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"I HEARD IT ON THE RADIO"

- A Reference On How Radio News Found Its Form in Canada.

by

REMI CANUEL

A Thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Journalism

Department of Journalism

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

March 23, 1989

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submitted by Remi Canuel

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for

the degree of Master of Journalism

Thesis Supervisor

Chairman, Department of Journalism

Carleton University

December 12, 1989

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INTRODUCTION:

Without warning, late in the afternoon on the last day of May in 1985, a series of tornadoes ripped through south-central Ontario. One of those twisters destroyed a subdivision in the southern part of the city of Barrie, some 90 kilometres north of Toronto. It claimed eight of the dozen tornado-related deaths that occurred in the province that day.

This disaster was not covered by any of the broadcasting outlets stationed in Barrie. It wasn't because these local stations didn't think the emergency was newsworthy enough. The violent storms, which accompanied the tornadoes, had created a massive power outage in Simcoe County.

Without electricity to run their transmitters, CHAY-FM, CKBB-AM, and CKVR-TV were knocked off the air. Normal broadcasting didn't resume until next day. And even though tens of thousands of homes and cars were equipped with battery-operated radios, news of the deadly and destructive tornadoes couldn't be heard over Barrie outlets.

As a reporter for CHAY-FM, I remember the frustration of being one of the first of the journalists on the scene and being unable to file a report back to my station. But,

to 1989. This story emphasizes, chronologically, the four most important facets of radio news' evolution in Canada: (a) the technological advances, which not only aided radio as a mass medium, but which made modern electronic news gathering possible; (b) the political interventions which molded government policy on broadcasting; (c) the entrepreneurial spirit of broadcasters; and (d) the impact journalists themselves had on radio news.

It is impossible to separate these four factors or forces into individual stories. The technological improvements, the political actions, the venturesome business undertakings, and the contributions of the reporters are constantly intertwined.

Perhaps with the exception of the reporters' creativity, these factors placed limits on the development of Canadian radio. Radio could go only as far as money, technology and government would let it.

Generally, these factors were more detrimental to private radio than to public broadcasting. Government regulation of this medium placed constraints on what private radio could do. In the early days of radio, Ottawa didn't permit private broadcasters to air enough commercials or to set up national or regional networks. Without sufficient revenues from advertisements, the private sector was unable to keep up with technology and establish news gathering services of its own.

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As a reporter for CHAY-FM, I remember the frustration of being one of the first of the journalists on the scene and being unable to file a report back to my station. But,

this is not to say, that during the chaotic hours after the tornado touched-down, that people caught in the midst of the emergency weren't getting vital information.

Radio did come through to provide the crucial public service to listeners in Barrie. Several stations to the south and north of Barrie immediately set up an *ad hoc* radio network to relay news to the disaster zone.

AM radio station CFOR-Orillia received instant approval from federal authorities to broadcast on emergency power. Meantime, stations in Newmarket, Richmond Hill, and Toronto remained on daytime, full-power throughout the night. Those stations interrupted normal programming to insert special announcements for the storm-hit areas.

And although the hydro failure had shut off street lights and rendered the traffic signals useless, news of the disaster did manage to come out of the darkened, torn city and come back to the residents of Barrie via radio.

With their frantic calling of family and friends, worried residents in the Barrie area had overloaded the local phone exchange. But due to some quirk of technology, reporters, including myself, were able to place long-distance calls to radio news agencies in Toronto. To our amazement, after countless attempts, we contacted the Toronto bureaus- even though local calls were impossible. Getting through to news agencies which used "800" service proved to be the easiest calls to complete because those

toll-free circuits were less jammed.

With on-site reporters filing accounts over the phone, agencies--such as Broadcast News, Newsradio, Standard and CKO--were able to pass along information on the extent of the damage only one hour after the twisters had hit. Stations affiliated with those agencies were quickly fed stories over the news wires and voice networks. Meantime, stations in Toronto, including the CBC, pre-empted regularly scheduled programs with live, on-the-scene, over the phone reports.

By airing news copy and voice reports, that came through the wires and audio feeds, stations, with signals capable of reaching Barrie, provided a great service to a shocked and confused city.

Within hours of hearing appeals for help over those neighbouring stations, thousands of volunteers appeared at the tornado zone to give assistance to the various emergency crews. Those teams worked throughout the night freeing people trapped under debris. They evacuated entire blocks. Others treated the injured and provided shelter to the homeless, while the authorities reunited people who had been separated from their families.

The Barrie Tornado is just one example of radio's role of keeping Canadians informed of important events.

First and foremost, this reference work is a narrative account of the development of Canadian radio news from 1919

to 1989. This story emphasizes, chronologically, the four most important facets of radio news' evolution in Canada: (a) the technological advances, which not only aided radio as a mass medium, but which made modern electronic news gathering possible; (b) the political interventions which molded government policy on broadcasting; (c) the entrepreneurial spirit of broadcasters; and (d) the impact journalists themselves had on radio news.

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Generally, these factors were more detrimental to private radio than to public broadcasting. Government regulation of this medium placed constraints on what private radio could do. In the early days of radio, Ottawa didn't permit private broadcasters to air enough commercials or to set up national or regional networks. Without sufficient revenues from advertisements, the private sector was unable to keep up with technology and establish news gathering services of its own.

Newspapers, along with other powerful rivals, lobbied hard to limit the growth of radio news. Initially, the dailies and wire services denied stations a supply of news.

Publishers and supporters of public radio found common cause in curbing private radio from establishing news networks. Under this pressure, private stations found it difficult to afford the equipment and talent needed to gather and broadcast news. In the United States, it was the newscasts that made private radio so vibrant and strong. American private radio networks helped build that country's national consciousness. This was not the case in Canada.

In the United Kingdom, the well-funded and heavily government-blessed BBC evolved a different, but equally effective, style of airing national news and information. Public radio in the U.K. didn't have to face competition from private stations. But, as with the U.S. model, the BBC also became an effective builder of national identity.

American radio stations were not overly hindered by government, nor did they suffer from restrictions placed on advertising. By selling airtime to sponsors, U.S. stations and networks were making sufficient profits to acquire technology and gather news. Commercial revenues made it possible for the American radio system to support extensive coverage of events. The popularity of these broadcasts permitted reporters--such as H.V. Kaltenborn, Edward R. Murrow, Eric Sevareid, and Lowell Thomas--to become

national figures in their own right. Many of the radio greats were shapers of the American dream, even though it wasn't government policy for them to do so.

On Canadian radio, a different tradition emerged. Without strong, profitable private networks, or a BBC-style public broadcasting monopoly, listeners were unable to find a Canadian radio news service comparable to what American and British broadcasting was offering.

Compared to the BBC, the CBC was late in coming. It also faced competition, at the regional level, from private stations. Because the CBC was created well after the birth of private radio, it took public radio in Canada a long time to establish itself as a dominant builder of national unity. And despite Ottawa's best efforts to fund public radio, the relatively less well-off private stations often attracted more listeners, in local markets, than the CBC. Competition from the private sector meant that the CBC's message did not reach as many Canadians as the government had hoped.

While compiling this book, I reached the conclusion that radio journalism in this country did not inherit the best traditions from either private or public broadcasting. Nor did Canada suffer the worst facets of the state-run BBC and the open American system. We seemed to have retained the mediocre qualities of both models. In my opinion, our broadcasting system has not achieved as much as either the

British or U.S. formats.

From the beginning of the debate over which sector should operate radio stations in Canada--epitomized by the formation of the Aird Commission in 1928--to its conclusion--when in 1958 a separate regulatory body, the Board of Broadcast Governors, was formed--it was an uncertain time for private and public broadcasting.

In that 30-year period neither sector felt secure. Private radio stations feared nationalization. Public radio--the CBC and its predecessor, the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission--grappled with the costly task of developing national networks in a sparsely-populated land, while heeding calls to absorb private radio and become the sole operators of radio broadcasting.

I believe the public interest was not served by these three decades of uncertainty. If the federal government had made a firm decision in the late 1920s on which kind of broadcasting system Canada was to have had--whether it be a public, private, or equally-mixed system--Canadians might have enjoyed better broadcasting. With the exception of the last 20 years, our murky and unevenly regulated dual system has left us with a public radio organization and a private radio industry both enfeebled.

