explorations," "Inquiry," "Quest"—programs of much experimentation (and of standing)—have been dropped. While some have been replaced with new titles like "The Sixties," "Show of the Week," "Eye Opener," most still have to prove themselves. Among the more interesting is "Telescope," hosted and produced by Fletcher Markle. However, the most sensational change in public-affairs policy occurred in the fall of 1964, when the only Sunday-evening period of public-affairs programming at 10:00 to 11:00 P.M., E.S.T., was filled with "This Hour has Seven Days," a magazine-type show consisting of a virtual rehash of the previous week's events. No program in my time received so much critical disapprobation, and none so well deserved it. It was a direct bid to reach a mass audience of relatively uneducated viewers with a public affairs program based on sensationalism and even sordidness. In this effort it appeared to be reasonably successful. Prolonged interviews with George Lincoln Rockwell, head of the infinitesimal Nazi Party in the United States, long interviews with Christine Keeler, Marguerite Oswald, mother of President Kennedy's assassin, the Walter Jenkins scandal at Washington, together with a series of political interviews far more calculated to provoke than to enlighten, do not unfairly illustrate its main contents. *Maclean's* (on February 6, 1965) said:

"Seven Days" is the disappointment of this television season. At its best it has made stunning restatements of the obvious. At its worst it has plumbed new lows of taste. With apparently unlimited power to draft the country's most promising television journalists as well as virtually unlimited money to spend on their activities, it has failed to raise or clarify a single legitimate national issue unless one considers its bold stand against the corrosion of cars by salt. All this could have been forgiven if the courage and the talent—both of which "Seven Days" had in abundance—had been spent with a purpose, if there'd been any point of view behind the sensationalism. Instead we've been given an endless and mindless raking of the week for its own sake. The program revels in its own hysteria.

Soon after "Seven Days" commenced, a growing feud between the CBC's News and Public Affairs Department ended in the absorption of the latter by the former. Though this was widely acclaimed, its logicity seems doubtful. News, and especially electronic news, is one thing; intelligent public affairs commentary is quite another. It demands a different approach, examination in depth, and a broad understanding of social and economic effects. The union is much less natural than would appear superficially.

GROWING UNREST

Not only has there been a serious erosion of program standards, but there also has been a definite erosion among creative personnel. Demands for increased coverage, new production centres, and extended hours of broadcasting have strained budgets which have resulted in a substantial withdrawal from areas of serious entertainment: music, drama, variety, ballet. Only by so doing has it been possible to maintain and expand the news offices now located in so many parts of the world, and to increase such public-affairs and feature programming as the 1964 Olympics. All these are seriously threatening the performing arts, of which the CBC has traditionally been a chief bulwark. It has become increasingly difficult for performers, writers, and producers to earn a living. Many talented Canadians who promised so much four or five years ago today must accept other part-time employment to the detriment of their development as artists; or they

must leave Canada, to seek employment and inspiration elsewhere. The number of competent, often brilliant young people who have left the CBC (and Canada) in recent years is profoundly disturbing. While the lure of more money, greener fields, and creative companionship have been important factors in this shift, these account for the smaller part of the artistic exodus. Many who joined the Corporation with great hopes have left in disappointment, sometimes with more than a little bitterness over slashed budgets, discontent with pressures, indefinite policy, lack of leadership, the need to report to executives who, whatever their other virtues, have little or no record of accomplishment in production and little understanding of the creative mind. The English-speaking artist or producer has alternative employers in Hollywood, New York, and London. His French-speaking colleague is more fortunate at home but less fortunate abroad, although he can be victimized by frustration and disappointment in his creative confinement.

In January of 1965, a five-day Conference of the Arts was assembled at St. Adèle-en-Haut in Quebec under the auspices of the Honourable Maurice Lamontagne to examine the present state of the arts in Canada. Some 140 professionals and other persons of authority attended. It marked the first time that a Minister of the Crown sat down with professionals in the arts to discuss common problems. "Seminar 65," as it was called, among other subjects, considered broadcasting. While expressing appreciation of the unique prestige the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation enjoys around the world—in no small measure contributed by creative artists—concern was expressed "that many aspects of the Corporation's programming reveal a sharp decline in the use of original material and native talent. Artists are profoundly concerned about the trend for the future."

Recommendations included an increase of Canadian creative material on both English and French networks; a reduction of commercials on television; an improvement of FM programming ("which is, in some cases, lower than that of private FM stations"); that the BBG make greater demands on the private television network (CTV) and on private English and French stations to increase employment of Canadian writers and performers; and that the annual allocation of funds to the CBC be reorganized to permit long-range planning and development.

Even more serious than the erosion of talent is the fact that the CBC is no longer the Mecca that it once was for the cream of young and inspired intellectuals. One very important person deeply involved

with the Corporation, a man of unquestioned stature, told me in December of 1964 that within the last two years he had definitely discouraged no less than six of his most intellectual friends from seeking positions with the Corporation. He maintained that prospective employees first meet people who know little or nothing about programming and even less about the history and the real purposes of the Corporation. The first question applicants face is: "Have you any experience in broadcasting?" CBC still lacks an organized system for recruitment and training.

Certainly there is deep unrest among many of the most creative minds in the CBC. On February 15, 1965, the Association of Television Producers and Directors at the CBC in Toronto submitted to the Fowler Committee on Broadcasting a six-thousand word memorandum.

The Association feels that a reappraisal from within the Corporation is long overdue. . . . Most of the members of the Association have spent many years acquiring their specialized knowledge and skill only to find that their experience is neither sought nor desired by many of the program planners and network officers, only a handful of whom have had television production experience; they find themselves part of an increasingly bureaucratic organization that seems on occasion to be concerned only with its own continued existence.

The Association contended that an examination of CBC television schedules revealed that the number of Canadian productions in prime evening hours had been slowly but steadily decreasing; that management's evaluation of programs is too strongly influenced by ratings and that facilities for technical perfection are inadequate. While clearly recognizing the right of management to manage and that inevitably many program ideas must be rejected, producers maintained that a pattern has emerged in the making of decisions by management that is inimical to public-service broadcasting. This pattern emerged in management's apparent unwillingness to define clearly areas of responsibility for program policy. More and more programs had to be fed to Ottawa so that officials there could listen to them. Yet these Ottawa officials with complete power of veto lacked that contact with the research and development of these programs which would give their judgment validity. A consequence has been that most of the adverse publicity has been about programs which management refused to show. The Association added: "The Corporation stands in far greater danger

from ill-informed and unimaginative authoritarian control than it does from the airing of the occasional frivolous or irresponsible program." They were not alone. Early in March, ten of the most important announcers on the Toronto staff, including Earl Cameron, Lamont Tilden, Bruce Rogers, and Lloyd Robertson—men who daily project the public image of the CBC on the national television network—presented a four-thousand-word brief to the Fowler Committee and at the same time took the hitherto almost unprecedented step of making it public. This provoked intense anger at the Ottawa headquarters followed by trepidation among some of the announcers at the possibility of losing their jobs. The announcers said:

With the growth of middle bureaucracy in the CBC, organization men have made unprecedented inroads on the broadcast level. Public money is used to prepare and present commercial programs but the benefits that accrue to the advertisers are often out of all proportion to the benefits that accrue to the public. . . . The solution is to separate the creative personnel from the bureaucracy. A veritable moat is needed. Broadcasting authority should be given back to the trained and dedicated broadcasters.

Lastly, in June of 1965, four highly competent women with long experience in the Public Affairs Department of CBC resigned. They were all supervisors, program organizers or producers with outstanding records of service. No personal considerations influenced their decisions. Not one of them had another job in view when she quit. They were motivated entirely by dissatisfaction with what they considered a lowering of standards and values within the Corporation. They felt that an anti-intellectual bias pervades much of the top echelon at Ottawa.

Many maintain that the emphasis now is on having a "team" of pliant "yes-men" whose chief effort is to please the president. Such a climate could only inhibit discussion, initiative and experimentation. One of the women, whose absorbing interest has been the promotion of more sympathetic understanding and co-operation between English and French networks, left mainly because, despite high sounding policy declarations, there was, she claimed, little genuine interest in it within the Corporation. The intellectual superiority of the French administration, it is said, has been definitely accentuated by the appointments of recent years.

One of the most experienced and respected producers of long-standing with the CBC said to me recently:

CBC is now a big monolithic corporation. What has been lost is that feeling of sharing with management one's successes and one's failures. It has become so departmentalized that communication is quite inadequate. Planners plan, producers produce, but far too often planners never hear or see what is produced.

BUREAUCRACY AND ITS EFFECTS

Bureaucracy had its beginnings in the CBC in 1944 with the establishment of the Personnel and Administration Department (the P. & A. — Pest and Aggravation, as it was quickly dubbed!). Ostensibly it was to relieve senior executives of increasingly onerous staff and administrative details. Its first major undertaking was a job-and-wage analysis, classifying employees in all areas by groups, and setting up a new salary structure. The staff for the new Department was recruited almost entirely from clerks within the Corporation and few, if any, had any special training for the job or knew anything of actual broadcasting and its problems. Nevertheless, they attempted to discover the proper "slots" for all clerical and many administrative personnel.

Many of the classifications arrived at by P. & A. were hotly disputed by department heads, and the growing red tape that accompanied this move created more than a little exasperation and dissatisfaction which, in 1951, culminated in prolonged and bitter inter-departmental debates and squabbles. One chief executive in utter exasperation termed it "that fungus growth that now covers the whole CBC like a green mildew." Nevertheless, the P. & A. juggernaut rolled on with persistence. It slowly but surely assumed dominance and power. It grew with the whole establishment, but more rapidly. Protests about its functions and capabilities became less and less effectual. Bureaucracy for the first time had taken a firm hold on the Corporation.

Bureaucracy feeds on itself. The conviction grows that all or nearly all knowledge resides within the organization, that only insiders are capable of understanding the involvements of the set-up. Seniority assumes vast and unwarranted importance. Jobs are posted within the organization only, and are filled long before any outsider could ever hear of them. Few ever do. Indeed, promotions from within come to be looked upon as an inherent right of existing staff, and outsiders are looked upon as intruders. Executives not too sure of themselves make certain their assistants are not superior to themselves in intellectual

calibre or initiative. A painfully slow but steady erosion of standards of capability is matched by the rise of a strata less qualified and less competent. Obviously there are exceptions, but a department in a bureaucracy has to be nearly bankrupt of ideas before it will or can recruit from outside. Longevity takes precedence over capacity. Creative conferences tend to become fewer while administrative ones flourish. Disagreement of lesser officers with either techniques or policies are less and less welcome. A lethargic acceptance of the "establishment" sets in.

This situation is not peculiar to the CBC. It is prevalent in any number of large organizations, both public and private, and some degree of bureaucracy in almost every large corporation seems inevitable. In any corporation it is serious, but bureaucracy in an industrial concern is very different from bureaucracy in a broadcasting organization, where the end product is programs, each tailor-made, where originality, creativity, and artistic perfection are vital, where dullness is death, where imagination, flair, and courage should be encouraged to the point of risk. Genuinely creative and inspired minds are rare, and the greatest function of management in broadcasting is to maintain those conditions that inspire ideas, experimentation, and creativity without losing touch with the indigenous and practical. It is a job that requires almost unique sensitivity and understanding.

Nor has the growth of bureaucracy been retarded by unionization. Nevertheless the CBC has retained an enviable reputation for its understanding treatment of employees, and this is far from adequately appreciated by many. Indeed, humane attitudes have been overdone. More than a few jobs have been created or shifts made, when both the CBC and the employees concerned would have benefited from parting. Nothing would prove more stimulating to the Corporation and inspiring to employee morale than the occasional firing.

