

OTTAWA WATCH

by James Careless

As the summer wound down here in Ottawa, people are looking ahead to what's coming up in the fall – and taking note of a few things that have already taken place.

Fox Network Decision

First and foremost, the CRTC has okayed cable's request to bring the Fox network to all Canadians. Previously, only about 50 per cent of cable subscribers could see wonderful Fox programming like *Married... with Children* straight from the source; namely those who could receive the signal off-air. As for the other cable systems who were out of range of U.S. Fox affiliates along the border – they were out of luck, and were not allowed to bring in Fox via microwave, fibre or satellite.

However, now that's all changed – and how it's been changed says a lot about how we do things in Canada.

In the September Ottawa Watch column, I detailed the Canadian Association of Broadcasters' objection to allowing Fox to go national on cable. This, CAB argued, would violate the Commission's longstanding "3+1" rule; that is, the cable companies could put the three commercial networks on basic – ABC, CBS and NBC, plus PBS – and no more. Allowing Fox in, said the CAB, would effectively turn it into a "4+1" rule; something that would further Americanize the Canadian broadcasting system. (It was noted, however, that the CAB didn't object to Canadian stations purchasing and airing Fox programming for profit.)

Well, hand it to the Commission to find a way to give both cable and the broadcasters what they want – on paper, anyway. Under its ruling on Fox, the "3+1" rule still stands. Cable companies are still allowed to put only three of the four U.S. commercial networks on basic – Fox now being included in the august company of the traditional Big Three – meaning that the CAB's wishes have been respected.

However – and this is a big 'however' – cable companies can now put that fourth U.S. network (read Fox) on extended basic. Given that 92 per cent of all Canadian cable households already take extended basic, isn't this effectively the same as changing the "3+1" rule to "4+1"? Probably so.

Rogers-Maclean Hunter Merger

An Angus Reid poll indicated that 60 per cent of Canadians oppose the purchase of Maclean Hunter by Rogers. The poll came out just weeks before the CRTC hearing into the merger, and the timing was no accident. That's because the group who funded the poll, The Friends of Canadian Broadcasting, are no fans of the deal, which would give Rogers control of 44 per cent of Canada's 7.8 million cable households.

Whether or not the CRTC will be swayed by this poll – or by all the goodies Rogers is promising to deliver should the merger be approved – remains to be seen.

Certainly Friends spokesperson Ian Morrison isn't convinced. He's quoted as saying, "We notice that when the cable monopolies come to the door, the CRTC rolls out the carpet." I'm sure that comes as good news to the Canadian Cable Television Association, who probably don't feel they've been as well-treated as Morrison claims.

Again, as usual, it's impossible to know which way the Commission is going to go on this deal. If silence is the same as impartiality, then the CRTC is a model of judicial virtue.

Personally, I find it hard to believe that the merger could be stopped at this late stage; it seems like a fact of life. But I also know that, when it comes down to deciding policy, the Commission is capable of stopping anything. This is what makes the process so fascinating. And for people like Ted Rogers, so risky.

One thing's clear: it's going to be an interesting autumn here in Ottawa. Keep watching this space!

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INDUSTRY NEWS

CRTC OPENS UP TELECOM COMPETITION: Most of the news reports dealt only with the increase in the cost of basic telephone service. The recent CRTC decision, the work of vice-chairman Bud Sherman, also opened up local telephone service to competition. But for the broadcast industry, the important part of the new policy is that telephone and cable companies will now be allowed to compete with each other; not only will telcos be getting into the cable business, but cable companies will also be getting into the telephone business. It's been that way for years in the U.S. and U.K., but the change of policy here in Canada came sooner than expected; it will require new legislation before going into effect. Telcos have already been allowed to experiment with video-on-demand, but will require a licence for any video services which compete with cable TV; the procedure will probably require telcos to establish subsidiary companies to qualify for CRTC licences.

SPICER CRITICAL OF ROGERS: As BT went to press, the CRTC hearing on the purchase of Maclean Hunter by Rogers Communications was underway, and Chairman Keith Spicer was urging Rogers to lower its rates. Rogers, he said, "wins the prize" for the highest cable rates in Canada. Noting that one survey indicated 70% of customers would rather deal with the telephone company, Spicer asked if it was "really smart to charge 7 or 8 times what the telephone companies charge for a second outlet?" All Ted Rogers would promise is that rates will be lower — lower than they would have been without the merger! (*Ed. note:* Now there's a good line to feed back to the government that's always telling us they've reduced spending — well, no, they didn't lower spending, they just spent less than they had planned to spend!) A poll commissioned by The Friends of Canadian Broadcasting suggests 60% of Canadians oppose the deal, while 26% favor it.