The United States and the United Kingdom retained their single, but different, radio systems until the mid-1970s. Canada continues with its mixed system which began

in 1932. The American radio industry draws its traditions from a long history of private broadcasting. Private networks--such as NBC and CBS--have existed since 1927. American National Public Radio came on the scene in 1970 and does not threaten private radio.¹

In the U.K., due to the popularity of off-shore illegal *pirate stations*, private outlets were first licensed in the mid-1970s. Public radio began in 1922 with the establishment of the British Broadcasting Company, which became the British Broadcasting Corporation in 1927. By the time private radio entered the picture, the BBC had spent half-a-century organizing both the medium and the institution of public radio. Private sector competition has not hurt the solid BBC.²

In Canada, as a result of our mixed system and the 30-year period of debate over broadcasting policy, radio was prevented from acquiring its traditions from any strong, stable, single system. Nor did the two parts of our mixed system complement each other. In the early years, private radio didn't have the money or resources to cover local news adequately, and the early CBC lacked the mandate to report local events. The private stations were also unable to provide listeners with alternative coverage of national and international stories because they lacked the finances, and Ottawa's blessing, to support their own news agencies and compete with the CBC.

During the 1928-1958 period, clashes between private and public radio interests delayed the development of radio news, especially the birth of strong, private networks and news gathering services. Publishers sided with the CRBC/CBC to help public radio eliminate competition. The most important weapon used by the press against private stations was to deny them a supply of news, while at the same time providing news to public radio. The newspaper/public radio alliance weakened the financial position of private radio, while weakening the public's opportunity to use private radio as a reliable source of news.

Had the concept of a mixed, but equal, system been adopted during radio's early days, we might have had better news service from the private outlets. Conversely, if Ottawa had found the will and the money to opt for the BBC model early-on in the game, the CBC might have developed a stronger news service much sooner than it did.

In the course of researching this story, I have been convinced that it was not for the lack of ability or effort on the part of Canadian radio journalists that private radio news cannot boast of possessing a wealth of highly-regarded and long-standing traditions. Although these reporters were restricted by government regulations, limited by lack of equipment and funds, and denied access to private networks and wire services, nonetheless, they contributed immensely to their craft. Had it not been for

their creativity and perseverance, radio news would not have been born at all.

Unfortunately, most of their accomplishments have not been recorded. The story of how they started and improved the practices of private radio news remains largely hidden. Bureaucratic organizations, such as the CBC, generate documents, but there is little in the way of a paper trail to follow in the private industry- and what exists is scattered all over.

This book has found talented and dedicated private sector reporters who have been responsible for many important journalistic, technical and programming innovations. Their achievements need better documentation, or they will be in danger of being completely unexplained.

I began this project merely as a reference work to list significant dates, individuals and events in the development of Canadian radio news. But, as I interviewed the pioneers of private radio news, I began to feel more research was needed on this topic since this is a story about a momentous Canadian happening that has been largely ignored by scholars and journalists.

Therefore, this work is not solely a year-by-year narration of factual events. It offers interpretations, opinions and analyses of the development of our radio news heritage from the author and his sources.

As a reference work intended for use by journalists,

historians and students, it is hoped this book will provoke a greater awareness of how and why Canadian radio news found its form. Perhaps this book will also aid those who may seek to improve radio news.

The writing style employed in this book attempts to satisfy two masters: the standards of academic writing and of broadcast journalism. Since this is a story about radio, the author felt it was necessary to blend into the text the characteristics of both broadcast and literary styles of writing. The inclusion of the radio writing style, where possible, is intended to reflect the flavour of this topic.

The author has chosen to feature the recollections of living sources in addition to historical literature and published documents to tell this story.

Today, the private sector has vastly improved how it gathers and disseminates news. It has created voice and wire services exclusively for private radio. Some stations provide excellent local news coverage, while others seem to have little commitment to news. Still, in terms of national coverage, I feel that the private industry here does not offer as good service as the American networks. As for public radio, although CBC Radio has matured into a reliable and professional news service, it is still not as developed as the BBC. Perhaps we can blame certain events in our history for leaving us with such a situation. The federal government waited too long to adopt the mixed

system as its policy. The acceptance of this system, some 30 years ago, was a case of too little and too late.

Current Status and Problems of Canadian Radio News

The thousands of radio journalists currently employed in Canada certainly have the potential to be heard by a large audience. Today with a population of 26 millions, Canada has over 28 million radio sets in use.³

Statistics-Canada tells us that 98.9 per cent of our 9.6 million households had at least one radio in 1987. Nearly two million families had four or more radios with both AM and FM capability. Only 422,000 homes didn't have FM receivers.

And on Canadian roads, 95 per cent of our 8 million registered, non-commercial vehicles had radios.⁴

However, how are these radios being used? And to what extent do Canadians tune into radio news?

Since 1944 most Canadian radio stations have subsidized a co-operative polling and research agency known as The Bureau of Broadcast Measurement. The BBM conducts regular surveys on the listening habits of Canadians and it produces up to four *ratings books* annually for member stations. The BBM surveys tell stations and advertisers how many people are listening to each station in every market.

BBM figures are broken down by gender, age and income. They reveal the listening habits of each demographic group.

in quarter-hour segments, from 5 a.m. to half-an-hour past midnight.

Recent results obtained from BBM suggests news on radio has a large and loyal following. In the ratings taken during the fall of 1986, an average of 7.2 million Canadians, seven years of age and older, had switched on a radio during the 7 a.m. time slot every weekday. An hour later, during the 8 a.m. newscasts, 6.9 million radios were being listened to. This means that respectively, 31 and 30 per cent of all Canadians, over the age of seven, were tuned-in for the seven and eight o'clock morning news. The morning rush hours are radio's most-listened-to period.

In broadcasting, it is widely believed that people who are listening at one hour are not necessarily the same ones still listening during the following hours.

Noon hour is the second most-listened-to time slot. Four-point-eight million Canadians, per day, have their radios on for the Monday to Friday noon newscasts. That's 21 per cent of all Canadians seven years old and older.

The afternoon *drive home* period attracts the third-highest average per day audience. For the 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. newscasts, 4.1 million radios are in use.

On a daily basis, 84 per cent of all Canadians, seven years old and up, listen to radio at least once from 5 a.m. to 12:30 a.m. In other words, nearly 19.5 million Canadians use radio daily, Monday to Friday.

Today in Canada, news can be heard on more than 500 Canadian radio stations. In over 80 communities, which do not have a daily newspaper, radio may be a chief source of instant news.

The federal authority which regulates broadcasting is the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission. In 1989, the CRTC listed 527 licensed radio stations in Canada. Of that number, 469 were privately-owned and 68 were owned-and-operated by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation- a federal crown corporation.

In the private sector, 294 stations were on AM and 175 broadcast on FM. Most of the FM stations were operated by companies which also had an AM outlet in the same market. As for language, 379 broadcast in English, 90 in French.

The CBC operates 46 AM stations and 22 FM. Service in English consists of 31 AM stations and 16 on FM. In French, Radio-Canada has 15 on AM and six on FM. In addition, the CBC rebroadcasts its signals on hundreds of low-power relay transmitters known as "LPRTs" or repeaters.

A superficial examination of these statistics tells us that not only do most Canadians have access to radio broadcasts, but that they also have a wide variety of stations to choose from, especially in the urban areas.

But, in homes and in social gathering places, such as neighbourhood pubs, television has assumed the role of general entertainer. With the advent of network TV, radio

stations in Canada quickly realized general radio was dead.

Radio is now "a massive medium with a highly fragmented audience...Radio listening habits are personal, and stations program selectively to satisfy individual needs within a relatively homogeneous group...Listeners use radio as a secondary activity to accompany the work or play or the moment," wrote the authors of MASS MEDIA, An Introduction of Modern Communication.⁶

In the 1950s when TV became established, radio broadcasters discovered that "the more variety a specific station offered, the more its audience dwindled. What evolved has come to be called formula, or format radio."⁷

Now that listening to radio has become a personal activity in Canada--meaning we tend to listen as individuals rather than gather around the set--stations are selective in what they program so as to corner a special segment of the market.

The two main traits characteristic of radio use today are: (a) the personal quality- "The individual listens in relative mental and/or social isolation, seeking to gratify a personal entertainment or information need of the moment." And, (b) the supplementary quality of using radio as a secondary activity. "Radio is to drive a car by, study by, or relax at the beach by. No longer does an audience eagerly cling to the radio for every sound."⁸ This last point is especially important for radio journalists.

Except on very few *all-news* or *mostly-talk* stations, the playing of recorded music is the most important part of radio today. Next is news, even though only the largest of the stations have extensive local news departments. Most stations depend on wire/audio services, or network material, for the bulk of their news material.

Talk by disc jockeys is considered third in importance. The creativity of these announcers is intended to serve "as the cement that binds the music, news, sports, weather and advertising into a cohesive unit." Sports and advertising round out the five most salient components of radio programming.