THE MONTREAL STRIKE

The protests of producers and announcers at Toronto in 1965 were sort of last-ditch efforts to bring the existing situation before a body which might be able to do something about it. During the hearings of the Parliamentary Committee of 1959, the question of organization and final responsibility for program decisions arose repeatedly. That committee in its final report said:

There is lack of clear definition of responsibilities and authority of the various executives of the Corporation. . . . There appears at times to be a multiplicity of authority, at others a divided authority and an apparent lack of effective liaison between the top-level management team on the one hand and those directly responsible for program production on the other. This has caused confusion and wavering in morale, which are factors to which recent troubles of the Corporation may be largely attributable.

The reference to "recent troubles" was to a tragic and devastating strike of the French producers, which started in December of 1958 and lasted for nearly four months. Essentially, it reflected a complete lack of awareness on the part of CBC management of the ferment among the creative staff and the performers—led by René Lévesque, who has since become an outstanding figure in Quebec politics, and Jean Duceppe, well-known French-Canadian actor. The insensitivity of local management and lack of effective rapport with producers and performers led to resentments that culminated in a demand on the part of producers to organize, in order to have a collective voice in dealing with management. This was resisted on the legalistic ground that the producers were an arm of management and not "employees" in terms of the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act. The negotiation team named by CBC management at Ottawa had among its six members only two who spoke French, and only one of the two had been a resident of Quebec; none had a background of program-production experience. The counsel of experienced members of CBC staff who were well aware of the implications of the strike was neither sought nor heeded.

The striking producers were joined by the French performers, a development that had the unhappy side-effect of breaking up the national performers' union, the Canadian Council of Authors and Artists, a breach that has never been healed. A majority of members of the different CBC staff unions refused to cross picket lines. The French producers did not have the support of the English producers in Quebec, another unfortunate break in what had been a pleasant and harmonious relationship.

Throughout this bitter confrontation the French television network service was continued without interruption by the use of film, largely imported. Personal financial loss to the strikers was not made more palatable by the final capitulation of CBC management, in conceding

to producers the right to organize. Without the senseless dichotomy between the administrative and creative segments in the CBC—still so evident in 1965—this unhappy and traumatic crisis should never have developed.

On October 2, 1959, following the report of the Parliamentary Committee, a top-level reorganization within the CBC was effected. An assistant to the President, three new Vice-Presidents and three so-called General Managers (for French and English networks and Regional Broadcasting) were announced. It was what might be called a horizontal rather than a vertical rearrangement. At the same time the President stated that a search was under way both within and outside the Corporation for the right man to fill the most important post of all—Vice-President in charge of programs and sales. The press (*The Montreal Star*, October 2, 1959) reporting this move said: "More than any other one man he will recommend the policies governing what people hear and see, while at the same time trying to boost revenue without affecting adversely the quality, freedom or variety of programming. The reorganization consists of putting old hands in new posts. The objective is to provide a close relationship between Ottawa headquarters and production centres and to lift the burden from the shoulders of the President and Vice-President." After six months E. S. Hallman, formerly director of Network Programming (English) was elevated to the post of "Vice-President, Programming." Five years later it is stoutly maintained within the Program Department that Hallman has no real authority, that his wishes are subject to countermand by far less knowledgeable persons, and that his efforts to acquire his rightful authority in over-all program direction have been steadily thwarted. His position is little more than advisory and without budget control as is clearly indicated by the organizational chart in the CBC 1964-65 Annual Report. CBC television programming is starving for inspired, authoritative leadership and a direct route to it.

In the meantime, in 1963, the Glassco Commission, reporting on the internal "staff and line" organization of the Corporation, confirmed many of the charges that were being made regarding diffused responsibility and committee rule within the CBC. The report of that Commission will be dealt with later.

Finally, faced with increasing controversy over contentious programs, the imminence of the Fowler Committee Report and the certainty of another Parliamentary Committee, steps were taken in November of 1964 to effect changes in the lines of authority. A new

chart delineating responsibilities was drawn up which was in many ways a reversal of that previously existing. It indicated a more direct line of communication from production officials to the upper echelons of authority. The Senior Vice-President, who previously occupied a secluded position, was suddenly projected into the centre of the stage with the responsibility for programming. The less acutely controversial "broad fields of corporate policy, long-range planning, and finance" were reserved to the President who, for the time, became more removed from the front line of controversy. The announcement of these changes made no reference to the function or authority of the Vice-President of Programs whose importance had been so emphasized in 1959.

The full effect of this manoeuvre remains to be seen. Though it made some program executives more hopeful, there remained a large area of dissatisfaction which found expression in the protests of producers and announcers to the Fowler Committee. These contentions I have also heard repeatedly among several of the most competent and experienced people on the program staff.

In April, a projected CBC television schedule of fall and winter programming for 1965-66 was issued. It showed little if any evidence of an increase in creative Canadian programming. Indeed, it indicated increasing dependence on American films. The main new program prospect was a series "On the Seaway" exploiting the St. Lawrence waterway. It will be independently produced. About the only really fresh breeze that has blown through CBC television schedules in the last two years is the genuinely indigenous and gradually improving "Across Canada." CBC radio schedules continue to set high standards and notable adaptability. The same cannot be said for television. Granted the serious inadequacy of funds for such an increasingly expensive medium, there still remains the equally serious need for a complete overhaul of TV programming. It is starving for inspiration and leadership.

OTTAWA AS PROGRAM HEADQUARTERS?

Undoubtedly bureaucracy has been hastened by the enormous rapidity of expansion and by the concentration of the CBC's headquarters in Ottawa. While there always was a headquarters staff in Ottawa until the middle 'fifties unfortunately it was restricted in personnel and function. Administrative conferences—frequent and regular in those

days—met occasionally in Ottawa, but usually in either Montreal or Toronto. About 1955, there was a drive to shift to Ottawa a large group of executives—including the heads of the Program Department—from their logical setting in production centres. This move would be no more sensible than moving all three American networks from New York to Washington. Many doubted the wisdom of this shift. Indeed, for a time it seemed doubtful whether it would be proceeded with, so great was the resistance. But the main directing superstructure finally settled into various buildings in Ottawa. Multiple, scattered, and inefficient, changes in the operating staffs were also necessary in other cities, particularly in Montreal and Toronto. In the former, the CBC occupied space in twenty-two different locations, and in Toronto in about a dozen. Though more or less finalized plans have been prepared again and again by CBC engineers and architects to centralize these scattered, wasteful, and in some cases dangerous locations, as a result of pressures of various kinds, these efforts so far have ended in frustration. In Montreal, a centralized location was finally chosen after a battle among civic authorities. This has still to be accomplished in Toronto, where a war is still on between the City of Toronto and the Municipality of North York. In the meantime, it was announced that precedence would be given to the erection of studios and other facilities at Expo '67 in Montreal, at a cost of approximately ten million dollars. Here a large part of CBC activities will be centralized until the big show is over. It is said that about 40 per cent of this will be recoverable.

Broadcasting naturally centres, or should centre, around the creative act. In Ottawa, the prevailing atmosphere of political turmoil seems likely to prevail indefinitely; it is not conducive to creativity or co-operation. Still more, the city has still to develop a community of artists. The CBC's headquarters should be moved out of Ottawa, or at least reduced to the skeleton proportions that existed for twenty years. The CBC must be in the Parliamentary Press Gallery, but it hardly needs more contact with Ottawa than that.

The Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists in its presentation to the Fowler Advisory Committee said:

Parkinson's law received its greatest proof when the CBC moved its head office to Ottawa from Toronto, the major origination point of English-speaking programs. The consequent overlapping of duties and authority has been prejudicial to the efficient and amicable production of programs. It is our opinion that the

diversion of interests between those who are concerned with policy in Ottawa and those concerned directly with programming in Toronto has resulted in confusion and disharmony. Reports from our members in all the broadcasting centres in Canada indicate clearly that this confusion is felt across the nation. In the interests of efficiency and wisdom, it is imperative that the policy-makers return from the rarified atmosphere of our capital city to the grit and dirt of the firing line of Toronto. Programs, not politics, is the business of the CBC.

CHAPTER 27

TELEVISION TOMORROW

Few people have any idea of the total cost of broadcasting or the relation of public grants to the CBC to these costs. Domestic sales of television sets in Canada from 1952 to 1961 totalled 4,467,000—a value of \$1,250,000,000. During the same ten years, domestic sales of radio receivers reached 6,492,000. With the importation of 2,978,000 sets into Canada, the total broadcasting investment of the Canadian public in receiving sets during those years was \$1,900,000,000. Purchases of radio sets prior to 1952 have been conservatively estimated at \$630,000,000, making a total investment in receivers alone more than \$2,500,000,000.

The annual cost of maintaining and operating a television set has been estimated at \$54.90, assuming the average cost of a set to be \$280 and the average life-expectancy eight years. The annual operating costs are composed of: depreciation \$35.00; maintenance \$15.00; electricity \$4.90, based on 4.8 hours a day, at 1.4 cents per hour. Daily hours of use are now estimated at more than six. Similarly, the annual cost of operating the average radio set (worth \$60.00) has been put at \$10.25 (depreciation \$6.00, maintenance \$3.00, electricity \$1.25).

This means that during the year 1961 the cash investment—in new television and radio receivers, in maintaining and operating them—exceeded \$250,000,000. To this must be added the amount spent in advertising on television and radio. In 1961, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics estimated this to be \$103,032,000 for the CBC and the private stations. Parliamentary grants to the CBC for the year ending March 31, 1962, totalled \$70,252,273, so that the total spent in broadcasting

operations in 1961 reached almost \$425,000,000, of which public grants to the CBC represented 16.5 per cent.

In 1960-61, prior to the second or CTV network, the CBC's radio and television expenditures totalled \$97,377,000, according to the CBC Annual Report. By 1963-64, expenditures had risen to \$111,000,000, while revenues from advertising totalled \$32,392,102. Of this, \$19,406,000 was for radio, an average cost per radio home of \$4.50. There were 4,300,000 radio homes. Of this \$4.00 came from public funds, and fifty cents from advertising.

CBC expenditures on television during 1960-61 totalled \$77,609,000, or \$20.50 per television home for 3,800,000 homes. Of this, \$35,322,000 was derived from advertising, or \$9.25 per television home. The cost from public funds was \$11.25 or approximately 25 per cent less than the firm estimate of \$15.00 per television home from public funds—estimated as early as 1949 by the CBC as necessary to provide good national television service in black and white, in two languages, to 75 per cent of Canada's homes with television.

Thus, in 1960-61, total expenditures to bring CBC radio and television service to Canadian homes were approximately \$25.00 per home, of which advertising furnished \$9.75, or 39 per cent, and public funds \$15.25, or 61 per cent. Of \$59,413,000 in public funds, 29 per cent was spent on radio and 71 per cent on television. Thirty-one per cent of the total expenditure and 28 per cent of the advertising revenue were accounted for by operations in the French language.