Cross-Ownership is one of the major issues facing the CRTC, if Rogers insists on keeping MH's ownership of the Toronto Sun properties. Even before the hearing began, some newspaper publishers were making it clear that if Rogers could own newspapers, then they should be allowed to own cable systems. Indeed, they say newspapers should be given preference over existing licensees because they bring new resources to the broadcast industry.

Concentration of ownership is also a major issue: if the deals are approved, Rogers will have 31% and Shaw 14% of Canadian cable subscribers, and together 65% of English-speaking subscribers. A CRTC study — prepared last November but just obtained for publication last month — notes that the broadcast industry seems to be evolving into a smaller number of very large

companies. "Small independents must make their mark very quickly or vanish... If the trend continues, by the year 2000 the broadcast system will be concentrated in very few hands." Another detrimental effect, the study says, is "a homogenized on-air product."

Other news: The review of Federal government policy on **Direct-to-Home** satellite service appears to challenge the CRTC's position on DTH. At the end of August, the Commission virtually gave the DTH Canada consortium a monopoly, exempting it from many regulations — even the need to be licensed. CRTC requirements included distribution by Telesat Canada and Canadian programming on the majority of channels, effectively closing the door on plans by Power DirecTV, 80% owned by Power Corp., to launch a Canadian version of DirecTV. Less than two weeks later, Heritage Minister Michel Dupuy and Industry Minister John Manley announced the review... In the U.S., DirecTV — with 40 channels of varied programming and 50 of pay-per-view — is now becoming available in northern states adjacent to Canada... A committee of MPs is to look at alternatives to the present **CBC Funding**. Ottawa now contributes \$1.1 billion, with another \$300 million coming from advertising... More than 1200 executives from the film and television industries attended *Symposium '94*. The 3-day conference was part of the **Toronto International Film Festival**... Statistics Canada has reported that **productivity of media employees** is almost twice the national average. Broadcast and print accounted for \$7.1 billion of the gross domestic product, and the value of broadcast services rose 31% from 1986 to 1991. Return on media investment was 5% in 1991, against 2.4% in the manufacturing sector.

NETWORKS + STATIONS

CBC Prime Time News is now attracting nearly 200,000 more viewers at 10pm than it did last season at 9pm. However, there's a significant drop in audience after the news portion, which attracts about a million viewers... **TVOntario** has a new public affairs show. *Studio Two* was launched on Sept. 26, and runs for an hour at 8pm, Mon-Fri... Two more decisions from the **Broadcast Standards Council**, which ruled that a segment of *Fashion Television* on **CITY-TV Toronto** was not degrading to women, but faulted **CJCL Toronto** for loss of logger tapes which prevented the council from deciding on a complaint against on-line host "Stormin' Norman" Rumack... The CRTC has asked two applicants for religious TV stations to clarify their commitments. **Victory Christian Fellowship of**

Continued on page 9

Lethbridge and **Cherry Point Association** of Dawson Creek, the Commission notes, had "few precedents" to refer to, being the first applicants under the new policy allowing religious radio and TV stations. The two applicants are to submit further details for meeting balance and ethical guidelines by Nov. 28; interventions are to be filed by Dec. 12/94... Among matters before the CRTC Nov. 1 hearing in Vancouver: **Four Seasons Radio**, for a country format FM at Kelowna, 11 kw on 99.9; and the **CBC's** plans for a production facility in Victoria... Other current applications: transfer of **CUC Broadcasting** to **Shaw Communications**; and conversion from AM to FM of **Soneme Inc.'s** CFLO Mont-Laurier and its rebroadcaster CKLO L'Annonciation, Quebec.

CRTC Approvals: Clint Forster was given approval to acquire **CFQC Saskatoon**, unprofitable during the past three years and in receivership, for \$500,000; and to move **CJWW Saskatoon** from 750 AM to 100 kw on 92.9 FM; formats are traditional and new country respectively... **CHSN-FM Saskatoon** (High-Line Broadcasting) was denied a format change to new country... The merger of **CKEG** and **CHUB Nanaimo** was approved, with CKEG moving from 1350 to 1570 and CHUB moving to 1400w on 102.3 MHz; CHUB's rebroadcaster at Parksville also moves to FM, 900w on 99.9... **CIRO-FM St-Georges**, which agreed not to sell advertising outside Beauce when it went on the air in 1987, was relieved of that commitment. The CRTC notes that the stations protected, especially **CFJO-FM Thetford Mines**, are now in a stronger position.