While most Canadian daily newspapers and network TV newscasts continue to appeal to the most common social denominators, radio news is designed to meet more specific demographic objectives. Gone are the days of an all-purpose radio station trying to be everything to everyone at once.

In Canadian radio, reporters, announcers and writers must know the target audience of the station they are working for. Under format radio, each station selects a segment of the total audience. It tries to reach only that segment throughout its schedule of programs - newscasts included. General-interest newspapers do the opposite.

The BBM surveys mentioned previously clearly indicate a strong audience for radio news. But, what do Canadians think about the quality of the news being broadcast?

In 1988, the Environics Research Group released the results of a national poll it was commissioned to do for Robert Fleming, general editor of Canadian Legislatures. That book examined public attitudes towards the media. The findings should be shocking to anyone connected to radio news in Canada.

Source of News:

"Almost half of Canadians (47 per cent) say they stayed informed about the news by watching television. Newspapers are the principal news source for three Canadians in ten (31 per cent). Only 15 per cent rely on radio for the news."

Objectivity, Accuracy and Depth of Coverage:

"Of the the four media categories--radio, television, newspapers and magazines--television is most often ranked first for objectivity, accuracy and depth. The print media rival television when it comes to in-depth analysis."

TV news was seen as the most accurate by 43 per cent of Canadians. "twice the proportion who feel that newspapers are most likely to get the facts right (21 per cent). Magazines and radio are generally seen as poorer performers on this count (13 and nine per cent)."

TV also received "the highest points for in-depth analysis (35 per cent), but the print media--newspapers and magazines--also get high marks (23 and 27 per cent respectively). Radio is least likely to be seen as having this attribute (six per cent)."

On Manipulation of Political Opinions:

"Canadians tend to believe that the media make a conscious effort to influence the political opinions of the public. Of the four media, newspapers are most likely to be seen doing so."

Seven in ten (69 per cent) feel that dailies attempt to manipulate the public's political views. "In comparison, just over half believe that television stations (53 per cent), magazines (52 per cent), and *radio* stations (51 per cent) have the same objective."

Enviro-nics concluded that TV "has become Canadians' primary source of news information and is trusted for its objectivity, accuracy and depth. Newspapers are the second major source of news information and are especially valued by Canadians of higher socio-economic status."¹⁰

Radio can defend its poor showing in such polls by using many arguments. Some of those apologies include:

- Radio news cannot be compared to TV news, because it doesn't have powerful and vivid video pictures to back up the spoken word.
- Radio cannot be as accurate as TV and the newspapers because radio has hourly, if not half-hourly, deadlines. TV and print can spend more hours getting the facts straight.
- Radio was never intended to be more than just a headline news service. Radio's role is to alert people to events and to direct them to the other media for more details.

Yet there seems to be no valid reason why radio cannot compete with TV and the dailies as the principal source of news in Canada, nor match them in accuracy and objectivity. There is nothing inherent in radio that makes it inferior to the other media. Perhaps radio news people do not strive to set higher standards. The Environics poll is no fluke.

In October 1984, Gallup conducted a national poll and one of its questions was similar to one posed by Environics: "Generally speaking, where do you feel you get the most reliable news coverage- from newspapers, radio or TV?" Gallup asked the same question in 1979 and 1977.

Here are the results in percentages:11

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TELEVISION</u>	<u>NEWSPAPERS</u>	<u>RADIO</u>	<u>CAN'T SAY</u>
1984	53.3	22.6	15.6	8.5
1979	48.2	26.5	18.2	6.8
1977	46.4	20.6	17.9	14.7

We can surmise from the Environics and Gallup results that although the vast majority of Canadians listen to at least one radio newscast per day, they also watch a TV newscast and read a newspaper on a daily basis. And when they are asked to compare news, they prefer TV and the dailies over radio. People may be satisfied by what they hear on radio newscasts, but TV news and stories in the papers seem to make more lasting impressions.

It would appear that no matter how comprehensive, balanced and accurate radio newscasts might be, radio news

does not seem to linger in people's minds as long as print or TV news does. After all, we don't listen to radio in the same way as read a newspaper or view TV. Basically, even though a radio completely surrounds us with its sound, we can listen to it while not paying full attention. Reading and watching news are activities which require far more concentration.

Former Quebec premier Rene Levesque once remarked that "radio was the peoples' book."¹² Before he entered politics he had a distinguished career as a broadcast journalist. It started, when at age 22, in 1944 he was hired as an uniformed correspondent to do war broadcasts out of London for the U.S. Office of War Information. He joined Radio-Canada after the war and in 1951 he was sent to cover the Korean War as that network's chief correspondent. With the aid of portable wind-up tape recorders he delivered many breathless accounts from Korean battlefields.¹³

Levesque's description of radio is perhaps tempered by his pre-television experiences in this medium. During critical times, such as wars, it was common for people to gather around radios and listen to the important news. However, radio today is most often listened to on an individual basis. When at the beach or at a sports event, how often do we hear people telling others to turn-down the volume of their blaring radios?

Although radio has remained as a sort of public

utility, today it is very rarely used *en masse*.

Montreal broadcaster, author and university professor, Gilles Proulx, concedes that broadcast journalism has more limitations than print, and declares that nothing replaces the newspaper. "The daily newspaper lends itself to reflection, while the radio newscast, in spite of all its qualities, remains superficial. One hour after hearing a newscast, the listener forgets the bulk of the broadcast's content. The newspaper reader can recall a paper's content much longer because he/she has the facility of turning back the pages. That explains why radio news has its own spoken style and not the style of print."¹⁴

However, before the reputation of Canadian radio news improves, things could get worse. A trend that developed in the United States in the early 1980s could be imitated in this country.

In 1981, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in Washington stopped requiring that U.S. radio stations broadcast news.

The two dozen or so Canadian news directors who attended the Radio-Television News Directors Association (RTNDA) convention in Orlando, Florida in September 1987, were given some shocking news by their American counterparts. American radio stations eliminated 2,000 full-time news jobs in the years 1986-87 alone. Studies released at that convention show that since FCC

deregulation, there had been steady declines in news formats, FM newscast length, radio news staff size and news budgets.¹⁵

Eric Rothschild, the then general manager of Newsradio (prior to its acquisition by CKO), was one of the Canadians who attended the Orlando convention and he said, "Radio news is healthier in Canada and always will be as long as it's regulated."

Across North America "some consultants are advising station management that news is a 'tuneout' that should be eliminated."¹⁶

Yet an Associated Press (AP) survey released at the RTNDA convention in Orlando indicates people want radio news. The AP study concluded that 69 per cent of the people polled said the main reason they listen to radio is to keep up with the latest news, and 70 per cent said they pay as much or more attention to news and information as to music.

In addition, 67 per cent said they are more likely to listen to a station with news and information programming than one without, and most listeners said they want at least one radio newscast an hour.¹⁷

Perhaps of equal significance is the analysis of the poll by the company which conducted the AP survey. Reymer & Gersin Associates says the study points to important new opportunities to satisfy listeners' appetities for news, "by stressing live coverage, interrupting entertainment

programming with updates on major breaking stories and by providing bits of information between music sets. These moves will enable radio to better adapt to listeners' changing needs, making it an even more powerful part of North American life well into the future."¹⁸

CHUM-FM Toronto news director, Brian Thomas, says the AP study proves "even FM rock fans want news." In fact, the majority of listeners from all eight major music formats (from *Album Oriented Rock* to *Easy Listening*) told the survey that news was just as important as music.

Thomas, who also attended the Orlando meeting, commented on another interesting point in the survey: "Listeners in each format say they favour a newscast with the emphasis on BASIC NEWS only, without comment and all formats' fans want a newscast that spends more time telling 'what happens' rather than 'why'."¹⁹

Radio stations that want to upgrade their news product may well look into studies such as AP's. By providing what the listeners tell us they want, news on Canadian radio could turn around its current sagging popularity.

How did news develop in this medium? Knowing the history of radio news in Canada would help us to avoid the mistakes that plagued this industry in the past.

How radio covered the 1985 tornado in Barrie illustrates many of the elements of modern-day radio journalism. We had federal authorities (such as the CRTC)

controlling and regulating broadcasting; we had stations (AM and FM) with fully-staffed news departments; and we had reporters, equipped with portable tape recorders, feeding stories back to their newsrooms through the telephone. We also had several news agencies providing affiliated stations with news from across Canada and the world. News items were being beamed by satellites, microwave relays and high-quality land lines to hundreds of stations hooked-up to the various radio news networks. And we had a fully-established national public radio network with its own elaborate news service.

Today, we often take such sophisticated and advanced conditions for granted. When radio was in its infancy, the primitive technology employed by broadcasters prevented those pioneers in radio from airing a news service that at all resembles today's product.