Although total expenditures had grown to \$108,365,882 in 1962-63, the number of homes served had also grown, so that the cost per home in 1962-63 was a little less than it had been. Owing to a drop in advertising revenues, the percentage derived from parliamentary grants rose to slightly over 70 per cent of total expenditures.¹

It would be difficult to find any private enterprise in Canada that has stuck more closely to its estimates and forecasts through the past ten years than the CBC, in spite of pressures for expansion and many uncertainties. Today the entire CBC operation, television and radio, four

¹ In Great Britain, the licence fee covering both radio and television service is approximately \$12.00; where a home has only radio, the fee is roughly \$3.00. Last year, 11,833,700 homes were equipped with both radio and television, and 3,491,000 radio homes alone, so that the total expenditures of the British Broadcasting Corporation (which has no revenues from advertising) were approximately twice those of the CBC. However, the latter has to broadcast in two languages and must spend a disproportionate percentage (almost 10 per cent) of its revenues in transmission costs.

national or near-national networks, with well over 100,000 individually produced programs each year in two languages, is well below the original estimate. The cost from public funds represents slightly less than five cents a day per home, or almost exactly one cent per day per head of Canada's population. This is about two-thirds the subscription price of the average daily paper; one-tenth the average per capita consumption of liquor; two-thirds the amount placed in bets at the race tracks of Ontario alone in one season. In light of these figures, suggestions that we cannot afford the cost have a rather hollow ring.

Nevertheless, after thirty years of development, some of which was little short of phenomenal, and the establishment of a production agency in the CBC that has been the envy of much of the world as well as a source of inspiration to many countries, the Corporation is still at sixes and sevens. After the stresses and strains of a feverish growth, following successive reviews of its activities by sixteen Parliamentary Committees and three Royal Commissions, CBC operations during 1964 underwent another inquiry (by the Fowler advisory committee) to assess its direction. While the inquiry was underway, CBC officers were called before the Public Accounts Committee to ascertain their response to the recommendations of the Glassco Commission. And while answering these interrogations, still another Parliamentary Committee to examine the operations of the CBC was proposed by the leader of the Opposition. No other public authority has had to meet such a continuous barrage of inquiry, much of it ill-informed.

PICKERSGILL'S COMMITTEE

On June 18, 1962, a federal election took place which reduced the standing of the Conservatives but still left the government without a majority. Such was the instability and indecisiveness of the administration which attempted to carry on that, following an insurrection within the Cabinet in February, 1963, the government was defeated in the House and another election was held on April 8. This was the fourth federal election in less than six years, and the CBC had to cover it, in addition to many provincial contests.

Though in a minority position, the Liberals under Lester B. Pearson assumed power. The Honourable J. W. Pickersgill, through whom both the BGG and the CBC would report to Parliament, was appointed Secretary of State. On May 1, 1963, he addressed the Annual Convention

of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters in Toronto. There he stated that he had asked Dr. Andrew Stewart, Chairman of the BBC, J. Alphonse Ouimet, President of the CBC, and Don Jamieson, President of CAB, to enter into a series of discussions (although informal discussions by the same group had begun five months earlier) "with a view to preparing for the consideration of the government a statement of those areas of public policy on which all three of them were in full or substantial agreement and those points on which there is a divergence of view." He added:

I feel I should indicate certain fixed points of public policy to which the present government is already committed. It is our position that there should be scope for the parallel development of both public and private enterprise in broadcasting, with an impartial agency of control. We believe it should be a prime objective to bring broadcasting in both official languages within the range of all Canadians as rapidly as circumstances and finances permit. It is our view that the budget for public broadcasting should be determined by Parliament for a period of years in such a fashion that it cannot be changed or influenced by the government of the day in order to preserve public broadcasting from partisan political pressure.

Mr. Pickersgill gave no indication what was on his mind, or in the government's, as to the interpretation of "an impartial agency of control." Did it imply approval of the existing system? He left them guessing.

Actually the Committee was no more than a stop-gap while the new minority government prepared for the extremely difficult task ahead of it. The small committee's joint and several reports became available twelve months later. They agreed on three points only. In principle, extensions to the existing alternative television service when it occurs should proceed through additions to the transmission facilities of the CBC (that is, to expensive and unprofitable areas); no restrictions should be placed on political broadcasting that did not apply to other media. A more stabilized system of long-term financing for the CBC should be established. With the publication of the joint report, Dr. Stewart gave a statement of his own opinions to the press. He favoured continuing with dual authorities, relinquishing all CBC commercial business to private operators and establishing three separate sets of

regulations, one governing CBC operations, one for private stations, and one for both. Private operators, he maintained, were irrevocably opposed to being placed under the authority of a Board that might appear to be the board of the CBC. He agreed with this attitude. A White Paper should set out the roles of both public and private broadcasters as well as the kind of programming expected from each sector. If deviations or exceptions from declared policy by one sector affected the other, then the Board responsible for private broadcasting should be the judge of the effect on the private sector of changes introduced by the public sector. The obligations and conditions under which private operators should be required to broadcast public-service programs should be controlled by the board for the private sector. Dr. Stewart's recommendations are unworkable, as is obvious to any broadcaster, public or private.

An experienced broadcaster of long standing, Don Jamieson took a more practical approach. He said: "We already have an over-all broadcasting structure which serves Canadians reasonably well. It would be neither practical nor logical to consider alterations in the make up of the Corporation." He envisioned different roles and obligations for each private station, based on disparities in capacity, resources, and public need throughout the many areas of the country. Operators should file with the BCG a notice of future program plans and intentions. Such plans when approved would become a realistic promise of performance. Licences should be conditional on the carrying out of the intentions so filed. An improved formula should be substituted for the existing "Canadian Content" regulation. The CTV network was still very much in the experimental stage. The amount of money to be sought from sponsors by the CBC should be more clearly defined—also the method of securing it. Though he favoured an impartial agency of control, he opposed Dr. Stewart's idea of a board exclusively responsible to Parliament for the activities of the private sector. Such a board could not be classed as "an impartial agency of control."

The Committee's report resolved nothing. It spelled continuing disunity.

In the meantime, behind the scenes, the struggle between the conflicting forces went on unabated. The Canadian Association of Broadcasters opposed another Royal Commission. It received little but criticism from the last two and was anxious to avoid any searching inquiry into private broadcasting, particularly through public hearings. The CBC alone favoured the searching review possible from a Royal

Commission. The BBG, not unnaturally, felt that the main problem was not an over-all survey, but clarification of the present legislation to meet most of the contingencies that might arise to simplify its administrative task. It favoured a Parliamentary Committee. However, few Canadian Parliamentary Committees are designed for such intensive studies; too frequently they lose themselves in inconsequential details. Their basic approach is often more partisan than constructive. They are usually too large, a condition brought about by the necessity of maintaining a quorum, attendance being desultory. (A careful check of the attendance of members at various parliamentary committees for several years back, according to Douglas Fisher, M.P., showed the average attendance at meetings to be only 18 per cent.) Members frequently lose track of what is going on unless they read carefully each day's printed proceedings; with many committees sitting simultaneously during crowded sessions, printed proceedings are occasionally late. Minority reports are traditionally outlawed. Committee chairmanships are sometimes rewards for political services or attempts to bolster prestige. There is a circus-like air to many of them. In Canada, they are generally inadequately financed and can seldom engage expert testimony. The contrast with Congressional Committees in the United States in this respect is notable.

LAMONTAGNE AND FOWLER

On February 3, 1964, a major shift in Cabinet posts at Ottawa took place. Pickersgill became Minister of Transport and was succeeded as Secretary of State by the Honourable Maurice Lamontagne who thus became the spokesman in the House of Commons for both the BBG and the CBC. On April 6, in a most significant speech which was indicative of government policy during the Annual Convention of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters at Quebec City, he announced the pending appointment of a Committee to study once more the point and purpose of broadcasting in Canada:

Since 1867 we have left our cultural life almost exclusively to personal initiative and to private organizations. As a result the body of our national culture has remained relatively anaemic. This cultural poverty and isolation are two of the main sources of tension in our country today. When we compare this poverty with

our economic progress, it reveals a deep imbalance between body and spirit.

In cultural matters, I think we have adhered much too closely to the American tradition of non-intervention by government. As a result, our cultural life is relatively weak and dangerously exposed to the dominating influence of the United States, and our Canadian identity remains too vague. . . . Cultural contacts will not come by themselves. The experience of other countries, with the possible exception of the foundation-studded United States, confirms our own. I am convinced that our cultural life needs both protection against impoverishment and stimulus to improvement, and that a deliberate effort to these ends, in which government must have a large role, is not only justified but is most urgently required. Government must ensure Canadian ownership and control over our means of communication. But while the government must play a greater and more systematic role in these matters, its responsibility is not and should not be exclusive. Private interests must help.

I believe we should not seek merely more Canadian content but better content, including better Canadian "escapist" entertainment. Broadcasters can do much more, especially for our performing arts which are in an almost desperate situation. Broadcasters can do this only if they are certain about their roles, purposes, powers, and the regulations governing them. Confusion exists between the aims and roles of public and private broadcasting in Canada, about the powers of the CBC and the BCG, and about the extension of television broadcasting. Included in a study of CBC financing is the subject of advertising and its ramifications in terms of Canadian broadcasting, public and private.

I think till now, Canadian broadcasting, Canadian television in particular, has not adequately played its essential role. In part this explains why we have cultural poverty in Canada and why we fear cultural domination; why we Canadians know each other so little and why we suffer present tensions. By deciding to establish the Broadcasting Committee, the government wishes to play its part in helping broadcasters to play theirs. Indeed in all fields, whenever and wherever possible and appropriate, the government intends to actively promote Canadian culture in all its variety.

Lamontagne also noted that the Glassco Commission, which in 1960 had reviewed the operations of the federal civil service, the military, and the Crown corporations, had made some general comments about the structural organization of the CBC which, if well founded, would warrant important changes. Advertising in relation to broadcasting, the costs of CBC's consolidated building projects, and satellite television stations would all be included in the new study.

On May 25, 1964, the proposed Advisory Committee was appointed. The Chairman was Robert M. Fowler, who headed the Royal Commission of 1957. The other members were Under-Secretary of State G. G. E. Steele and Marc Lalonde, a Montreal lawyer. No public hearings were held, but many interested groups and individuals made representations to Fowler. It would be unduly optimistic to believe that the struggle for national broadcasting in Canada, which has been waged continuously for more than thirty years, will be won by a commission or committee, as long as politics remain what they are in this country. Nevertheless, much is expected of the Fowler Select Committee, which may well point the way to permanent improvement. This report, expected in June 1965, was not released until September.

WASHINGTON'S BROADCASTING LOBBY

When the Secretary of State mentioned the American tradition of non-intervention by government, he assumed some knowledge of broadcasting conditions in the United States. Canadians see the best programs from the three American networks, plus such epic events as the funeral of Kennedy, presidential messages, election returns, and the World's Series. But few Canadians have much knowledge of the real conditions controlling American television and radio. In the United States, broadcasting is increasingly becoming one branch of a large diversified industry, a move accelerated by its enormous profits. Multiple station-ownership is growing; network broadcasting is overwhelmingly dominant. Almost every local station in the country that can becomes affiliated with a network, and then receives from it the network programs, which often cost more than \$100,000 an hour to produce. The network sells this time to national advertisers; local stations transmit these programs and sell spot announcements next to them, time being conveniently provided. The local station does very little original telecasting. A few stations in exclusive markets—such as

KTBC-TV in Austin, Texas, owned by the Johnson family, and presently operated in trust for them—carries programs from two or even three networks.