A number of Quebec stations are in the CRTC's 'bad books' — Mandatory Orders have been issued for two years against **CHOC-FM Jonquiere** and **CIHO-FM St-Hilarion**, primarily for failing to maintain logger tape recordings. A Mandatory Order is filed with the Federal Court and failure to meet its requirements will put the station in contempt of court... Problems at Radiomutuel stations include too few French-language vocals on **CJMS/CKMF-FM Montreal**; too little Canadian content on **CJRC Ottawa-Hull**; and logger taping and "coarse" language on **CKRS Chicoutimi**. CKRS is also to establish a studio at Jonquiere, where it had its main studio for many years... Also having difficulties meeting the required level of 65% French vocals were Telemedia's **CKCH Hull**, which now has a policy of playing French vocals exclusively, and **CJMT Chicoutimi**...

Standard's **CKQB-FM Ottawa** is now on the air on 106.9, replacing 12-year-old CJSB. GM Gary Aube says simulcasting on 540 AM will continue until the end of November... **CHUM Toronto** cut 11 jobs — 4 in news, 3 in programming and 4 support people — dropping a noon-hour news show and evening newscasts on AM. GM

John Wright says radio revenues in Toronto have gone from \$108 million in 1988 to \$102 million this year... **CHFI-FM Toronto** again chalked up top ratings in the summer BBM... The receiver says seven parties have expressed interest in buying bankrupt **CHER Sydney** and Oct. 5 was the closing date for firm offers... Congratulations to **CKCO-TV Kitchener** — one of some 17 Canadian TV stations celebrating their 40th anniversary this year. CKCO went on the air March 1, 1954 as a CBC affiliate, owned by Famous Players. It was just in time for the hockey playoffs and engineer Joe McIntyre was the hero of the day when he climbed a tower during an ice storm to adjust the microwave tower that brought in the games. The station was noted for its live production, everything from parades to *Polka Time*... There's a story that a viewer once came up to Bill Inkl and said, "Aren't you the guy who does *Bowling for Dollars*? At the time Bill was sitting next to Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward... Joining CTV in 1961, CKCO produced the network's longest running program, *Romper Room*, for 20 years... In 1954 Famous Players also launched **CFMT-TV Quebec City**... BT salutes all those pioneer telecasters, from **CFRN-TV Edmonton** in the West to **CBHT Halifax** in the East, on 40 years of achievement and excellence!

CABLE + SATELLITE NEWS

Two new performing arts channels may be licensed in addition to **Bravo!** and **Arts & Divertissement**. A six-member committee, set up by Heritage Minister Dupuy, is to prepare proposals during the next six months... The CRTC hearings on the **Rogers Communications** bid to buy **Maclean Hunter** were carried live on many cable systems of both companies, via the

Ontario Community Television Network... Less publicized was the Rogers purchase of **West Coast Cablevision** of Burnaby, B.C., from the McKay family. Rogers paid \$15.5 million for the system and promised benefits of \$1 million for production and \$400,000 for coverage of community events and university grants/scholarships... **Cable Industry Regional Meetings** are being held across the country: Oct. 12 at the Westin Hotel in Edmonton; Oct. 13-14 at the Delta Pacific in Richmond, B.C.; OCTA Oct. 25-27 at Le Parc, Markham (Toronto area); and ACQ Oct. 30-Nov. 2 at Quebec City... The first bid by a telephone company to get into cable TV was rejected by the CRTC. BCE-owned **Northwestel Inc.** of Whitehorse had sought to buy two systems and build nine others... **Illegal Decoders Seized:** The RCMP, with the assistance of the Film/Video Security Office of the Canadian Motion Picture Distributors Association, has seized over 5,000 illegally-chipped decoders and several thousand electronic chips. Seven raids were conducted in the Montreal area and charges laid under the Radiocommunication Act, Copyright Act and Criminal Code. Cable systems being defrauded included CF Cable, Videotron, Rogers and Maclean Hunter... **Shaw Communications** has agreed to buy **Chinook Cable TV**, with systems in Dawson Creek, Fort St. John and two other B.C. communities... **Fundy Cable** plans to launch a fully interactive multimedia pilot project on Nov. 1. Initially, about 50 subscribers will be provided with modems, hardware and software to link home computers to the Miramichi campus of New Brunswick Community College... On the west coast, Canada's largest Credit Union, **VanCity**, has a two-month trial of home banking underway in about 100 homes.