Gathering historical information from radio's early years, especially the period from 1919 to 1937, is not easy. Few documents relating to radio news in that period have been located. For instance, National Archives of Canada archivist Sylvie Robitaille reports that no scripts or disc recordings of newscasts prior to 1937 have been deposited at the National Archives or any other institution that preserves and displays items from broadcasting's past. She says some pre-1937 newscast scripts may be in existence in private collections. National Archives in Ottawa is

constantly trying to locate such old, but valuable papers.

Her colleague at the Archives, Rosemary Bergeron, says if the private radio sector doesn't make a concerted effort to locate historical materials and set up a policy to preserve current broadcasts and news copy, it will have its history written for it by people outside of private broadcasting. By comparison, she says the CBC has been, especially since 1945, more conscientious and organized in perserving and cataloging historical materials.

The director of the Archives' moving images and sound col'ection (MISA), Ernie Dick, says, "the broadcasting sector, particularly the private people, hasn't been one of the industries with a good track record in preserving their historical data."

Concerns over the state of Canadian broadcasting history resources, during the mid-1970s, led John Twomey, past-chairman of the Radio and Television Arts department at Toronto's Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, to conduct a survey of that situation. His findings, recommendations and conclusions are in the report: Canadian Broadcasting History Resources in English. CRITICAL MASS or MESS?

Twomey said he was motivated to conduct such a study partly because of his frequent encounters "with inaccurately published accounts of Canadian broadcasting history and material that diminish by omission or commission the role of private broadcasting in Canada."

Twomey found that a critical mass of such broadcasting resources does exist and it would sustain historical scholarship. However, he also concluded "it will require leadership, funds, and a plan to discover and recover it, to preserve it, to catalogue and index it, and to make it accessible" and that broadcasting's past "remains, in large measure, a hidden heritage. The decades of inertia and neglect were chiefly the result of the widespread view of both public and private broadcasters that broadcasting was a today and tomorrow business."

Although he concludes that this country's broadcasting resources "are too few, too scattered and neglected", he doesn't think such historical materials are in "too much of a mess to warrant concern about their preservation and use." Twomey believes privately-held collections are probably the single richest source of such documents. He recommends starting a concerted campaign to locate them and persuade owners to deposit them in libraries and archives. If these materials are made not available to our researchers, he feels we run the danger of foreigners writing our history.²⁰

A few dozen books about radio in general have been published, but little has been researched about the history of radio news in Canada. No single volume reference book on the evolution of Canadian radio news has been compiled. This work attempts to fill that need. It is a beginning.

CHAPTER ONE

1919-1929: The Genesis of Radio News in Canada

From the beginning, Canada and Canadians played an important role in radio.

In 1901, six years after he invented radio, Italian inventor Guglielmo Marconi, based in St. John's Newfoundland, received the first trans-Atlantic *wireless* signals from Cornwall, England. This was a telegraphic Morse code signal using dots-and-dashes.

Five years later in 1906, a Canadian engineer, Reginald Fessenden, while working for the Thomas Edison Company in the United States, made the first *voice* broadcast on radio.

On April 14, 1912 when the radio-equipped luxury oceanliner Titanic hit an iceberg off the coast of Newfoundland, the damaged ship relayed news of the sinking to other wireless-equipped vessels in the vicinity. The world learned of radio's potential as those freighters steamed to the Titanic to rescue hundreds of passengers from the icy Atlantic.

In 1919, radio station XWA (later given the call letters CFCF) in Montreal went on the air. XWA, operated by the Marconi Company, is widely regarded as the first and oldest commercial radio station in the world. XWA received a federal broadcast licence November 1918 and it had

conducted closed-circuit tests at its William Street location prior to making broadcasts on the actual airwaves.²¹

The Westinghouse station in Pittsburgh, under the call letters 8XK didn't begin experimental broadcasts until some months after Marconi's XWA. After spending most of 1919 testing their equipment, both stations began regular broadcasting the following year. On November 2, 1920, 8XK became KDKA and it inaugurated its service by broadcasting the returns of the Harding-Cox presidential election. In December, XWA began airing music from gramophone records along with news items and weather reports on a regular basis. On April 1, 1923, Ottawa issued the Marconi station its first commercial licence and the call letters were changed to CFCF.

The Roaring and Static-filled Twenties

The 1920s was characterized by listeners making their own receiving sets out of copper wire and other assorted spare electrical parts. Cylindrical Quaker Oats cereal boxes and shellac were used to make tuners. Most Canadian stations used homemade transmitters and antennas to bounce their low-power signals off the ionosphere. Many listeners who had crystal sets or bulky battery-powered tabletop radios stayed up all night listening to the miracle of sound coming through their earphones.

Commercial radio began in this country with only a few

licensed stations operating for several hours in the evening and afternoon. In the United States, radio stations grew more quickly in number and in power, which meant American radio programs became very popular in Canada in the early 1920s, especially those broadcast in the late evening.

In the early twenties, entertainment, consisting of mostly recorded music, dominated the Canadian airwaves.

Owners set up radio stations in Canada for several reasons. In large cities, such as Toronto, private companies got into the radio business to use broadcasting to promote their merchandise. Distiller Gooderham and Worts took over a station that began in 1925 and renamed it CKGW in 1927. And although that company could not advertise its spirits over the air, it did call itself the "Cheerio station".

Also in Toronto that year, the Canadian National Carbon Company opened CKNC. Since the early radios ran on batteries and that company manufactured dry cells, it was a clever move on the company's part to promote its products on its own station.

Across Canada about a dozen newspapers got into radio in the 1920s. The first was the Winnipeg Free Press with its first broadcast of CBCB in July, 1921.

Other papers such as the Edmonton Journal, London Free Press, and Montreal's La Presse began broadcasting in 1922

with stations: CJCA, CJGC and CKAC respectively. They got involved in radio not only to promote their papers over the air, but to prevent potential broadcasters from opening stations in those markets.

A few companies that manufactured radio equipment also set up stations to promote their products. Apart from Marconi's outlet in Montreal, the Rogers Majestic Radio Company of Toronto bought CJCQ in 1927 and renamed it CFRB.

But, unlike the situation in the United States where giant radio manufacturers, such as RCA and Westinghouse, set up their own radio networks (i.e. NBC and the KDKA chain of stations) to provide radio signals to help demonstrate radio to potential buyers of receivers, Canadian radio makers didn't operate commercial radio stations in a large scale.

Instead many Canadian stations were started by stores that sold radio sets. Bill McNeil and Morris Wolfe have cited many incidents of this happening in their book, Signing On.

One example is the story of CJCB Sydney, Nova Scotia. Its founder was Nathan Nathanson whose family-run music store sold gramophones and sheet music in that city. One day in the late-1920s, he was asked by a representative of a radio company to sell radio sets. But, Nathanson asked himself, "what good would it be to sell radios if there wasn't something to hear?

"We needed a local radio station that could be heard, because outside reception was a very indifferent thing. A local station would fix that. So I ventured into a fifty-watt transmitter." He received his licence on Valentine's Day 1929. "We now had something for people to hear on the radios we wanted to sell them. The only reason I started a radio station was to give people something to hear with the boxes they were buying," said Nathanson.²²

And there were other reasons persons or groups began broadcasting, but these motives are exceptions rather than the general pattern. For example, the Bible Students' Club opened CJYC in Toronto in 1925 to air religious beliefs, and the University of Alberta bought Edmonton station CFCK in 1926 to start up its educational station, CKUA. And in Manitoba, the province-run phone company opened Winnipeg's CKY just to have a say in the content of radio programs.

In the early 1930s, entrepreneurs, such as Roy Thomson, began buying into radio with the desire to build broadcasting empires. He began with CFCH-North Bay and gradually during the Depression added more stations in northern Ontario, including Timmins and Kirkland Lake.²³

During the 1920s, many stations shared the same frequency with other stations. This meant a station, with its own call letters, would broadcast for part of the day and then let the other station, with different call letters, take over the same spot on the dial for a couple

of hours while it went off the air.

The reception in that decade was far from being clear and strong. "Hissing and whining and static sounds were part of the whole thing," said Nathanson. "You must remember that in those days electric sets (those that ran off AC household current) hadn't come into being. There were only battery radios...and there were headphones. This was before the days of the loudspeaker. If two people, or three, wanted to listen together they all had to wear headphones...Radios were very expensive. They cost as much as an automobile."²⁴

Broadcasting in the early years wasn't so much a public service as it was a vehicle for manufacturers to promote their products.