The first consideration of American networks is making money for stock-holders. Unsold periods—especially during prime evening hours—quickly turn profits into losses. The race for pre-eminence, for ratings, is increasingly fierce, never more so than during the 1964 and 1965 television seasons when the American Broadcasting Company (ABC), for years in third place, pulled alongside CBS and NBC in a neck-and-neck race for mass popularity during peak evening time. A slight audience shift, possibly from an inquisitive “Hazel” to a sexy “Peyton Place,” can raise the temperature in executive board meetings several degrees. “Peyton Place” will likely run three nights a week during 1966, while “The Girl from Peyton Place” will run the other two, thus filling out the week with an evening serial. Sex equals ratings, and sponsors are said to be standing in line to sponsor the programs the public will watch.

Dennis Braithwaite in *The Globe and Mail*, on February 2, 1965, wrote that once the appeal of sex has been verified to the satisfaction of the conservative business men who control television in the United States, the medium will undergo a massive reorientation that could drastically alter its content and its acceptance as a cultural form. He suggests that sex has always been the missing ingredient in television, and he considers it remarkable that television has been able to thrive as it has with little more than indirect reference to man’s greatest pre-occupation.

The restraints and promised improvements initiated in the all-too-brief Kennedy administration are followed by an open grab-for-profits in the rosy Johnson era. And what profits! Pre-tax profits of American television stations and networks in 1963 were double those of 1958, and are increasing. It was stated by John Bartlow Martin in *The Saturday Evening Post* (November 11, 1961) that some individual stations even then were grossing nine million, with five million in profits before taxes. They have been doing even better since. Some local stations rarely carry unsponsored public-affairs or public-service programs, and will not hesitate to pull off a fine program like “CBS Reports” to put on an old movie which will net a few hundred dollars.

Government restrictions on station-ownership in the United States limit the size of any broadcasting “empire” to not more than five “very high” frequency television stations, plus seven AM and seven FM radio stations. One result is that some broadcasters are diversifying into other

industries to absorb their surpluses. At the same time, broadcasting profits are attracting new money and forcing even higher the values of existing properties. *The Wall Street Journal* (on June 22 and August 17, 1964) disclosed that Rollins Broadcasting of Philadelphia, which owned ten radio and TV stations, had acquired the country's largest pest-control concern. Rollins was already developing large citrus groves in Florida, and owned Satin Soft Cosmetics, a producer of beauty products for the Negro market. Metromedia Inc., with four TV stations and many radio stations, last year bought the "Ice-Capades" and an affiliated concern, and followed this with the purchase of outdoor-advertising properties in Chicago and New York. It also bought 720 acres atop Mt. Wilson, California, where it is suggested an amusement centre will be built. American Broadcasting - Paramount Theatres purchased Silver Springs, a Florida tourist attraction, and there are many others, including the purchase of the New York Yankees Baseball Club, and a substantial investment in "My Fair Lady" by the Columbia Broadcasting System.

The control of programming by the American networks has become so dominant that the Federal Communications Commission is currently proposing that the three networks should be obliged to turn over one-half of their peak evening time to be filled in open competition by sponsors and their agencies. While sponsors spend vast sums on the creation and distribution of programs, local expenditures by all but a few radio and television stations for talent are insignificantly small. The obligation to foster local talent is foreign to their way of thinking. Talent that does find expression on these stations is almost entirely confined to the production of commercials. Education is left to a few starved stations supported mainly by the great foundations.⁷

⁷ There is a perceptible drift to local programming, fed by the ready-made products of Hollywood. It makes for greater immediate profits. Ultimately networks may cut less and less ice on the American scene, except for timely features such as sports, international news, and special events. Nor will the advent of colour stop the drift. Colourcasting will add immensely to the effectiveness of big parades, games, and ceremonials, but little to the acceptability of the average run of programs.

A more important straw in the wind is the increasing tendency to watch television less and less. CBC's latest surveys tend to confirm this. There is a growing hunger among many - and not only among intellectuals - for programs less frothy and more meaningful. I visit near relatives at least once each year at Berwyn, on the outskirts of Philadelphia. In addition to three commercial stations, there is an educational station on Channel 12 at Wilmington. I make it a practice while in the area to question neighbours

THE FATE OF NEWTON MINOW

President John F. Kennedy was aware of the situation and made a gesture toward improving it by appointing an intelligent and aggressive young reformer Newton Minow as Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (the FCC, which has been dubbed "From Crisis to Crisis"). With the zeal of a missionary he set out to make improvements. Addressing the Annual Convention of the National Association of Broadcasters in 1961, he said:

I invite you to sit down in front of your television set when your station goes on the air and stay there without a book, magazine, newspaper, profit-and-loss sheet, or rating book to distract you, and keep your eyes glued to that set until the station signs off. I can assure you that you will observe a vast wasteland. You will see a procession of game shows, violence, audience-participation shows, formula comedies about totally unbelievable families, blood and thunder, mayhem, violence, sadism, murder, Western badmen, Western goodmen, private eyes, gangsters, more violence

and friends about their viewing habits. Never before was I so impressed as during my visit early in June of 1965 with the number of those who said they had ceased entirely – or almost entirely – watching commercial stations. At the same time I found a quite perceptible increase in the number of those who, of their own accord, specifically mentioned Channel 12. High among the contributions to the schedules of educational stations are the filmed productions of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Apropos of this growing apathy to commercial television, Stan Freberg, the noted advertising consultant, speaking recently before the National Educational Television Association (*TV Guide*, June 26, 1965) said: "Deep down I believe they are dissatisfied. They know they are wasting their evenings, checking in their brains, and just staring, and I believe they even are ashamed of their apathetic state. My fear is that they will have given up the medium altogether before we have a chance to show them a better kind of television.

"In cities all over America, where not enough is known of Educational Television, I fear that these disillusioned millions of potential viewers will eventually snap off the little glass window for the last time and dump it in their garage between the Atwater-Kent radio and the Mah Jong set before educational television will have established a brain-hold on their lives. Yes—the white tornado has all but devastated the people's air waves and in lieu of the government doing it, I should like to officially declare commercial television a disaster area. Educational Television would appear to be the only Red Cross truck in sight."

and cartoons. And, endlessly, commercials—many screaming, cajoling and offending. And most of all, boredom.

Though he bothered a few broadcasters, Minow was not long in learning the power of organized broadcasting, and he left the scene even before the death of President Kennedy as Laurence Fly, once Chairman of the FCC who dared to tell the broadcasters what he thought, left it twenty years before. Minow's successor E. William Henry, another purposeful idealist, set out to bring about some modest reforms. But he soon found himself almost alone in his efforts to deal with "problem" stations. His prospects are no brighter than those of Minow or Fly. Jack Gould, the noted columnist, outlined the situation in *The New York Times* (November 24, 1963):

For all the publicity that may attend the FCC proclamations and aspirations, it is a harsh fact that on crucial matters in broadcasting the FCC is often stripped of meaningful authority and its mission to protect the public interest is reduced to little more than a procedural jest. Far and away the most influential body concerning tv and radio today is the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. The first to capitalize on the Congressional involvement were the broadcasters. Local station-owners have organized one of the most influential lobbies in Washington, buttonholing senators and representatives at the slightest hint of FCC concern over the desirability of the status quo in broadcasting.

The broadcasters have spread a soothing nostrum: free enterprise. There is the fervent plea for the same unlimited private action enjoyed by the manufacturer of a consumer's product, completely disregarding the fact that broadcasting operates under a public franchise carrying obligations not imposed on a non-licensed industry.

Now at long last the agency [the FCC] is thinking out loud whether at some place there must not be a cut off point [on commercials] so that the viewers' interest is reasonably preserved along with the advertisers' interest.

But the deeper significance is that a sub-committee of the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce did not even await the FCC inquiry. Nine out of ten members of the sub-committee chastized the regulatory agency and bills have been introduced to prohibit the FCC from entertaining any limitation

on commercials whatsoever. . . . Thus to a responsive Congress the broadcasting industry can bump the Commission at will.

Such is the broadcasting lobby in Washington. Let no one deceive himself that the Canadian equivalent is asleep in Ottawa. The BBG is the direct result of the persistent lobby of CAB. Its creation was contrary to the recommendations, as we have seen, of a long succession of Parliamentary Committees and Royal Commissions.

BROADCASTING IN UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Based on economics, and linked hand-and-glove with industry, it is interesting to speculate on the place of American commercial broadcasting in the concentrated drive for foreign markets. Trade used to follow the flag. Now trade follows the radio serial, the movie, and the television film. Oliver Trez, before he was fired from ABC over a particularly scandalous television film, was quoted in *The Saturday Evening Post* (on October 22, 1961) as saying:

Television has a great future. ABC is out in front on the international front. We have acquired a minority interest in twenty-two stations abroad. "The Untouchables," "77 Sunset Strip," and "Maverick" are the most popular programs in Australia. In Bangkok they watch Wyatt Earp. Half the people in the world are illiterate. Television can penetrate that barrier. In five years we are going to broadcast live from New York using a satellite. Television is a world-wide medium. You have to think globally.

Since then ABC International Television Inc. has expanded to fifty-three stations in twenty-three countries. The satellite has swung into orbit—not only is it there but it has been organized into a corporation controlled by the great American communications complex. Engineers stand ready to push American products into every nook and cranny of the world, under the commercial banner of American films and television.

Some Americans are fully aware of the future pattern and distinctly bothered by it. Before the National Institute of Social and Behavioural Sciences at Montreal, on December 28, 1964, Professor Hubert I. Schiller of the University of Illinois directly referred to this. Tracing

the development of radio and television in the United States, commercial control by the great corporations, its dependence on advertising, the lost opportunities for educational broadcasting, and other aspects of the vast complex, he said:

For the scores of nations who comprise the developing world, these states with very high expectations but excessively low incomes, the radio spectrum constitutes a national resource of inestimable value *if* it is utilized with care and imagination. Should it be abused it is a threat to the realization of national aims. . . . The inapplicability of the commercially dominant American system of broadcasting to the requirements of the underdeveloped world is particularly striking. Acceptance of American broadcasting practices in developing societies could only aggravate already serious problems. The position in the developed western countries, where the media are generally great entertainment enterprises, does not in the least apply in the developing states. . . . Developments seem to support the belief that an offensive is being waged for global commercial television. Not even the state-controlled systems of some already developed countries are excluded from the pressure to commercialize. Certainly this is the meaning of the recent British experience. According to two well-documented studies, American influence was not only present but decisive in the British Isles to introduce a commercial television system alongside its public service in 1954.

The construction of a global communication satellite system is another program that reinforces the impression that American commercial broadcasting is actively expanding its world-wide influence. The satellite communication system is organized essentially as a private enterprise, with some governmental participation. Dominant decision-makers in the new company are familiar major companies long-active in the communications business in the United States.

Lacking the technicians to produce and transmit the educational and cultural programs, which their development needs urgently require, media in the developing countries have been relying heavily on programs from a few of the more advanced countries. This has provided revenue windfalls for scores of less than distinguished Hollywood films. The spectacle of impoverished people being treated to diets of westerns and private-eye dramas

(aided by the girls from "Peyton Place") suggests a developing wastage of resource potential of the radio spectrum that can hardly be viewed with equanimity *anywhere*.

Professor Schiller also said:

To attain their hopeful goals, the developing states, rather than welcoming, may be compelled to resist the attractive but totally destructive embrace of broadcasting institutions rooted in the soil of commercial enterprise. Effective non-commercial broadcasting in Asia, Africa, and Latin America inevitably would force reappraisals of domestic procedures. It would be an irony of history, but a hopeful turn of events, if a second chance to utilize the radio spectrum meaningfully in the public interest should be provided to the world's most developed nation as a result of the pressing necessities facing the least developed ones.