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JERRY FAIRBRIDGE

Information Superhighway: A Lot of Hype???

For those who aren't sick of talk about the information superhighway, here are views to further confuse the issue.

First, a skeptic in **Mark Stahlman**, president of New Media Associates of New York, writing in *Wired* magazine.

Headlines about the digital, interactive, multi-media blow-your-socks-off information highway are all hype. "There will be no convergence. There will be no 500-channel future." The reason, he writes, is there are no obvious businesses to exploit the new technologies.

The battle between cable and the telcos has become the centre ring of the convergence circus because they're both regulated and don't want to be. So they're telling governments that if they will deregulate, "it will save the nation, the economy and the free world." The switched voice network of the telcos is fundamentally different from the broadband/broadcast character of cable television, write Stahlman. "These systems have developed and continue to evolve to address very different business needs. There is neither the business nor the technical basis for them to converge." The real money, he says, is being spent not on

residential rebuilds but on business-to-business communications.

Mike Ellis of Sisco is another contrarian. The information highway is a lot of hype, the marketing flavor of the month, he told the national RTNDA convention. "What's behind the information highway is a process that's been going on for 50 years. The information hasn't changed, the technology has changed." Furthermore, broadcasters are not a significant part of the highway. "You're an afterthought."

"The closest thing I can think of (to the information highway) is a living organism," said Mike. "It moves toward the end user/consumer. If this beast is properly fed and housed, it excretes money for its owner. Fundamentally, it's a marketing scam trying to stick you with product. It's intrinsically unmanageable. At best it can be influenced. The technology escaped from captivity."

However, he also said: "You're in the prime position. You can create product out of nothing. You do it every day."

Since it's a question of a technical revolution creating new capacity, and finding content that will pay to use that capacity, and telcos and cablecows are already playing in each other's turf, I believe Stahlman's comments are simplistic. But not his main message that money will drive the information highway. The telcos are aggressively chasing anything that will pay.

You can read the future in the CRTC's exemption of direct-to-home satellite services from detailed regulation if they meet basic guidelines. Major interests are watching, much more, for the coming CRTC decision on Rogers' purchase of Maclean Hunter.

Other points to ponder for the future. Consumers will be able to access entire news conferences or meetings. They will no longer be tied to reporters' interpretations of what's most important. However, such access will cost both money and time and only those will pay who have a special interest. Free newscasts will still be needed and in effect will be the menu to what's available.

They will also be the filter and interpretation, both of which will be needed because there will be far too much for audiences or even individual newsrooms to digest or want.

The telcos will increase their wooing of entertainment rightsholders, exploring whether it is profitable to become a bridge between them and consumers. Major companies like Sony will look at new marketing methods. For example, they might imitate broadcasters. They might hire your talent to program new delivery channels with infomercials that sound like a radio format if that proves effective. They might pay telcos to carry these infomercials.

There will be more user-pay to fill the new data-delivery capacity, but consumer wealth is not boundless.

This comes from **Mark Jan Vrem**, ND at CITY Edmonton which works with Videotron to provide viewers with some news choices. "When you get back to basics, it's just good, solid story-telling that will determine our future success."

That goes for programming as well as news. I hope there'll still be some good, solid story tellers around. The CRTC would help if it stopped bleeding the patient every time a new doctor took over a case, even if the blood goes to other patients.

Changes: Canwest-Global took charge of MITV. There was lots of speculation in the months preceding the takeover whether Canwest-Global would go ahead with the deal considering conditions placed on it. CBC took CHSJ-TV Saint