It wasn't until the federal government set up the Aird Royal Commission, in December 1928, to look into broadcasting that Ottawa began taking radio seriously. In the 1920s, federal responsibility for radio shifted between the departments of Naval Service and Marine, and Fisheries. Because the Marconi Company had equipped many cargo ships of the merchant marine with wireless, radio in Canada "was administered in the belief that all broadcasting was an extension of marine service."²⁵

The first Broadcasting Act was passed by Parliament in 1932. Prior to that, radio in Canada came under the Radio Telegraph Act of 1913 and its subsequent amendments. The

Liberal government of Mackenzie King had simply given the whole area of radio broadcasting to the Department of Marine and Fisheries to look after in the 1920s.

As in the United States, the private sector started commercial radio in Canada. Public radio didn't officially begin until 1932. The first of the private broadcasters had two problems to overcome: (a) the crude state of broadcasting technology; and (b) the federal government-- which took little interest in this new medium.

During the years of Department of Marine caretaking, "broadcasting activities were governed by rulings from a department or tribunal which had the force of law, although not sanctioned by legislation or official regulation. In that forbidding atmosphere (stations weren't allowed to sell advertising or to play records from 7:30 p.m. to midnight), the greatest mystery of all is why most of the broadcasting pioneers ventured at all into this uncertain new world."²⁶

By 1922, 39 stations had been licensed in Canada. A year later federal authorities imposed a tax of \$1.00 annually on each home receiver. In 1924, the list of Canadian broadcasting stations had grown to 51, with a dozen of them owned by the newspapers. Meantime, in the United States, private radio, not hampered by a ban on advertising and a tax on radios, flourished.

Hundreds of stations began airing high quality

programs to the hundreds of thousands of homes which had bought radios throughout the U.S.A. Thousands of loyal fans in Canada *D.X.*'ed their radios (scanning the dial for long-distance reception) to bring-in those popular programs from the States. Commercially-sponsored shows meant the U.S. stations could afford big-name live talent. Those interesting shows attracted big audiences which in turn yielded higher revenues from advertisers. By comparison, Canadian radio programs were dull.

Competition from American stations was not the only problem facing Canadian stations in the 1920s. "Radio stations in a good many places had been set up by newspapers as a means of killing off any possible competition and the stations were sort of kept as stand-bys. No money was pumped into them" by the papers, remarked Hugh Trueman who had been an early radio performer in eastern Canada.²⁷

In fact it was the newspapers' involvement in Canadian radio that gave radio news much trouble in the 1930s.

By the time the Aird Commission was appointed in 1928 only 68 stations were licensed in Canada, and 32 of these operated on low power and intermittently. Eleven stations were owned by newspapers in the following cities: Vancouver; Calgary (two stations owned by papers); Edmonton; Regina; London; Hamilton; Toronto; Montreal; Quebec City and Halifax.

The competition for advertising dollars became a real threat in 1928 when Ottawa permitted radio stations to collect monies for *indirect* advertising. By this move, *direct* advertising, which was the airing of paid commercials, was still banned, but a station could mention whoever was paying a fee to sponsor a radio program.

In 1988, the National Archives of Canada, on the eve of radio's 70th anniversary in Canada, set up an exhibit called "Beyond the Printed Word". It highlighted the history of newsreel and broadcast reporting in Canada. At one point in the exhibit, which was held at Ottawa's Museum of Science and Technology, visitors were told: "Radio was not initially primarily used as a news medium, though it was used for the broadcast of events such as hockey games, church services, formal public events, and political addresses by the mid-thirties.

"Many early stations had links with newspapers or were owned and operated by a newspaper to forestall competition that newspapers feared from the new media. However, radio stations in the first two decades did not develop active newsgathering departments and the earliest newscasts consisted of announcers reading excerpts from the affiliated newspaper."²⁶

T.J. Allard of Edmonton spent 25 years as the chief executive officer of the Ottawa-based Canadian Association of Broadcasters. Before his death in 1985, Jim Allard

completed volume one of his history of private broadcasting in Canada. Straight Up covers the period from 1918 to 1958. In it, he agreed that early radio wasn't much of a news medium. "It was thought of primarily as a source of entertainment rather than information. News came later. That's because most of the people who went into broadcasting saw it as an extension of the theatre. That's partly why broadcasting was rigidly structured in hourly, half hour and quarter-hour formats as distinct from today's rolling format."²⁹

The non-commercial broadcasting of entertainment programs didn't bother the newspapers, but the possibility of airing sponsored newscasts did. Only a few papers, which owned radio stations, were serious broadcasters.

Foster Hewitt, of "Hockey Night in Canada" fame, began working at the Toronto Star just when that paper started its radio station, CFCA in 1922. "There was no such thing as a job title then. Everyone did everything. I was the announcer, and did the news and the musical shows. I even relieved the engineer on his day off."

Hewitt, who later started up a Toronto station bearing his initials in its call letters (he sold CKFH in 1981), recalled how the Star got out of radio: "CFCA closed in 1932. The Star's original intention was to have the station as a novelty...the Star got mixed up with the Ottawa Citizen in a discussion on the future of radio. The story I

got was that the Citizen and the Star felt that radio was going to compete with newspapers and the best thing to do was get rid of it. The best way to do that they felt, was to give back their licences! And they did just that."³⁰

The 1928 regulation changes which permitted radio stations some limited indirect advertising, resulted in CFCN Calgary becoming the first station in Canada to receive compensation for commercial broadcasting. "It was also the first to carry regularly-scheduled news broadcasts and employ local *stringers* for that purpose. "The Texaco News", preceded and followed by the sound of a siren, became a listening habit throughout Alberta."³¹

In the Atlantic provinces, CFNB Saint John, New Brunswick, began operating in 1926 and it was one of the first privately-owned stations which had access to a regular supply of news. "Initially this was supplied by the Saint John Telegraph-Journal, later by the Fredericton Gleaner. Russ Deakin who broadcast the 8 a.m. news was probably Canada's first professional news announcer."³²

But generally, it wasn't until the mid-1930s that most radio stations had regular newscasts, their own reporters and access to news wires. In the 1920s most newspapers that also ran radio stations didn't share news stories with their stations. The few that did made sure the news was aired long after the papers had hit the streets.

By the end of the decade there were some exceptions.

Around 1928, CFRB Toronto "was the first station to broadcast news directly from the editorial room of a newspaper."³³

The year after Ted Rogers had started up CFRB in 1927 (which is believed to be the first batteryless broadcasting station in the world), Rogers had the original idea of broadcasting newscasts from the source of news. He had his engineering assistant, Jack Sharpe, design a compact remote-control amplifier which was placed in the newsroom of the Toronto Globe.

Initially the news flashes and the late-night newscasts were read by Globe staffers, and this posed the occasional difficulty. The Globe reporters weren't as proficient as the studio announcers. They were always introduced on the air as the Globe's "Radio Editor" without mentioning them by name. One day one of those anonymous "Radio Editors" was reading an item "about a threatened United States coal-miners strike and suddenly stopped halfway through the story. He was heard to rustle some papers, to utter a muffled curse, and then to say, 'Sorry, I seem to have mislaid a page. Well, it wasn't very interesting anyway'."³⁴

Newscaster Andy McDermott remembered that in late 1928, the Regina Star, which owned CHWC, was looking for promotion, "and they proposed that I do an eight o'clock newscast on CHWC- for 15 minutes every morning. In those

days you never thought of a newscast being anything less than 15 minutes. I think Jack Kent Cooke of CKEY, Toronto, was one of the first to use a five-minute newscast.

"In making up my newscasts, I took the items that were in the Star and clipped and pasted them up. On my way down to the station I would grab a copy of the Leader and rewrite some of their stories. Half the time there wasn't enough news in the two papers for a decent newscast."³⁵

This era in broadcasting history also resulted in the emergence of semi-public radio in Canada. In 1923, Canadian National Railways, a crown company, began renting airtime on existing private stations to broadcast programs to customers staying in its railway hotels and travelling on its passenger trains. The CNR had radio-equipped coaches and its hotels, such as the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa, had radios in the suites for the convenience of its guests. CNR-sponsored programs were aired whenever CNR trains rolled to within radio range of the leased stations.

Canadian National and the Magic of its Radio Trains

In 1923, a world-known figure would say after hearing a brief newscast on a Canadian radio station that the experience was simply "scientific witchcraft". The occasion was David Lloyd George's post-war visit to North America and the broadcast was a special newscast the CNR had arranged for the Prime Minister of Great Britain. What was amazing about this event is that Lloyd George heard the

news on radio while in his private railway car as it travelled from Montreal to Ottawa.

On October 9, after installing a radio receiver on George's train, CNR began broadcasting to the Prime Minister as his train pulled out of the Montreal railway station. After commencing with a short greeting, the CNR then aired a short musical program which concluded with a newscast. The news was made up of items taken from news agencies and the Montreal papers.