WEAKNESSES OF GLASSCO REPORT

It is now clear that the system of broadcasting which the Canadian Parliament originally defined and intended to provide for in a series of acts has not yet been brought into being. The Canadian system—except through the creation of the CBC (mainly its non-commercial programs)—is essentially a replica of the American system, and becoming more so. This has provoked great concern among many of CBC's staunchest supporters. In *Queen's Quarterly* (Summer 1961), Graham Spry wrote:

In a generation of conflict between private interests of several hundred businesses and the national instrument, the forces of money making have carried the day. There is not a nation-wide single system of public-service stations from coast to coast. The public structure which Parliament enacted is a minority. As private stations proliferate and private networks emerge, the influence of the essentially Canadian sector will decline, and the stature of the CBC be still further diminished. The onslaught upon the CBC will intensify both quietly and overtly in the lobbies of Parliament or nearby hotels, as well as noisily in the hostile press.

In *Maclean's*, on February 9, 1963, Ralph Allen wrote:

The heat is on the CBC; to flatter politicians, to get ratings, to make money, to carve itself up so the competing network can make money. . . . And if, in the end, the heat makes the CBC fit for nothing better than pumping insanity into idiot boxes, we will be able to see ourselves in the thin light reflected from their screens. . . . If it does, we will have lost by our own choice one of the few honestly original and clearly valuable things ever made in Canada. . . . It has taken us just five years to pervert the intentions of the Fowler Report.

In spite of these dire predictions and increasing unrest within the Corporation, there should be no undue pessimism. The CBC's record of accomplishment from 1937 to 1962 has given the Corporation a secure place among Canadian institutions. It is a *fait accompli* which needs no defence. Though still far from fully realizing its potential—particularly in television—it nevertheless has demonstrated clearly that it is one of the most constructive and powerful forces in the national life of Canada. If it were not already in existence, it would have to be created and maintained. The real problem is how to make the Corporation function most efficiently.

The Glassco Royal Commission appointed in 1960 chose the CBC among the Crown corporations to examine. Its Report in April of 1963 was highly critical of the CBC's managerial structure and organization, but it commended the program service rendered the public: "The policy has been to strive for superior quality, and there is universal agreement that a very high standard has been reached." But the Report strayed wide of the mark in some of its observations, with respect to the commercial policy, which it called haphazard. It also suggested that "no evidence exists of any weighing of cost against need, and the impression was that the pursuit of high quality had been carried on without consideration of what the country could afford." It is difficult to understand how such an observation could be made by a responsible Royal Commission in the light of the estimates of cost prepared and approved by the government before television commenced, and of the careful calculations made six years later in the Fowler Report, estimates which have not been exceeded by actual expenditures. In this respect the Glassco Report appeared more politic than economic.

A contentious section dealt with the difficult area of government responsibility for policy. It said:

In matters of broad policy governing the shape and nature of the Corporation's development, there is an inescapable responsibility on the government to give guidance. An independent board of directors will normally welcome informal policy guidance and has an obligation to ascertain the views of the government before giving effect to any important change in policy. To make effective a minimal degree of essential control, the Minister responsible should have the power to give formal direction to the Board. A requirement that such power when exercised be made public would pinpoint responsibility.

The Glassco Commission believed if directives from the Minister to the Board had to be made public simultaneously with their communication to the Board, this would provide adequate insurance against impingement by the Minister on the authority of the Board.

This section of the Glassco Report brought immediate opposition from the press and public. It drew this observation from Pickersgill: "A singularly unperceptive document. It showed an extraordinary lack of understanding of public broadcasting." It was pointed out that in the past it was understood that the CBC was responsible to Parliament rather than directly to the Minister of the day; that the Minister was but a liaison between Parliament and the Corporation and without direct responsibility for CBC policy or operations; that pressures can be readily and effectively exerted without the issuing of formal directives. The former Chief Editor of CBC News, D. C. McArthur, in a letter to *The Toronto Star* (April 22, 1965) commenting on the Report and on pressures both direct and indirect to influence news during the war:

I am convinced that the appointment of a Minister vested with any form of responsibility for CBC policy, even on the broadest terms, would be the first fatal step in making the CBC a government-controlled political operation. Instead, the proper surveillance and direction of the CBC should be exercised by a standing committee on broadcasting. Over the years the lack of this has been a serious and inexplicable gap in the matter of making the CBC responsible to Parliament in a continuing and effective way.

“PREVIEW COMMENTARY”

McArthur knew from experience. Others could confirm his views. During 1958, “Preview Commentary” was broadcast from Toronto each morning, a three-minute comment associated with the 8:00 A.M. news. This was fed to Ottawa and Montreal. The commentators were mostly Ottawa press representatives who had *carte blanche* to say what they liked. Some of the opinions expressed were unusually frank and were far from attractive to the Prime Minister. Early in June, CBC Public Affairs was instructed by Ottawa headquarters to cancel “Preview Commentary.” An explanation was requested, and the answer was that unless the cancellation came immediately “heads would roll.” It was suggested that the heads were not those of underlings but those of the two chief officers of the Corporation, and even of the minister through whom the CBC reported to Parliament. Turmoil prevailed. Frank Peers, head of Public Affairs, and his assistants, Hugh Gillis and Bernard Trotter, tendered their resignations, but these were not accepted. Press and public rallied to support the CBC, and the program continued. It was the second occasion when Peers had taken a definite stand. In 1956, at the height of the famous pipe-line debate, a series of televised press conferences was planned. A proposal to include George Drew, Leader of the Opposition, in the series was resolutely challenged and a decision was taken not to include him. Peers left no doubt that his resignation would be tendered if that decision stood. It was reversed, and Drew took his place in what turned out to be a very successful series.

Investigation of the charge that “clandestine political influence” was responsible for the attempt to remove “Preview Commentary” from CBC schedules was one of the responsibilities of the Parliamentary Committee of 1959. The Committee in its report found no evidence to support the charge. Where did it look? Only among the chief officers involved. Shortly after this so-called investigation, I had it on unimpeachable authority that had the Committee dug deeper and investigated telephone calls at a little lower level, the charge of clandestine political influence could not have been so easily dismissed.

On this matter of ministerial responsibility, it is interesting here to look back to the original proposal of the Radio League, reiterated by Alan Plaunt before the Parliamentary Committee of 1934: “That the Board be related to Parliament through a special Committee of the Privy Council, including three ministers, the Chairman of which would

be the spokesman for the Board on the floor of the House. This resembles the way in which the National Research Council is related to Parliament.”

The Glassco Commission suggested that possible alternatives to a board of directors would be to revert to a salaried Commission or even to place responsibility on a single officer supported by an Advisory Committee: “In fact, though not in form, the present arrangements accord closely to this pattern, since it is clear that the initiative lies with the President and the Board’s authority is extremely circumstantial.”

INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF CBC

Nevertheless, when the Glassco Commission confined itself to internal organization—which it obviously understood best—it did make suggestions that reflected opinions strongly held by no inconsiderable group of the ablest minds in the Corporation. It said:

In many areas the functional authority of head-office staff and service departments is confused, and throughout the Corporation there is a general lack of understanding of the common “line and staff” relationship. One result of the present arrangements is that the ordinary business of the Corporation management is undertaken by a profusion of committees which occupy much of the time of the staff at every level of management. The same pattern was observed in regional and area headquarters. A presumption is that the existing organizational structure has been developed with the deliberate object of ensuring that, as far as possible, policies are formulated and decisions taken by groups rather than by individuals. Under this system the President assumes total responsibility for all activities of the Corporation (as he rightly should), but no one of his subordinates can ever be held answerable for any particular aspect of policy or operations. Apart from the frustrations experienced by progressive officers of the Corporations, and the confusion that arises in the transmission of decisions, the maintenance of these permanent defences has the effect of directing an inordinate amount of attention of senior officers from their proper business.

This Committee practice went deeper than senior officers. An outstanding writer told me that following submission of a script to the CBC, he immediately had a call by telephone complimenting him on its excellence and suitability. Two days later he received a two-page, single-spaced letter of highly critical comment, and two days after another letter quite different and almost as complimentary as the phone call. This left him more than a little confused.

The Commission also believed that too much authority was vested in the President of the CBC to whom any or all powers of the Corporation may be relegated through the Executive Committee. "Board Meetings may extend over three or four days. No agenda are issued in advance, and at each meeting the part-time directors are confronted with a mass of financial and statistical data which neither they nor anyone else can digest and evaluate in the time available. The result is that, in fact, Corporation policy is largely dictated by management." The Glassco Commission added: "The appointment and tenure of all management personnel, including the chief executive officers should be subject to the recommendation of the Board of Directors." Insofar as the organization of the CBC was concerned, the Glassco report was in essence a confirmation of the Fowler report of 1957 and a repudiation of the system provided by the Broadcasting Act of 1958.

Glassco wanted a strong board with all CBC management responsible directly to the Board:

Having regard to the scale of operations of this Corporation, the directors should be administrators and executives of proven competence and experienced in large-scale operations. They should be prepared to spend the time necessary properly to carry out their function and should be remunerated fairly for their services. To provide that the views and interests of various parts of the country and of the several professions and callings specially interested are properly represented an advisory council might be appointed to consult with the Board periodically.

Though Glassco believed a board of seven to nine would be adequate, he was not prepared to restrict it to any specific number, as long as the recruits were of the calibre of mind and experience needed for the responsibility. He felt they should be adequately reimbursed, but not well enough to tempt any of them, including the Chairman, to become actively involved in administration.

The Glassco report provoked great resentment in the CBC, particularly at the executive level. Nevertheless, it was recognized that sufficient evidence had been presented to indicate that more intensive studies should be undertaken.

In September, 1963, on the suggestion of management, the CBC Board of Directors appointed an internal study group of six experienced officers and one outside management consultant, to examine the Glassco criticisms, and pursue a searching inquiry into organization and communication within the Corporation. The CBC appointees worked on a part- to full-time basis for almost a year.

Among the terms of reference were: an examination of the organization of the Montreal and Toronto centres; of the relationship between French and English network operations; and of communications between all levels of management and employees. Some three hundred senior officials, encouraged to speak frankly by an assurance of anonymity, were interviewed.

Unfortunately, no copies of the report are available. It is known, however, that three principal areas of CBC's operations were found to need definite improvement: over-all corporate direction; programming leadership; and production co-ordination. Communication between head office and regions, and particularly between French and English networks, was found wanting. Network meetings so characteristic of earlier administrations had all but disappeared. Indeed, it is said that the final report of the study group was so strikingly similar to that of the preliminary report of the Glassco Commission that it received a decidedly chilly reception. But the Fowler Broadcasting Committee gave an attentive hearing to representatives of the Group.

CBC AS A BIG BUSINESS

In the meantime, the financial problems facing the CBC intensified, as did the see-saw of a balance between select and mass audiences, between public-service and commercial programming. This adversely affected both morale and programming. Beset by built-in pressures, the CBC was nearing a dangerous crossroads. Wage increases and other costs provoked by rising inflation (an increase of 3 per cent each year of 1963, 1964, and 1965 was granted to the Association of Radio and Television Employees of Canada, and 6 per cent to supervisory employees in 1964) had to be paid to all. The resistance of the unions

to automation of technical equipment in the studios, the demands of out-of-the-way places for television service, the establishment of additional new and relatively expensive production centres, the extension of program service into the morning, and the continuing wasteful duplication of offices and studios at main production centres have all made for tighter budgets. Though revenues, mainly from public grants, expanded, money was never so tight, and in the resulting constriction the program budget is the last resort. Some departments contend that this constriction has reached the strangulation point.