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John. Canwest-Global keeps Saint John as just a news bureau of the anchor station in Dartmouth. The CBC is broadcasting to New Brunswick out of its Fredericton studios. Between 30 and 40 jobs were lost... **Gary Miles** moved to Toronto to look after operations at Rogers' radio stations, except CFTR/CHFI-FM Toronto, and to help oversee CBS. **Sandy Sanderson**, already VP and GM of CFTR 680News/CHFI, became Executive VP Toronto operations and national PD. Rogers' chief financial officer **Rael Merson** became executive VP cable services... **Rob Mise** went from CFRB Toronto to Director of Programming, Telemedia North, based in Sudbury, where he's looking forward to life among the trees and lakes. **Steve Kowch** is sitting in for him... **Randall Moore** left the CKBY/CIWW Ottawa newsroom for CFRB... **Daniel Freeman** is no longer news director at CFCF-TV Montreal... **Larry Silver** is gone from the CFTR/CHFI-FM newsroom... Harvard Broadcasting's CHMX-FM Regina to MX 92.1, country FM, joining its AM sister CKRM in the format. CKIT-FM lost to MX in the bid for a Regina country FM licence. As a result, ops manager **Dean Sinclair** and GM **Vic Dubois** invented what they call format 13, a pop-rock format with a country flavor. It's 30-per-cent country with a blend of rock and pop hits from the '90s, '80s and '70s that flow with the pure country. "It's a painstaking, high-maintenance format, but it can be done and we're doing it," said Vic.

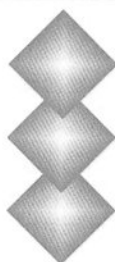
The CRTC approved the purchase by CJWW of CFQC Saskatoon from receivers. CJWW moves from 750 to 600 on the AM band and CFQC becomes a country FM station at 92.9, probably late this year. Vic Dubois is GM of both stations... Palmorex's CHNO-FM Sudbury went from oldies to classic rock and the name The Crusher. **Bruce Lindsay** is PD.

Former PD **Scott Jackson** moved to sister station CJMX-FM. Three other positions are gone... **Steve Olson**, PD of CIRK-FM Edmonton, K97, was in for a visit after BN delivered a morning show from Winnipeg from him during the Rolling Stones tour.

It seems everyone is winning and no one losing in a revitalized Edmonton market, which sounds good to me. That doesn't mean there aren't big changes. As you know, **Rob Christie** and **Audie Linds** are moving from CKNG Edmonton, Power 92, to replace **Larry Fedoruk** and **Carla Collins** at CKFM, MIX 99.9, Toronto. Despite rumors to the contrary, **Pat Cardinal** at Power 92 said when I called that they're there until November. At CKRA-FM, K-Lite, PD **Len Thuesen** moved from mornings to afternoon drive and to more time for other things, **Don Ritchie** to mornings from midday and **Gord Robson** from afternoon drive to middays. At CFBR, The Bear, **Terry Evans** and **Kodiak Steve** are the new morning team.

Marty Forbes, GM at The Bear, ran an ad congratulating Rob and Audie on their move to the The Bear's sister station, listing their top 10 reasons for going. Among the reasons: after weeks of study they're close to spelling Mississauga correctly; they're convinced they have a chance of making the Toronto Raptors' starting five; Club Med Scarborough (Marty obviously knows Toronto well). Number one reasons: No vacancies at The Bear. However, Pat Cardinal heard about the ad and, in the same issue, took a bigger ad to list the top ten reasons to listen to Rob and Audie in the mornings. His top reason: Because Power 92 eats Bear for breakfast every day.

Peter Emerson is back on air as morning host on his CKDX-FM Newmarket, aptly called The Phoenix since it's risen from



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the ashes of CKAN... **Peter Webb** moved from CHOW Welland to GM of CFMX Toronto... CHMG Edmonton moved to FM August 29 but kept its oldies format. A new morning show started a week before the switch, the Charlee and Charley show with **Charlee Redman** from CIRK Edmonton, K-97, and **Charley West** who's been there for three years... CHUM's CFCA-FM Kitchener is now 105.3 KOOL-FM with a classic rock format and a morning team of **Neil Hedley** and **Lisa Brandt**... Electrohome's CKCO-TV Kitchener is celebrating its 40th anniversary... BN's **Brian Kennedy** has gone to BN Washington from Ottawa. He replaced **Mike Omelus**, who is settling in as general ND at BN Toronto... At CFSL Weyburn, **Richard Boone** is now ND, succeeding **Wayne Ross**. Richard was formerly at CKLB-FM Yellowknife. **Cam McCubben** and **Jeff Palmer** are gone from the CKWS Vancouver newsroom. **Jim Fraser** ended his morning show there at the end of August, went on two months vacation, and was due to start November 1 at CJJR Vancouver, JR-Country. He replaces **Chris Coburn** who has co-hosted the morning show with **Sharryn Graham** for nearly a year. Sharryn stays on. Some sales people are also gone from CKWX.