Former CNR Radio manager and author, Austin Weir, who helped put together that broadcast, said it "was the first news 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."³⁶

Among the items that George heard was American President Calvin Coolidge's comment on a war reparations plan. Coolidge had made the remarks in Washington just hours before the news was aired on the train. The newscast prompted the large group of reporters aboard the train to press George for a news conference. "It was the first interview resulting from radio reception on a moving train," according to Weir. George told the press he was very grateful for the speedy news service of the radio:

"This most excellent service of the Canadian National Railways has made me acquainted without the 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 I am to speak tonight (in Ottawa)."³⁷

And later in 1923, on December 30, the CNR successfully conducted the first network broadcast in Canada and possibly the world. It linked two private stations together by telephone wires. CKCH Ottawa rebroadcast a musical program it was getting through the phone lines from the studios of CKAC Montreal.

In February of 1924, CN opened its own station in Ottawa, giving it the call letters-- CNRO. CN also began broadcasting its own programs in six other cities by using existing privately-owned stations. Under a *phantom station* arrangement, CN received federal approval to use its own call letters on those stations it was buying time from. For example, when CN leased time on CFCA in Toronto, that station would call itself CNRT. And in the next two years, CN took ownership of two more stations: CNRA in Moncton and CNVR in Vancouver.³⁸

By 1925, CN's outlet in Ottawa was operating Wednesday and Saturday nights from about 6:30 until midnight. "It opened with news and market quotations, children's stories and some music."³⁹

CN Radio is also credited with having made the first coast-to-coast network broadcast in North America. For the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation (60th anniversary), CN

aired an entire day of programming on July 1, 1927. "It was a co-operative venture of the part of Canadian National Telegraphs, Bell Telephone and provincial telephone companies all across the country who hung wire on fence posts," said former CN employee Vic George who worked on that historic Dominion Day broadcast.⁴⁰

But, it wasn't until late 1929 that the CNR began regular national broadcasts. By that time, two American companies had been operating networks, NBC and CBS, for over two years.

In the nine years that CN Radio remained on the air, it chalked-up many other firsts in broadcasting. By 1930, the CNR had become so involved in radio that it had up to 78 of its passenger trains equipped with radio receivers and it had been publishing a radio timetable magazine called Radio Features, for over five years. This radio booklet of program schedules was the precursor to the CBC Times and later the Radio Guide.

In 1930, the British airship R-100 passed through the Ottawa area from Montreal en route to Toronto, Niagara Falls and Rochester, New York. On August 11, a two-way conversation was established between the R-100 and CN's station in the national capital, CNRO. "This was said to have been the first time a two-way conversation was broadcast over a Canadian network."⁴¹

The following year, Canada's new Governor-General

arrived in Halifax from England and CN Radio with technical assistance from companies such as Canadian Marconi, used the event to try out a new type of microphone. On April 4, 1931, after Earl and Lady Bessborough's ship had docked:

"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 a day before Gordon Olive and his staff overcame the hum. The mikes were finally shielded by standing them in zinc trays...twelve microphones were used at various points- the scratching of the pens, slightly accentuated by the parchment, could be heard distinctly from one extremity of the network to the other."⁴²

Today, condenser microphones are so commonplace they are a standard feature on even the most inexpensive cassette tape recorders. Unlike all other mikes, condenser microphones have electrically-assisted pick-up plates, so they don't have to rely solely on the mechanical force of soundwaves to make the sounds register on the pick-up unit. They are more sensitive to sounds than other types of mikes, but they require an electrical power source.

The year after the condenser's debut, CN made use of another type of microphone which is still one of the mainstays of radio today- the *dynamic* mike. The occasion was the 1932 Imperial Economic Conference held in Ottawa:

"This was first time dynamic microphones were used on remote control 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 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."⁴³

These second-generation microphones gradually began replacing the original *carbon* microphones. Carbon mikes were usually suspended inside a circular frame by using small springs. Having a diameter of about one foot (30 cm), these mikes only operated in a vertical position. When placed on an angle, the tiny carbon granules inside the microphone would lump together and prevent the sounds from being picked up. In the 1920s, singers appearing on radio shows would *croon* into these carbon mikes due to the fear they had of displacing the granules by singing too loudly.

Dynamic mikes were more reliable, more portable and less noisy than carbon mikes because they used a metallic ribbon suspended in a magnetic field as the pickup unit, instead of granules. They were also called *ribbon* mikes. By 1934, RCA was manufacturing unidirectional ribbon microphones which eliminated the background sounds that omni-directional carbon mikes were bothered with.⁴⁴

However, whenever events called for the use of several mikes on a remote control basis, another problem arose. Much of what was going on was not visible to the commentator and technicians working on such shows. The modern intercom had not yet been invented in the late 1920s and early 1930s, so production crews had no way of telling

when a speaker at a certain microphone was finished talking and when another mike at another location had to be switched on. They got around this operating-in-the-dark problem, somewhat, by arranging to have every speech timed to the split second. With no intercom, those switching the microphones operated solely by the clock.

Stuart Clark, who worked as a radio technician in Ontario, summed up broadcasting's first decade by saying, "In those days nearly all transmitters were homemade, and I built the one Jack (Beardall, founder of CFCO Chatham, Ontario) used until 1948. There wasn't many stations who could afford to walk into RCA or Western Electric to buy ready-made equipment. And even if they could, not many broadcasters were willing to invest heavily in equipment because radio was still a shaky proposition. The Depression didn't help" the second decade of radio either.⁴⁵

According to the National Archives, and other institutions that specialize in collecting broadcasting documents, unfortunately, no examples of radio news copy from the 1919 to 1930 period have been saved.

CHAPTER TWO

1929-1941: Depression, War and Fight for Public Radio

The 1930s saw radio solve most of its principal technical problems. With signals being received dependably, a sizeable audience listened to radio on a regular basis. But Canadian radio paid a price for its popularity and acceptance. Interest groups lobbied Ottawa for more government control. Some wanted better service, others dreamed of coast-to-coast radio. And vested interests, such as the newspapers, wanted non-commercial radio.

The 1930s also saw private radio interests battle with both the newspapers and government in bids to expand news services. The fight for more news on radio extended well into the Second World War.

The Aird Commission

Canada's population was still under ten million when the Liberal government asked Sir John Aird to chair this country's first Royal Commission on broadcasting. But, by December 6, 1928, Canadians owned 400,000 radios and listened to 68 Canadian stations. Also at this time the United States had a completely private radio industry, while Britain had the opposite; the state-owned BBC.

The order-in-council which set up the Aird Commission referred to several problems existing with Canadian broadcasting at that time: "(a)...a substantial number of

Canadian listeners at the moment appear to be more interested in programs from the United States than in those from the Canadian stations and (b) the limited range of the Canadian stations prevent them from effectively covering the whole of our populated areas."

The first point was accepted as a matter of fact. This argument was strengthened when two Canadian stations, CFRB Toronto and CFCF Montreal, joined an American network to bring in popular entertainment shows from the States. However, some private broadcasters, including Jim Allard, disputed the second point. "The second claim could arise from ignorance or malice. The spectrum (of AM frequencies) was very far in those days from being cluttered." At that time the government wasn't allowing stations to increase their transmitting power because it thought the dial was jammed with signals. The real problem was that the early transmitters were not very precise in keeping to their allocated frequencies. This technical problem caused most stations to interfere with the signals of other stations that were located on adjacent frequencies.⁴⁶

In that order-in-council, Parliament had provided the Aird Commission with three suggested remedies: "(a) establishment of one or more groups of stations operated by private enterprise in receipt of a subsidy from the government; (b) establishment and operation of stations by a government-owned and financed company; or (c)

establishment and operation of stations by provincial governments."⁴⁷

A brief examination of the composition of the Aird Commission allows us to predict more accurately what recommendations this body would eventually make:

The chairman was Sir John Aird, president of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, who early in the game remarked that he "once owned a radio, but later threw the damn thing out." The second member was Charles A. Bowman, editor of the Ottawa Citizen, who was then making frequent anti-private broadcasting comments in his editorials and was of the opinion that stations should all be owned by a consortium of daily newspapers.

The third member was Augustin Frigon, director of Montreal's l'Ecole Polytechnique. Some years later he became the general manager of the CBC. And the commission's Secretary was Donald Manson, chief inspector of radio for the Department of Marine and Fisheries. He would later succeed Dr. Frigon as the general manager of the CBC.⁴⁸

The Aird Report was released September 11, 1929. The report's recommendations were the result of extensive travel by the Commission. It had held public sessions in 25 Canadian cities, conferred with all nine provincial governments and had visited the various broadcasting systems in place in the U.S., Great Britain and Germany.