Reorganization of Canadian broadcasting is clearly overdue. New legislation has been set back years, through lack of understanding and political manoeuvring. The legislation introduced by Diefenbaker's government in 1958—sometimes called the “new look” at broadcasting—has proven inefficient, conflicting, and divisive. The complete disregard of the carefully calculated financial proposals of the Fowler Commission, prepared only a few months before; the encouragement of high pressure commercialization by making up in grants only what could not be wrung out of advertisers; the creation of “dual systems”—these have all militated against advance planning, have fostered bureaucracy and uncertainty, and have helped to produce more than a few of the present difficulties. The Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists in its presentation to the Fowler Advisory Committee said:

The Board of Broadcast Governors has signally failed in its duty to ensure that the promises made to it were fulfilled. It has failed to protect the Canadian writer and performer. . . . The present policy leads to the padding of information and orientation type Canadian programs, and an increase in quiz games from Canada, at the expense of Canadian drama and variety.

Instead of the present dual act, with its divided authority, there should be a return to a single, unified National Broadcasting Board, even though that might not satisfy some private broadcasters. Far from introducing great changes in private operations, it could bring these more in harmony with national purposes. No position in Canada—short of the Prime Minister's—surpasses, if indeed there are any that quite equal, that of the direction of broadcasting, which includes some twelve different major operations—including French radio, French television, English radio, English television. Each of these four networks embraces

two distinct though co-ordinated functions. As well as the creation or acquiring of some three hundred programs daily there is the function of the distribution of these programs by stations owned or operated by the Corporation or by affiliated stations connected by wire lines or microwave circuits leased by the Corporation (at an annual cost well in excess of ten million dollars). The CBC owns and operates, as of 1964, fourteen television stations and twenty-two AM radio stations of its own, plus 120 small local relay and re-broadcasting stations. It has contracts with forty-four privately owned and affiliated television stations and eighty-eight similarly owned and affiliated radio stations which also own 154 affiliated re-broadcasting television and radio stations—a total of 371 outlets of all kinds. The Corporation is a large technical and administrative undertaking, apart from the main function of program production.

Added to these eight different operations is the International Service broadcast by the CBC from two high-power short-wave transmitters at Sackville, New Brunswick, on behalf of the Department of External Affairs. In eleven different languages, the "Voice of Canada" is beamed daily from there across the world. From Sackville, a third short-wave transmitter broadcasts daily the Northern Service, which covers the Yukon and Mackenzie networks; a short-wave receiving station at Yellowknife picks up these transmissions and sends them up to these far northern outposts. The Northern Service also produces programs in Eskimo and in several Indian languages. The Armed Forces Service provides a weekly service, including a package of kine-recordings, to bases of the Canadian forces in Europe, the Middle East, and the Congo. Finally there can be added the FM network connecting Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto, as well as similar operations at Vancouver.

DEFINITION OF PURPOSE

On no other organization are Canadians so dependent for national and world news, information, entertainment, for the development of art and outlook. No other organization has such a responsibility to mirror the world accurately to Canadians in a Canadian way, to reflect Canada accurately to the outside world. The revenues and expenditures of the Corporation have multiplied more than ten times since 1952, when television began. Surely the selection of a board to direct this vast organization—unparalleled in complexity, ramifications, impact on

Canada, at home and abroad—merits the most thoughtful attention from no less a person than the Prime Minister himself, certainly far more attention than has often been given to it in the past. There is no room on a National Broadcasting Board for any but the most brilliant, experienced, tolerant, courageous, and devoted minds in this country, irrespective of party, race, religion, or geographic area. Granted that many estimable and competent citizens have been appointed in the past, but there has been far too little care taken with the selection of others, and far too much political colouration. Not infrequently national interest has been regarded as secondary to the regional or provincial concerns. The day for making appointments on the recommendation of local members of Parliament or politicians, who seek to gratify the ambition of some helpful friend or even to honour him, should be long past. Canada cannot afford it. Moreover, very few appointees in the past have any idea of the magnitude or significance of the task they were undertaking. Some have been appalled by the task; occasionally an appointment has been followed by a resignation, when it was realized that the job was more than should have been undertaken.

The broad direction of policy should be kept separate from day-to-day administrative and important executive functions, as it was under the Act of 1936, as was recommended by Fowler in 1957, by the present Prime Minister during the debate on the Act of 1958 in the House of Commons, and by the Glassco Commission. The board should be paid reasonably, perhaps \$5,000 for each member each year, with the Chairman receiving perhaps \$10,000, but no more. The job should not be attractive for the money, but for the challenge. Though such people are scarce, they can be found.

At present the purposes of national broadcasting are too inadequately defined. I am aware of how undesirable it is to define aims specifically in a field resting so much on entertainment. But it does seem that the words "for the purpose of operating a national broadcasting service" could be given some clearer definition without inhibiting the freedom of the board. This lack of clarity accounts for much of the confused thinking and endless contention that has characterized Canadian broadcasting; this is the job of Parliament.

It is not my intention here to dwell on the various operations under a National Broadcasting Board. The production and distribution of programs for the national and regional service would remain the major function. But consideration could well be given to a division of these functions into program production, with its various operations on one

hand, and with distribution, on the other, more clearly separated from production. Relations with the private stations, upon which the CBC is dependent for distribution, is also a major problem of distribution, as is the setting of requirements and the recommending of licences, both public and private. It was contended by members of the Pickersgill triumvirate that private broadcasters want definite recognition under the Broadcasting Act, and that each station should have its functions individually defined. Perhaps this could be done, but it could scarcely enhance the almost limitless freedom private stations now enjoy. If it did not mean more regulations—more supervision than is presently the case—then it would be nothing more than a sham. The untangling of the great traffic snarl in broadcasting was the chief function of the Pickersgill triumvirate; they might as well have left it alone, as far as practical accomplishments were concerned.

Following their initial encounters both the BBG and the CBC have appeared to shy away from further clashes. The BBG has confined itself more and more to the supervision and recommending of licence renewals of private stations, as was forecast by Pearson during the debate on the new Act of 1958. To continue the two boards in their present form would not alter the problem at all.

PROBLEMS OF THE CTV NETWORK

The evening before the affiliates of the private CTV network met to consider a new affiliation agreement, *The Toronto Telegram*, whose owner is also the chief factor in CFTO-TV—the most powerful of CTV's network affiliates—launched a brutally frank criticism of the network and its administration by Bob Blackburn (on November 12, 1963). It charged that though beginning its third year the CTV network owned no stations, had produced no programs, had no investment in most of its affiliates, and engaged in countless time-consuming negotiations over exceptions to its agreements. It concluded:

Certainly the BBG, which licensed CTV, wants to see it survive, but just as certainly it isn't likely to intervene to save a profit-making institution which is unable to make a go of it. Meantime, with the likelihood of second CBC-owned stations being licensed in cities now served by privately owned CBC affiliates, these affiliates are going to need a raft of programming to replace what

the CBC now provides to them, and the need for a second network becomes stronger. The need for a second network is two-fold. The smaller stations need it as a supplier of programs, and the bigger ones, in the major production centres, need it as a market for their products in order to make proper use of their production facilities. One question which arises is whether CTV would have to be subsidized, like the CBC, in order to function properly.

Press reports as late as April of 1965 indicated that the disaffection of CTV affiliates was still strong.

This matter of subsidizing private stations and the second TV network is certainly not new. It has been bandied about in private discussions for years. The truth is that only through much more money can CTV be anything more than it is now—a very limited network of mediocre productions. The CTV network, to be really meaningful on a national scale, requires increasingly large amounts of money that can come from nowhere else in this country but from public subsidies. That fact is becoming more rather than less apparent. To the Fowler Commission in 1956, the CBC suggested that if “second” stations were to be licensed (it offered no positive objection to this), it might be thought well to have the public element (the CBC) supply a certain amount of Canadian programming to them. The implication was that there was advantage in having the CBC direct the national programming on both networks, much as it had with the Trans-Canada and Dominion networks. CBC also pointed out that private “second” stations in major markets stood to make a great deal of money (broadcasting largely imported low-cost programs). Television is proving more costly than was ever anticipated, and colour, when it comes, will certainly add to that cost. Though the shifting of all commercial network programs from the public to the private network, as suggested by the Chairman of the BBG, would make the CTV network more presentable and profitable, the move would really do nothing to ease the over-all problem. This is not basically the fault of the operators, some of whom are thoroughly capable and well-intentioned people. It is inescapable because it is inherent in the system. Commercial revenues have been, are now, and will continue to be inadequate to provide meaningful television. They may, however, be adequate to deliver profits that will make such properties eagerly sought by investors.

RESEARCH IN THE MEDIUM

I have suggested that as yet we have done little more than glimpsed the possibilities inherent in television. "The impact of television" is a phrase bandied about freely, but even broadcasters do not realize its implications. The CBC's Annual Report for 1963-64 included this statement:

Television is impressionistic and suggestive, it provides multiple meanings, some overt, some hidden; it implies more than it says because pictures invite many kinds and many levels of interpretation. . . . Any medium which involves its audience so deeply stimulates strong reactions. Audience demands seem to crystallize sharply and are vigorously expressed. Differences of taste and opinion seem to be magnified. Members of the television audience feel a sense of possession toward the medium. This attitude makes the broadcasters' lot a difficult one.

At present, in Canada, little or nothing has been done to study scientifically the impact of television. The people who have worked hardest at it and spent the most money are the advertisers and their agencies. Fortunately, or unfortunately, their research has been limited and confined to a single purpose.

Research into the social effects of television *must* be undertaken. It has been estimated that viewing in the average Canadian home now fills more than forty-three hours a week, though this is probably exaggerated. In the new electronic age, when people have and are going to have much more time to spare, how they use that time will be of vast and increasing importance. Dr. Paul Lazarsfeld, an outstanding authority at Columbia University, has said:

What people feel about television programs is a question which deserves to be answered in great detail, not only to provide producers with criteria for evaluation of programs but also to give social scientists further knowledge about the audience experience. . . . The question of the effects of exposure to television over a period of years remains on the research agenda of society.

Today, after more than ten years, the only real measure of the impact of television is how it influences our impulse to go out and spend money.

Ten years ago, an Audience Research Department was started within the CBC. It was hoped this would evolve into an evaluator of programs, operating within the studios in both Montreal and Toronto. Unfortunately, it ended up being located in Ottawa and developed along conventional and statistical lines. It accomplished little of what was originally intended. The Fowler Commission noted the growing need for genuinely scientific studies in this field, and it commended the modest beginning that had been made.

Why has there been little or no research on the impact of television? One reason is that most public broadcasters either do not believe in such research or are too busy to do anything about it. Nevertheless, it hardly seems good enough to plunge ahead spending more than \$100,000,000 a year in broadcasting without knowing what is really being accomplished beyond entertaining or informing people, and furnishing a list at the end of the year of the programs that have been broadcast. Another reason is that private stations are only, or mainly, concerned with programs as vehicles for commercials. Their chief concern is to subject the largest possible audience to the impact of commercials. A third reason is the methodology and gadgetry associated with such research is in the primitive stage. There seems reason to believe that this situation could and would change rapidly if some concentrated attention were devoted to it.