Record - Breaking KKNW Show Ends: At KKNW New Westminster, **Bill Hughes'** roving mic show ended after 45 years. It's in the Guinness Book of World Records as the longest consecutively running radio show.

Bill is now 69, a past president and GM of KKNW. He continued to do his show after he retired from his management job. His signoff was the 15,862nd show. In case you haven't been to Vancouver and heard the Bill Hughes roving mic show, he took his mic out and spoke to tourists about how they liked Vancouver... The **Rafe Mair** and **Bill Good** shows now start earlier, and there's a new afternoon lifestyles show called *Life with Bob and Shawn* - that's **Bob Say** and **Shawn Webster**. Then **Rick Honey** goes 3 to 5 pm... CKOR/CJMG-FM Penticton have a new news director in **John Ferebee** from sister station CICF Vernon... **Jeff Paterson** moved from news to become the voice of the Kamloops Blazers for CHNL Kamloops. He was succeeded in the newsroom by **Kent Krahn**... CHSC St. Catharines and CHOW Welland have amalgamated after emerging from protection of the bankruptcy act and are going public. **Doug Setterington**

is president and **Gordon Burnett** VP.

CFPL/CFPL-FM London laid off news staff **Dean Chevalier**, **Jerry Daniels** and part-timer **Mike Mitchell**, and **Bill Adams** now has a part-time position. CFPL still has 13 news people... The Radio Marketing Board named **Steve Fawcett** of CKPT/CKQM-FM Peterborough sales person of the year. CKRY-FM Calgary, Country 105, won the sales team of the year award. GSM is **Gerry Bader**... At CJOB Winnipeg, **Mike McCourt** has left and was replaced as news director by **Lorne Edwards**. Skater Lorne (his licence plate reads ICE) is the son of longtime newsman **Vic Edwards** . . .

The Alberta government has handed CKUA Edmonton over to a private foundation that will manage it until the CRTC provides permission to change ownership. CKUA has been on air, government-funded, for 67 years. It has 18 AM and FM transmitters across Alberta. In handing over to a private foundation, the provincial government is phasing itself out of radio broadcasting. The new GM is **Rick Lewis** and **Brian Dunsmore** is program manager. The format stays almost unchanged for now; the new managers wanted to keep CKUA's character as they went into fall fund-raising.

CJAD Montreal now plans its 50th anniversary get-together next year, its anniversary year, rather than this year. **Roger Currie** of CJOB Winnipeg called to point out that I called **Sheldon Bowes** former head of Dome Petroleum. Actually, the slip occurred somewhere between my keyboard and the final printing. Dome failed. Domo succeeded. Bowes was head of Domo. Anyway, it was worth it to speak to Roger whom I haven't seen since for years.

Ray Rylatt, regional technical manger for Pelmorex's CJQM/CHAS/CJWA Sault Ste. Marie/Wawa, pointed out he supervised the dismantling of CKCY's towers two years ago. There must be life after death, he said, because he read here that CKCY had found a home at 1 Yonge Street. CKCY, CKYC - it's my dyslexic fingers, Ray.

Louis Tremblay goes from CANCOM this month to the CBC as Senior VP for Resources.

Mug Shots: I've mentioned previously that CKIQ ND **Mike Guzzi** was named male citizen of the year in Kelowna. That was partly because of his work as chairman of Crime

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Atlantic Airwaves

by Sandra Porteous and John Porteous

Cable Chaos: Considerable chaos continues with cable channel allocations in the Maritime Provinces, leaving the viewing public thoroughly confused. Not only have almost all stations had their cable channels changed, for some stations the channel position varies from town to town and city to city. Some subscribers, for example, are receiving The Movie Channel multiplex feature, which offers several movies at one time. But multiplex is not available on many cable systems and others have only three channels instead of four. Cable operators say the confusion is temporary and ask viewers to "stand by"...

CanWest Global Axes 38 MITV Jobs: For weeks after New Brunswick Broadcasting sold CHSJ-TV to the CBC and MITV to CanWest Global, many employees were left not knowing if they still had a job, and if they did, who it was with! Finally, CanWest president **Jim Sward** delivered the bad news: 35 jobs lost in Saint John (downgraded to a news bureau), three in Dartmouth. Sward blamed the job losses on the CBC decision to move CHSJ-TV from Saint John to Fredericton; the union agrees and is taking legal action against the Corporation for failing to honor its promise to offer new positions at what is now CBAT Fredericton to displaced MITV workers. Adding to the concern: despite previous assurances that programming would remain the same, MITV has announced "Full Global programming in place by year's end."