The Commission's report was a compromise position. It

recommended the creation of a "national company" with that organization building seven 50,000 watt stations to cover Canada. But, its service would be supplemented by "stations of lower power...in local areas not effectively covered by the main stations." By then, Jim Allard had become a spokesman for the private stations with his post at the CAB. His reaction to the report was plainly sarcastic, "Thus no Canadian would have been exposed to the danger of two or more domestic broadcasting services."⁴⁹

The Commission also recommended that the provincial governments have a voice in public policy on broadcasting. The report suggested the provinces should have full control over the programs being aired and that the board of the proposed national radio company should have a dozen members; three from Ottawa and one from each province.

To finance such a national radio system the Commission suggested a combination of methods: a yearly receiver licence fee of \$3.00, a direct subsidy from Ottawa and income from the use of indirect advertising.

The report left those interested in the radio debate divided into two camps. On one side were those who had national interests. They feared private broadcasters would develop American-style networks and monopolies. And this would result in too much advertising and continued poor rural service.

On the other side of the dial, private broadcasters

argued they could only air interesting entertainment if they had the benefits of advertising. Some station owners wanted competition and disliked political meddling. They feared government propaganda would end up dominating the airwaves of public radio.

However, Prime Minister King called an election in 1930 and the implementation of the Aird Report was put on the back burner. By then, Canadian Pacific Railways was contemplating a move into radio to match the CNR.

The Depression-time election was preceded by government action which severely curtailed the expansion of private radio. Immediately following the appointment of the Aird Commission, Ottawa placed a freeze on new licences, and existing stations were told of the consequences of possible nationalization. Broadcasters were notified that any power increases or improvement to equipment were to be carried out with the stipulation that the licensee had waived all right to compensation should the private sector be taken over later by the government.

Shortly after R.B. Bennett and his Conservative government assumed office on August 7, 1930, the principal lobby group for public national radio was formed. Graham Spry and Alan Plaunt founded the Canadian Radio League in Ottawa in October. This group was to be the nemesis of private radio for the next quarter of the century.

The Canadian Radio League (Radio League of Canada)

The CAB's Jim Allard documented the extensive lobbying this group undertook not only on Parliament Hill, but across the country. Allard's first entry on the League sets the tone: "Within 30 days (of its inception) the League had managed to create, in the political world, the impression that implementation of the Aird Report was the most urgent desire of nearly all Canadians." The League was financed mainly through its wealthy founders and its allies in the newspaper companies such as the Southam family.

A CBC-commissioned biography of Alan Plaunt by Michael Nolan aptly described the lobbying role of this well-educated son of an Ottawa lumber magnate: "Private broadcasters...were soon to face a formidable opponent- a young Canadian who had both the financial means and the social influence necessary to shape the broadcasting system as he and others saw fit."50

Plaunt, who would later serve on the CBC's Board of Governors, denied he helped form the Radio League with the personal goal of acquiring a post with the corporation.

Allard says the League sang divergent tunes to various audiences when it tried to explain the fundamental issue of its policy and objectives. "Both were made to appear as different things to different people at the same time. Some of the League's material advocated the outright nationalization of broadcasting...In other places, the

League supported a nationally-owned system, with some low powered stations to be 'operated commercially by amateurs or by some civic authority'. (But,) the appeal to newspapers was bluntly economic. Kill off this potential competitor for advertising before it kills you."⁵¹

Co-founder Graham Spry maintained the League was set up to persuade the government of R.B. Bennett to act on the recommendations of the Aird Commission. "My feeling was that broadcasting must not be treated as a business...it had to be treated as a public service, like the school system...The job of the Canadian Radio League was to see that Mr. Bennett, despite the economic situation, would give expression to the demand...for a decent broadcasting system that was Canadian on large part."

Spry viewed his group's actions as those of a legitimate pressure group. "Mr. Bennett, an ardent Tory, was anti-public ownership traditionally. We had to sell him the idea of a publicly owned corporation, independent of day-to-day government, and financed by the audience."⁵²

But, by 1930, the private stations had proved they could cover, as a public service, some major news events. For example, when one of the world's largest airships, the R-100, arrived in Montreal from England, CFCF hosted the broadcasting of the dirigible's passage. The live accounts were relayed to a network of 15 Canadian stations and to the full CBS chain in the United States.

And shortly after, when it visited Toronto, CFRB's "Globe" announcer, from a roof-top microphone position, described the R-100 as it floated across the sky.

New listening trends were also being created and exploited by stations. Hugh Trueman, an announcer with CHSJ in Saint John, described how radio found the morning rush-hour, "I used to do the eight o'clock newscast...people didn't listen to radio very much in the morning those days. It was unthinkable. But I hit on the idea that people might want to be advised of the time as they were getting dressed."³³

Two technical developments in the late 1920s did give radio more flexibility as a mass medium. Rogers Radio in Toronto had invented the battery-less radio receiver, which could be plugged into ordinary household current, and the use of speakers freed listeners from wearing earphones.

As the Radio League was drumming up support for public radio, a battle in the courts over jurisdiction erupted. In Quebec, the provincial government, perhaps sensing that federal implementation of the Aird Report was being further delayed, passed its own Radio Act.

Federal Conservatives took Quebec's legislation to the Supreme Court of Canada for a constitutional reference.

On June 30, 1931, the Supreme Court ruled broadcasting fell under federal jurisdiction because of Ottawa's "residual power" in the British North America Act. Quebec

had argued broadcasting was a provincial concern under the "Property and Civil Rights" heading of Section 92 of the Act. But, the Supreme Court felt that since broadcast transmissions crossed provincial boundaries, the matter was covered, in Ottawa's favour, by the "Peace, Order and Good Government" clause of the BNA Act.

Quebec's appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the highest court for British colonies, was lost. Viscount Dunedin upheld the Supreme Court decision on February 9, 1932. His rationale was that since radio waves do not recognize political boundaries, broadcasting can be seen as a "connecting undertaking" and as such it falls under federal jurisdiction. The ruling also reaffirmed Ottawa's sole right to negotiate radio frequencies and power allocations with other countries in international treaties.

A month after the JCPC's ruling in the "Radio Case", the Conservatives established the first House of Commons' committee on broadcasting.

By the time that Committee's hearings had begun, the Canadian Radio League had knocked on the door of every newspaper. With its pamphlet, Radio Broadcasting: A Threat to the Press, the League had "convinced a lot of editors that radio was a real threat to their survival and they ought to favour radio becoming not an advertising medium but a public service. So the newspapers started to say

radio was too important an educational vehicle to be in the hands of private exploiters," said Walter Dales, who then worked for CKBI, in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.⁵⁴

Claiming the support of numerous associations and most of the newspaper industry, the League dominated the 1932 Committee proceedings. There were several incredible contradictory and inaccurate statements made by League members at those hearings.

For example, Jim Allard quoted Graham Spry from the Committee minutes as saying, "'Canadian stations in the largest centres of population are in some cases owned or controlled by American interests.' Two days later he admitted (under cross-examination) that only two Canadian stations had even U.S. network affiliation; that he could not identify any U.S. ownership at all. None existed."⁵⁵

Other apparent contradictions in testimony centred on advertising. At various times not only the League, but former Aird Commission members told the Committee that while radio was "heavily over-commercialized", it didn't have enough revenue to maintain its physical facilities or to produce Canadian programs. But they alleged that the volume of advertising on radio was so ineffective it would soon disappear. Allard said: "Were such totally contradictory statements not available on the official record, they would be unbelievable. They went unchallenged."⁵⁶

But the will of the pro-national, public radio forces prevailed when the Committee released its recommendations on May 9, 1932.

That report was almost a carbon copy of the Aird Report. The Committee envisioned a chain of high-power national stations, operating on clear channels (the best frequencies) at suitable intervals across Canada. The private sector would be reduced to stations of low power (100 watts or less) operating on shared frequencies located only in areas not satisfactorily covered by the national stations. Thus, the non-public stations would be local in nature and would broadcast programs of educational and community interest.

This plan was put into a bill and after little debate in the House and Senate, it received Royal Assent only 17 days after the Committee had released its report.

Canada's first Broadcasting Act enabled the proposed national company to start public radio. It was to be financed by a combination of licence fees for receivers and advertising revenue. Government subsidy had been ruled out. The Act dictated that the company be administered by three commissioners with assistant members coming from the provinces.