AUSTRALIA AND MCLUHAN

In 1962, disturbed by the increasingly unsatisfactory broadcasting situation in Australia, particularly among commercial stations, the Australian Parliament appointed a Select Committee of the Senate to study the whole programming problem. One of its most important recommendations in October of 1963 dealt with research: "The importance of research into the sociological and psychological effects of television cannot be overestimated. The amount of [broadcasting] research already carried out in Australia has been totally inadequate." Recognizing this as a national need, Parliament recommended that a Television Council be founded for the pursuit and co-ordination of research at the national level. The British Government has set up a Committee to study the effects of television on young people. Recently the American Academy of Pediatrics, following studies of child-viewing at two Air Force hospitals, reported that excessive TV viewing induces

symptoms of anxiety conditions, chronic fatigue, loss of appetite, headache, and vomiting. In none of the many cases examined were the parents aware of the causes. When viewing ceased, the symptoms disappeared. An American Senate Committee investigating juvenile delinquency found, on the basis of expert testimony and impressive research evidence, that a relationship has been conclusively established between televised crime and violence and the anti-social attitudes and anti-social behaviour of juvenile viewers.

Recently the University of Toronto established an Institute of Culture and Technology under Marshall McLuhan, considered to be an international authority on communications. He has been joined by nine scientists in the fields of medicine, architecture, engineering, political science, psychiatry, neurology, anthropology, and English. They are working on the concept that man has eight senses, all of them conditioned by his background; the way he uses them or is stimulated by them determines how he reacts to situations. The scientists at the Centre believe they can define and catalogue these sensory characteristics with the aid of such sophisticated machines as the computer and the head camera.

McLuhan believes that we have only reached the "flat-earth" stage in our understanding of the effects of today's instantaneous means of communication. He suggests, in his recent book *Understanding Media*, that TV exerts an influence far beyond and quite apart from the actual content of its programs; that the scanning value of the TV screen rejects sharp personalities and favours the presentation of processes rather than finished products; that the "cool" low-definition character of the TV image demands a high or "hot" degree of audience involvement, and explains the effectiveness of programs which include some process requiring completion or participation; that the TV image challenges the value of fame as much as the values of consumer goods; and that the "star" system has tended to dwindle to a more moderate status since the advent of television. He explains the sudden emergence of the TV medical programs as a rival to the western, and he suggests that it would be possible to list a dozen untried programs that would prove immediately popular for the same basic reasons.

Whatever one's attitude to Dr. McLuhan's opinions—and many highly intelligent people are sharply divided over them—it is clear that both the very nature of the broadcasting media, and especially the nature of television, as well as the impact of their programs, demand the most skilled research, if broadcasting is to be more than a mere

guessing game, and if the viewing public is to receive value for the very substantial expenditures devoted to it. The spending of but a tiny percentage of the budget—the equivalent of even two or three programs—on research by skilled hands should pay high dividends. Sooner or later this will have to be done, so the sooner the better.

Successful programming must always be built on ideas, imagination, originality, and the adaptability of planners and producers, and vary with the intellectual capacity of the individuals concerned. Intelligent and continuing research could be both an incentive and an assistance to creative programming. It need not inhibit the freedom of either planners or producers. There should be more conclusive evidence of the effects of programs on viewers and listeners than the return of box tops and letters of appreciation.

Though such research must of necessity be carried on in close collaboration with the planning and production operations of broadcasters, or even interested sponsors, it should be in the hands of independent scientific groups. It cannot be left to broadcasters alone, not even to the CBC. There are too many biases, too many temptations to present the most favourable picture, to use research to confirm opinions or hopes, a disposition to meet the immediate rather than the long-range need. In any event, broadcasters to date have done nothing about such research.

NATIONAL ADVERTISING

Granted that public-service broadcasting is a vitally important factor in the national life and culture of Canada, its financial stability must be assured. The system of making up annually from the public purse what cannot be obtained from advertisers must be changed. Nevertheless, commercials will continue to have an important place in the public system. Sponsors not only support the entire private structure, but as tax-payers they contribute substantially to the subsidization of the CBC. To deny the use of the public system to sponsors would be discrimination, and those who propose to do so do favours to neither advertisers nor viewers. The implication is that private operators will provide an equally efficient alternative. There is not the slightest indication that they can, and even if they could, the proposal would still be unfair.

Why should those who already support the entire private structure

and make important contributions to the public system be jostled out of the use of the latter? A balanced schedule is an unqualified asset to both sponsor and viewer. Commercials and public-service programming are complementary. What they must have is better-balanced distribution. Surrendering most choice evening hours to commercials and overdoing commercial messages provoke intense dissatisfaction. To deny such programs as Danny Kaye, Walt Disney, "The Defenders," and others to great groups of Canadian viewers would be unthinkable. There are other American productions which could be admitted in the place of some of those now filling choice time, particularly as most programs are on film and can be juggled into a variety of places, subject to the agreement of the sponsor.

Moreover, in the fast moving and rapidly shifting broadcasting scene, the struggle to keep abreast and ahead is inexorable. Nowhere is the battle of nerves, brains, and tension more fierce than in the boardrooms of sponsors and their agencies. Here a never-ending series of engagements takes place, involving the capacities of the most competent writers, illustrators, actors, producers, and promotion men. Nowhere else is the application of art to the promotion of industry so intense. It may be controlled by too exclusive a purpose, but every resource that money can buy is brought to bear. Without the vast sums spent by advertisers, broadcasting would be far from what it is today or will be tomorrow. The presence of commercials on the CBC radio and TV networks is and always has been one of the greatest stimulants that the Corporation has had. That sponsors should occupy most of the choice time to the exclusion of important public-service objectives is quite another matter. They should not. But the responsibility for this does not rest alone on the CBC by any means, but sits squarely on the shoulders of those in authority who have told the Corporation to exert every effort to secure maximum revenues from commercials.

STABILIZING CBC FINANCES

The annual subsidies to public-service broadcasting must be tied to something more stable than making up the inadequacies of advertising revenue. Commercial income under existing conditions can and will become a decreasing percentage of the resources of the public system. If national broadcasting is to be such an important factor in our national life and culture, as seems inevitable in this instantaneous electronic age,

its cost in public grants should bear some closer relation to the national income or expenditure. The Fowler Commission in 1957 proposed that public grants for operating expenses of the CBC be based on a specified percentage of "Personal expenditure on Consumer Goods and Services" (one of the components of the figure on Gross National Product prepared annually by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics). The experimental period of five years first proposed would have expired in 1962. This equation would be subject to a percentage revision and terms of years as decided by Parliament. Thus based, public grants would rise or fall in keeping with the growth of population and the national economy. If inflation drove expenditures up, as will inevitably happen, the needs of the Corporation would be automatically met. If deflation drove them down, the CBC would have to share the disadvantages along with all other segments of national life.

Had the Fowler formula been adopted in 1958, when the present Act was passed, the CBC would have enjoyed an additional \$5,000,000 to spend in 1962, \$12,000,000 more in 1963, and \$10,500,000 more in 1964, or a total of \$41,000,000 more during these three years than was voted on in public grants. There would have been much less reason or excuse for the erosion in programming or in personnel that has taken place between 1962 and 1965, assuming that most of the extra revenue would have been devoted to programming. What many people in Canada forget is that every dollar of CBC money, whatever its source, has to be split two ways, to produce full schedules in two languages—roughly one-third to French operations and two-thirds to English. Last year in the News Division (one of its five operating divisions), the National Broadcasting Company alone spent fifty-three million dollars, while the three American networks spent more than one hundred and twenty-five million on news alone (Robert E. Kintner in *Harper's*, April, 1965). Total CBC expenditures on news, talks, and public affairs in two languages for the year 1963-64 were \$12,035,000.

What percentage of the total personal expenditures on consumer goods and services might be allotted to national broadcasting obviously would depend on what the public and Parliament of Canada expect to be done. It should be subject to adjustment every five—preferably every ten—years after reviewing what had been accomplished. Such grants could even be multiplied and still be considerably less than what is spent annually by Canadians now on any number of non-essential luxuries. This should permit sound long-range programming and reduce somewhat the more or less continuous series of investigations that are unsettling and wasteful of a vast amount of time, energy, and money.

THE NEVER-ENDING BATTLE

During the thirty-two years since national broadcasting began, the struggle between conflicting forces has been constant and insistent. It has been fought against geography encompassing five-and-one-half time zones, with diverse interests and nationalities; against inadequate finances which only, since the arrival of television, have necessitated substantial and growing public subsidies; against the overpowering influence of an increasingly affluent but friendly and almost too helpful neighbour; against sniping politicians ready to make political capital of both the errors and even the enterprise of a nationalized body; and, above all, against public apathy and indifference. Broadcasting in Canada has been a history of struggles—between two great railway systems; between railway and telephone transmission interests; between provincial and federal authorities as to jurisdiction; between small community and large regional privately owned stations for a share of limited revenues; between the hucksters and the intellectuals; between artists demanding adequate remuneration for their talent and stations occasionally struggling to make ends meet but occasionally ready to take any and every advantage of talent; between aspiring amateurs and trained professionals; between various program elements, regions and language groups seeking places in the sun as well as their share of available dollars; between bureaucracy and creativity—and, encompassing all these, between public and private broadcasting. Unremitting agitation and conflict before Parliamentary Committees and Royal Commissions, lobbying and log-rolling behind the scenes, seasoned through sheer necessity by a substantial measure of compromise and co-operation, all have combined to create the hectic kaleidoscope that has constituted Canadian broadcasting and which has no counterpart anywhere else in the world.

Clearly the time has come to untangle the snarl of program distribution and to define more clearly the prime purposes of broadcasting and the functions of its component parts. In May of 1933, nearly four years before the CBC came into existence, I was invited to address the Institute for Education by Radio at Ohio State University. That was many years before the Institute had established the enviable reputation as an appraiser of programs. At that time I indicated in *The Toronto University Monthly* of May, 1933, what to me were then—and still are to me today—the prime purpose of broadcasting: (a) to develop the latent artistic talent of our cosmopolitan population by providing opportunity for self-expression; (b) to interpret to one another the many groups con-

stituting the Canadian mosaic; (c) to awaken a greater national consciousness and unite more firmly the far-flung provinces and diverse thinly populated areas of Canada; (d) to inform, entertain, and inspire Canadians to better things; (e) to serve the needs of commerce. These factors enumerated thirty years ago are almost identical with those set out since, at various times and places, but with somewhat varying emphasis, as the *raison d'être* of the CBC. They are no less important today than they were then. Though the picture has been enlarged, the purposes remain constant.

CONFEDERATION FROM SEA TO SEA

Though Canadian accomplishments as a whole have been impressive, often spectacular, the over-all emphasis has been on quantity, not quality. Much of this has been inevitable under the more or less explosive development that has taken place. Expansion is still on. Pressure in television to program the morning as well as the afternoon and evening are insistent; every last minute of the day must be filled with something. Our neighbours do it, so we must keep up with them. There are many Canadians still to be reached with television, and they will be the most expensive to service, quite beyond the reach of private operators.

The burden of maintaining standards rests on too few shoulders. No great improvement, by and large, can be expected from private stations, because in the face of ever stiffening competition, not many could afford to, and they would do so under compulsion. The national system must continue to carry the torch. Quality programming cannot be legislated. It can only be attained by idealism, inspiration, sound organization, and enough money to do good constructive work in a healthy atmosphere. Broadcasting is not an employment agency, though some talent seems to think so.

Whether Canadians like it or not, Canada is still more of a mass meeting of relatively uninformed and perplexed people than it is a united country. Everywhere divisive influences abound, and the impact of the United States grows, particularly in English-speaking Canada. Nor has French Canada escaped. The separatist movement in Quebec is based to no small degree on the desire to escape submergence in the great American tide of radio, television, films, and allied influences—to save their language and customs while yet there is a little time. In

Dear Enemies, Solange Chaput Rolland wrote: "We [in French Canada] are a nation in despair at the idea that one day, perhaps not far off, we shall lose our identity. . . . French Canada is completely consumed by the fear that it will disappear, that it will be assimilated by Anglo-American voracity."