Atlantic Viewers Want to Dump Detroit: Citing excessive violence on Detroit newscasts, Chamcook Communications, the head-end facility owned by a consortium of Atlantic cable operators, has asked the CRTC for permission to change back to a pair of Bangor, Maine, outlets — WABI-TV (CBS) and WVII-TV (ABC). Chamcook reports a great deal of mail expressing viewer concern over the "sensationalist" treatment of "horrendous" criminal acts in the Motor City. Detroit stations are seen on many Canadian cable systems via Cancom. But Chamcook says its subscribers don't want this "murder and mayhem" type of TV coming into their tranquil region. Spokesperson **Ceci Flanagan** of Chamcook says, "Our subscribers have a much greater community of interest with Maine than they could ever have with Michigan." The request comes before a CRTC public hearing early in October...

(Editor's note: BT was credulous when Cancom came up with the idea of distributing Detroit TV stations on its satellite package, and astonished when the CRTC approved it. For years now, Canadians in many areas very far from Detroit

have had this absurdity inflicted on them. It is indeed time to 'dump' Detroit and import signals that have some degree of community interest with the various areas across Canada that Cancom serves. Common sense demands it, technology now makes it possible. — DL)

A Matter of Country: Speaking of U.S. stations on cable, many Maritime viewers have sent letters to the CRTC regarding the planned removal of Country Music Television from Canadian cable systems. It would be replaced by one of the newly-licensed Canadian specialty channels, The Country Network, a partnership of CFCN Productions (60%) and Rawlco (40%). CMT has refused to go quietly and has challenged the legality of the ban. Because CMT is widely viewed in the Maritimes — as is The Nashville Network — viewer interest in the dispute is high. CMT argues that because it is seen in 27 countries, it exposes Canadian country music to viewers all over the world. If banned from Canadian cable, all this exposure would stop, warns CMT, and the result would be a net loss to the Canadian country music industry...

Radio "Rationalizes" Some More: Togetherness appears to be a growing philosophy in radio in the Maritimes. First it was Fredericton, where pioneer CFNB amalgamated some of its services with competitors CIHI/CKHJ-FM. Now, in Charlottetown, CHTN, owned by NewCap, has been merged into the facilities of Maritime Broadcasting's CFCY/CHLQ-FM. The stations continue to program their distinct formats. Each company has its own news director, but share the same newsroom and reporters. Management of CHTN says it was the only alternative to shutting down the station, which has never made money but has attracted a loyal audience...

In other news... **Larry Nichols** is retiring as president of New Brunswick Broadcasting, former owner of CHSJ-TV and MITV. The company still owns radio stations in the Maritimes... Former MITV news director **John O'Brien** is suing the network and its GM for wrongful dismissal. O'Brien's statement of claim charges that GM **Ted Billo** acted solely by personal interest in firing him last May 27 in order to hire another MITV employee. Billo has declined comment...

Paul Knott has been named PD of CIGO Port Hawkesbury, NS. A native of North Sydney, Knott has been with CIGO for seven years... **Joanne Roberts** is new co-host of CBA Moncton's *Information Morning*, sharing duties with **Dave MacLelland**... CBC Radio's **Beth Gaines** spent a pleasant summer back at CBC Saint John, where she did the New Brunswick afternoon show for the summer months. Beth used to read news at CHSJ-TV and has worked for CBC in Toronto, as well as in NB... The Halifax studios of *NewsWorld* joined in celebrating CBC's 50 years in the Maritimes last month. Studio tours were held, with an excellent turnout.

Items for Atlantic Airwaves may be sent to Sandra Porteous (for NS & NF) at 7 Centre St., Bedford, NS, B4A 2B3, Tel (902) 835-1485; or John Porteous (for NB & PEI) at 110 Pleasant St., Moncton, NB, E1A 2V2, Tel (506) 857-8133 or FAX 852-9564.

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CCBE NEWSLETTER

by Bob Findlay

The October newsletter is written at a time when much of the work leading up to the 1994 convention is in progress. However, by the time this Newsletter is printed, the convention is history.

One item of interest from the September 8 executive meeting is the result of the draw for free accommodation. **Dave Storey**, membership chairman, announced that **Hilda Lenoir** of CBC North in Yellowknife, NWT, is the lucky winner. She is one of 56 eligible people who registered before the September 1st deadline. Congratulations to Hilda, who will stay at the beautiful Delta Airport Hotel as a guest of the CCBE.

Further news of CCBE will have to wait until our post-convention coverage in BT's November/December issue. However, a visit to the Production '94 trade show in Montreal earlier this year resulted in a subject of interest for this Newsletter.

At Production '94 I had the good fortune to run into **Andre Vien**, a former colleague from CFCF-12 in Montreal. We go back to the early '60s, when CFCF was owned by Canadian Marconi. Andre's area of expertise is mechanics and over the years he handled many mechanical projects with great innovation. Since his retirement he has continued to be innovative, as demonstrated by the following story.

Big Savings with Klystron Repair

In the spring of 1994, **Richard Dagenais**, transmitter manager for CFCF Inc., called on Andre Vien to attempt to repair a klystron that had failed due to burned contacts.

The tube has a normal life in the vision transmitter of between 22,000 and 25,000 hours. In the aural transmitter, the life of the klystron can extend to 50,000 to 60,000 hours. Warranty for 100 per cent replacement value is 2500 hours; a pro-rated value is available to 5000 hours; then you are on your own. A faulty filament transformer apparently resulted in the klystron contacts being pitted and it appeared to be ready for the garbage bin, with only 17,000 hours of life. With a potential life of 20,000 hours beyond the warranty period, it makes economic sense to try to extend the life of a tube if it is possible.

When I met Andre he had just repaired the burned contacts of the klystron using a procedure that he has now registered. The burned contacts are indistinguishable from unburned contacts.

I spoke to Richard Dagenais about the repair and he was very

pleased with the work. CFCF transmitter staff performed extensive tests on the klystron to compare the operation of the repaired one with a new one and found no measurable differences; the klystron is still operating perfectly four months later.

When the contacts failed, the klystron was in the vision transmitter. Now, with the repaired contacts, it has a new lease on life in the aural transmitter, where the original klystron was retired at 54,000 hours.

Because a new klystron costs around \$34,000, Dagenais estimates the saving to be \$22,000, minus the cost of repair.

Further information on repairs of this type can be obtained from Les Entreprises Andre Vien, 12210 Lachapelle, Montreal, Quebec, H4J 2M7; tel/fax (514) 334-0893.

Digital Radio

On returning from vacation, I decided to record some late movies on television. When I checked the tape the next morning, I found I had recorded a few hours of color bars or transmitter noise. I repeated this procedure on and off for a couple of weeks. So, after discussing the above klystron item with Richard Dagenais, I asked him about my problem in recording the late movies.

He explained that all the Montreal stations were off-air between 2am and 6am so that the Montreal television tower could have the top platform reinforced to permit installation of a digital radio broadcast antenna. According to Dagenais, a temporary antenna had been installed on the CBC transmitter building for the digital radio tests that were recently concluded in Montreal. A number of local FM stations — including CITE, CHOM, CKMF, CJFM and CFGL — are broadcasting on both FM and the new digital antennas. There are only four digital receivers presently in the area, and these are expensive prototype receivers that are equipped for test measurements.

According to **Robert Latreille** of Telemedia, Montreal, four vehicles were used in the digital radio reception tests in the Montreal area. In addition to the antenna on Mount Royal, an antenna in the Laurentien region north of Montreal and one west of Montreal were monitored.

Meanwhile, a *Digital Radio Alert* arrived in the mail stating that the Task Force on the Introduction of Digital Radio had released its report to the federal government. The report was presented to Minister of Industry **John Manley** and Minister of Canadian Heritage **Michel Dupuy**. The chairman of the task force, **Peter Kruyt**, president of Power Broadcasting, said, "We have recommended principles which ensure an orderly implementation process with a minimum of bureaucratic procedures, and which permit all broadcasters to provide CD-quality digital radio service to their listeners."

The task force advocates digital replacement coverage for AM and FM stations in the new digital L-Band (1.452-1.492 MHz); the principles also recognize that there are opportunities for some stations to correct deficiencies in their present coverage, subject to regulatory approvals.

The *Alert* quotes **David Garforth**, chair of the task force working group which developed the report, that "The principles are achievable and practical within the available 40 MHz allocation of L-band spectrum for digital radio."

Watch for a full report of the 1994 Convention in the November CCBE Newsletter.

Bob Findlay is publicity chairman for CCBE. He may be contacted at (514) 352-4038 or FAX (514) 354-7514.



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