The CBC has been the only distinguished and distinguishing feature of Canadian broadcasting. In the confused disarray of thought—economic, social, and political—that besets us, the CBC, whatever its shortcomings, has established a record of brilliant accomplishment; it continues to be the most potential force for unity and understanding. It is an essential complement and reinforcement of the East-West Confederation of Canada, from sea to sea. Its future, like the future of Canada itself, will depend on the leadership it gets, and the degree of interest taken in it by those whom it strives mightily to serve.

The Diamond Jubilee of Confederation centred around the first great national broadcast. Canadians joined hands in a united effort that day, as they never had before, and also as they have done rarely, if ever, in the years since. On the morning, afternoon, and evening of July 1, 1927, all Canada became, for the first time, under the spell of united radio, a single assemblage swayed by a common emotion. Among the plethora of celebrations, exhibitions, monuments, and public works that are now being prepared for Canada's Centenary celebration in 1967, let us clarify now, once and for all, this endless struggle for Canadian national broadcasting, by putting aside our needless strife, petty differences, the search for power, and join once more in making broadcasting the symbol that united us with such emphasis and clarity on that memorable day nearly forty years ago.

POST SCRIPT: THE FOWLER COMMITTEE REPORT 1965

On September 9th the Fowler Broadcasting Committee, appointed May 25, 1964, reported to the Government on the state of Canadian broadcasting and found it decidedly wanting. At that time this book was ready for press, but because this could be a turning point in the history of broadcasting, my publisher at some inconvenience agreed to the inclusion of these brief observations.

The report (Queen's Printer, \$5.00) is a voluminous, brilliantly written and well co-ordinated analysis, highly critical of the programming of both public and private operators and also of the internal structure of the CBC. It is a good report, and it is to be hoped that the structural changes recommended can be made before further serious (and almost certain) deterioration in national programming sets in.

The paramount importance of the CBC is reaffirmed in the report. It recommends the return to a single unified system under a "Canadian Broadcasting Authority" (CBA) of fifteen members quartered in Ottawa with powers to licence *all* stations, to examine their records of performance and to confirm or cancel their licences. The Board of Broadcast Governors and the CBC Board of Directors would both disappear. The CBC head office would be transferred to Montreal and the direction of all English programming would be centred at Toronto. The new CBC building at Ottawa would be sold. The television day for *all* Canadian stations would begin at noon, with the morning hours being reserved for educational broadcasting.

The importance of extensive independent research into the impact of broadcasting is recognized, as is the need for standardizing the forms

of accounting and reporting for all stations in order that their achievements and shortcomings may be more readily recorded and compared. A public grant on a five year basis of twenty-five dollars per annum per television household to the CBC is called for to cover both capital and operating costs.

The CBC would be headed by a Director-General and a General Manager, both appointed by and responsible to the overall Authority. Vice-Presidents as such would disappear. In essence the proposed set-up differs very little from Fowler's 1957 recommendations or the original CBC Board of Governors, except that the new Board would have the power to issue licences instead of merely recommending them. I would have doubts about the large number of unsalaried members of the Board! who might have little knowledge of the problems discussed and would then be forced to rely greatly on the judgement of others.

The most important recommendations bear a striking resemblance to the conclusions reached in this book. The report generalizes; the book particularizes.

The report opens: "The only thing that really matters in broadcasting is program content; all the rest is housekeeping." However, the finest programs are of little value unless they are adequately distributed, and distribution, as we have seen, has been a provocative and frustrating problem for thirty years. The Fowler Commission of 1957 was very critical of the lack of distribution of the CBC "national program service" by private affiliates. The present report in referring to basic affiliates of CBC networks, both radio and television, states that the CBC must have the means to distribute the national program services across Canada – a service which should be available to almost every Canadian home. Referring to basic affiliates it states (p. 71) that these are required to carry the *whole* of the network service of the CBC. This is probably only a broad generalization. In any event it is inaccurate, as we have seen in chapter 22. A few pages later (p. 81) it refers to the "*essential*" national service as being provided to all those places within the coverage areas of private affiliated stations. However, in neither the 1957 report nor the present report has any attempt been made to define the national program service, essential or otherwise. That was left to the BBG and was never done. It would appear that the Committee considers the present distribution adequate, and it is at least partially on this assumption that it has recommended a freeze for at least five years of any extensions of CBC production or transmission facilities.

The CBC National Service in radio is between sixty and seventy hours

weekly out of a total of one hundred and fifteen. The rest is local. Admittedly some of this is not of great moment, but a very considerable part of it is. The "reserved time" which basic radio stations are expected to carry, even now, is only twenty-five hours a week. Though many small stations exceed this requirement a substantial group of larger stations broadcast *less* than one-third of the whole national service. In television the record is better but here too, there is considerable disparity. Since all basic television affiliates carry the same volume of commercials, which occupy about 80 per cent of prime evening time, it follows that some broadcast a great deal less of the *remaining* CBC service than others. Too many good programs still die at the switchboards of affiliated private stations which jostle increasingly with the steadily expanding number of non-affiliates which have grown at an unprecedented rate during recent years. The Committee suggests that this can be corrected by some minor changes in the arrangements with the affiliates. In view of the experience of thirty years and developing trends in the business, this is optimistic, if not actually naïve. (See pp. 320, 327.)

Mr. Fowler is at some pains to disclaim any responsibility for the overall effects on CBC programming of the aggressive commercial policies he recommended in 1957; and quotes the PCB 1959 report in support of his stand (PCB. p. 809). This as everyone knows now, was mainly a political document from start to finish and its recommendation for "hotted-up" commercial policies was merely an excuse for not facing up squarely to the real purposes of broadcasting and the financial needs of the CBC. He continues to recommend aggressive commercial policies and urges a thorough reorganization of the Sales Department nationally. With this I agree, with some reservations. The importance of reorganization can scarcely be overstressed. Regionalization has been overdone by setting up a whole series of little departments, sometimes with conflicting policies and lack of co-ordination. The recommended change should increase efficiency. That any substantial success can be achieved or should be expected from a more concentrated drive to sell certain types of cultural, public affairs or institutional programs without further fragmentation of the commercial rate structure seems problematical and with affiliates that is not practical. There is a real conflict here. The CBC has (or should have) one main purpose in view in the creation of each of these programs. The sponsor usually has quite another. These purposes are unlikely to

coincide, and substantial compromises will be necessary before sales can be really effective.

The proposal to freeze for five years at least, all extensions of CBC production and transmission facilities, and to grant to private entrepreneurs willing to take a chance all those channels reserved for the CBC, as well as others requested by the CBC for future use is to me the most provocative and unsatisfactory part of the report. The areas affected include the whole province of Saskatchewan, New Brunswick (English), Cape Breton, several other large areas, and a number of important cities. While there may be good reasons for a breathing spell in CBC expansion, this should not be used to open a way for additional private entrepreneurs (BCR p. 82). They should be excluded for the same periods and from the same areas, even though this might mean a continuation of local monopolies in the meantime. Anything less will provoke conflict and, ultimately, endless political manoeuvring. We already have good examples of this at Quebec City and St. John's; certainly, we do not want more.

If additional licences are to be granted in these areas or elsewhere, it should only be after a new Broadcasting Act has stipulated, as did the Act of 1936, that licencees have no proprietary or vested right in the channels they are permitted to use, and which belong in the public domain. (This was omitted from the draft statute in the Fowler Report of 1957.) It should also be stipulated that, in the event of expropriation, compensation will not exceed the depreciated value of the physical assets with no allowance for good will. Trafficking in station licences and consolidation into powerful hands with little purpose save capital gains and high profits is becoming increasingly prevalent and will accelerate. As with other public utilities, a reasonable limit should be set on profits. If the excess profits of large metropolitan stations could be redistributed among deserving but small, struggling community stations, both equality and national purpose would be better served. While admittedly this would be difficult, it should not be thought impossible.

The Committee roundly condemns the programming of the private stations. It calls for them to take a larger share in the national objectives of broadcasting while continuing to fulfill their local community services. While it admits that program quality cannot be legislated, it recommends the establishment of individual station standards of program performance which would be made a condition of each station's licence and would be enforceable as such.

The report was met by a barrage of editorial criticism from the press and certain commentators. But it also met with wide commendation. I read about a hundred editorials and commentaries—about 60% critical and 40% laudatory. From the timing and content of much of the former, it appeared that some of the writers had done little more than read somewhat garbled news reports. Reaction in the French press was also mixed, though generally favourable.

Howls of protest were loudest among those publishers heavily interested in both newspapers and broadcasting stations, particularly the Sifton-Southam, Bell, and associated groups in the West and Ontario; though there were exceptions even among these, notably *The Ottawa Journal*. The *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix* threw a tantrum and called the proposals dictatorial, unfair, ill-founded, biased, with no understanding of, or regard for the prerogatives of free enterprise or the will of the people. It said:

Are not our television and radio stations commercial enterprises, and is this not the whole of our economy and ideology? We have had enough of this socialized bureaucracy. Control belongs in the hands of the men who invest their resources, their experience and their professions.

The *Winnipeg Free Press* (the chief Sifton organ) even opposed longer-term financing for the CBC. However, most critical comment was more restrained. Though admitting the weakness of the BGG administration, most of this group still plumped for the retention of the separate board for which they had worked and lobbied so long.

The main attack was focused on the composition of the proposed authority—a full-time Chairman and fourteen part-time members—all paid, and all appointed on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. This was blazoned far and wide as Czarism—thought control. Beneath it all was the obvious fear that at long last some attention might have to be paid by private operators to the instructions given to the CBC in 1936 (p. 204); by various Parliamentary Committees, notable that of 1946 (p. 245), and re-emphasized by the Fowler Royal Commission of 1957, and by this Committee. The fact that the licence requirements proposed for private stations are based on, and are almost identical with, those suggested by the President of the CAB in his report of May 1964, as a member of the Pickersgill Committee seems to have been entirely overlooked.

Nevertheless there was a large body of support, led by the *Montreal Star*, and supported by many papers in the smaller cities all across the nation, for the main proposals of the report; and broad press recognition of the urgent need for positive action to improve the quality and character of Canadian programming; and particularly the need to provide at least a little more substance between 7:30 and 11:00 P.M. Had the absence of this been less conspicuous, there is little doubt that the Committee's report would have been much less condemnatory.

In September a federal election was called for November 8. On the results of that election will hang the fate of the Committee's report, and much of the future of national broadcasting in Canada.

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E. Austin Weir

Earnest Austin Weir, a true pioneer in the world of radio, has played a major role in the establishment of Canada's national broadcasting system. As head of the radio department of the Canadian National Railways, Mr. Weir was the first to bring symphonies, drama, opera, and commentaries nationally by radio to Canadians. The inauguration of transatlantic broadcasts was due to his inspiration and initiative; the first of these programs was the Thanksgiving Service held in Westminster Abbey in 1929 following King George V's recovery from a critical illness.

In 1937, Mr. Weir became Commercial Manager of the CBC and Superintendent of the CBC Press and Information Service, and served on the executive of the CBC until his retirement. But Weir's work did not end with his retirement. He continued to serve the CBC in an advisory capacity for many years, always utilizing his wide experience and ever-present interest in the world of broadcasting.



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