The private stations felt humiliated, but their spokesman, Jim Allard, predicted an early death for the League's first child: "Although its claims of widespread

support and its allegations of inferior service (of private radio) had been discredited, the Army of Phantoms (Radio League) had clearly won the first round. It hailed the new Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission as the 'nationally-owned company' it advocated. Then the League set out to destroy its creation to advance further on its road to control of communications content."⁵⁷

To help pay for this new creation, licence fees for radio sets were doubled to \$2.00 per year on April 1, 1933.

Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (CRBC)

The CRBC was set up in 1932 with the authority to operate public radio in Canada, and with the power to regulate and control ALL broadcasting in the nation. It was able to acquire property, but not borrow money on its own.

On April 1, 1933, the CRBC put 108 new radio regulations into effect-- most were intended to restrict private radio. Advertising was not to exceed five per cent of airtime. Price of products could not be mentioned and there were to be no *spot* announcements in the evenings. Foreign programs rebroadcast on Canadian stations could not exceed 40 per cent of the daily schedule.

Simultaneously, the CRBC purchased the CNR radio system for \$50,000. This consisted of stations in Ottawa, Moncton, and Vancouver; and studios in Halifax and Montreal. For Vic George of CN Radio this takeover amounted to no less than theft by the CRBC, "its first act was to

expropriate our (CN and affiliates) network without so much as a 'thank you'."ee

Meantime, the CRBC leased the facilities of CKGW in Toronto and changed the call letters to CRCT. Later in 1933 it leased time on CKNC Toronto as well. Canadian shows went on CKNC. The more popular U.S. programs were aired on CRCT.

The expropriation of CN Radio was the last beneficial financial transaction the CRBC made. By 1933, the amount collected by Ottawa in radio receiver fees totalled \$1.5 million. The Department of Marine skimmed the first half-million for expenses it incurred supervising the technical aspects of the radio regulations, leaving the CRBC with the rest. During their tenure, the three-man executive running the CRBC had hardly spent much of their share of the fees. Who knows what kind of useful Canadian programming the private stations could have broadcast had they had access to a one million dollar annual operating fund?

To distribute its programs over the CRBC network, the commissioners signed an agreement with the joint services of Canadian National and Canadian Pacific to use its telegraph lines. But, the deal provided for only the transmission of non-commercial programs. And the CRBC could only use CN-CP lines from 6 p.m. to midnight. Advertisers desiring network exposure had to pay the telegraph companies extra. By doing so the CRBC shut itself out from commercial revenue. A better arrangement would have been to

buy time on the telephone companies' lines for commercial purposes and re-sell some airtime back to the commercial sponsors for profit.

In July 1933, the CRBC entered into agreement with Canadian Press Limited (CP) for the supply of its news. This deal with CP started a ten-year war between the private stations and the newspapers over news, and it forced private broadcasters to get other sources of news.

The CRBC-Canadian Press deal gave the Commission a free supply of news, but with the stipulation the newscasts would not be commercially sponsored. As in the telegraph deal with the railways, the Commission missed another opportunity to generate revenue by denying itself the right to broadcast sponsored newscasts.

The arrangement with CP amounted to only a sparse supply of news. Charles Jennings became the CRBC's first news reader. In late 1933, Jennings broadcast five-minute newscasts at 10:45 Ontario time nightly on the network. A once-daily, 1,200 word report written by CP was all he could read. Later that year another five-minute newscast, supplied by CP, was added to the network.

In late 1934, the CP news bulletins for the CRBC were extended to eight minutes and in the fall of 1935 to a full ten minutes. Along with the news, the CRBC began providing listeners with weather information. The forecast bulletins were prepared for the network by the Meteorological Service

of Canada.⁵⁹

However, the CRBC never was to have the programming, resources, time and courage to reduce the existing private stations to 100-watt weaklings as prescribed in its federal charter. The CRBC, which was having a hard time providing material for its small network, had no immediate intention of disturbing the vast majority of Canadian listeners who still were enjoying the offerings of private radio.

Because the CRBC operated only in the evenings, the private stations affiliated to its network were forced to seek alternative programs and newscasts for daytime broadcasts. To supplement the news generated by their own correspondents, many private broadcasters signed on with a new, U.S.-based agency known as Transradio News.

Transradio was headed by Herbert Samuel Moore, a former United Press news correspondent. Moore began signing up Canadian stations as clients in early 1934.⁶⁰

And even though the Depression had wrecked the North American economy and national radio posed a threat to private radio, news on non-public radio boomed in the *Dirty Thirties*.

For example, the actions of Winnipeg businessman James Richardson were typical of the times. He was denied permission to open a station in Winnipeg to compete with that province's only outlet, CKY, which was owned by Manitoba Government Telephones. So Richardson started CJRW

in Fleming, Saskatchewan. Close to the Manitoba border, its signal could be picked up in Winnipeg.

In 1933, Ottawa let his station move to Winnipeg. As CJRW became CJRC, it immediately broadened its scope from reading grain prices to include news as well as information and entertainment. CJRC "set up a general news service provided by local telegraphers who monitored broadcast reports from all major news centres."⁶¹

Another Prairie broadcaster, Andy McDermott, recalled how radio prospered in the 1930s at the expense of newspapers. The terrible drought of the *Dust Bowl* years meant that without crops to carry, the railways ran only one or two trains a week in western Canada. "The whole week's newspapers would arrive in one bundle. By the time the farmer got them the news was old. So he came to depend on radio, and daily newspapers declined in circulation."⁶²

In central Canada, the Dionne Quintuplets were born in a farmhouse at Corbeil near North Bay, Ontario on May 24, 1934. CFRB was in on the story from the start. At the time of birth and for an amazing two years, CFRB broadcast three shows a week from the scene. Those shows were relayed throughout North America and carried on CBS.

Although not a reporter by trade, Claire Wallace hosted that program and as a result she was "among those involved in covering the biggest human-interest story of the decade. Claire visited the Dionne parents and found it

a dismal experience." Most of the shows centred around the quints' doctor, Allan Roy Defoe.⁶³

In Edmonton, the founder of CFRN, Dr. G.R. Rice, got news going on his station in 1934 by getting Texaco to sponsor newscasts. Gord Williamson did the news and sports. "In those days, the one wire service (for private radio) was British United Press. All your international stuff came over BUP. We used to have four half-hour transmissions a day (from BUP). From that you took what you needed to build your newscast. It meant an awful lot of rewrite. Your local stuff you just gathered yourself by telephone. And you scalped some from the newspapers."⁶⁴

Elsewhere, other radio stations attempted delivering some news, often in an unprofessional manner. As was the case with Bill Spears in Regina. "I'm sitting in the (CHWC) studio and this...guy leaned over my shoulder and said, 'Now we bring you the five o'clock news', and he handed me a copy of the Leader-Post. So I read the first two paragraphs of every story on the front page and then signed off ten minutes later."⁶⁵

The newspapers who had supported the Radio League during the fight for public radio became incensed that private radio was still operating and making money by selling newscasts, often with stories lifted from the papers.

The newspapers retaliated with a three-pronged attack.

The dailies attempted to choke-off radio's news sources by not allowing them access to CP material; they pressured the CRBC to ban sponsored newscasts; and they simply ignored radio in their coverage.

Don Laws, who was with CJOR Vancouver in 1933, recounted how far the newspapers went to hamstringing radio. "They were so anti-radio that if we were doing a remote broadcast and the press was there taking pictures they would scratch out the microphone call letters so readers couldn't see what station it was when the picture appeared.⁶⁶

Compare that situation to what appeared on the front page of the Globe & Mail, national edition, November 2, 1987. Here is the entire three paragraph story which ran under the headline: Ex-premier Levesque dies of heart attack-

Canadian Press
Montreal

Former Quebec premier Rene Levesque has died of a heart attack. Montreal radio station CKAC has reported.

The radio station said a person "close to Mr. Levesque" at the emergency room of the Montreal General Hospital had confirmed the death of the former premier.

Mr. Levesque, 66, suffered a heart attack at about 9 p.m. while he was entertaining guests in his home, the station said.

In the early 1930s, news from the papers was never provided to broadcasting stations owned by non-newspaper

interests. However some newspapers, which owned radio stations, periodically permitted these stations to carry paraphrased excerpts from the latest edition after it had hit the streets.

Since private radio wasn't permitted to join Canadian Press, the stations were forced to sign contracts with other wire services and start-up their own newsrooms for local and regional coverage. Many stations on the Prairies quickly followed the example set by CFCN Calgary which was an aggressive pioneer in radio news. CFCN had established a network of nearly 200 correspondents throughout the province of Alberta and it picked up news from other parts of the continent by wireless telegraphy and shortwave.

Jim Allard, who called the deprivation of news to broadcasters short-sighted, explained why some stations were engaged in the robbing of stories from the papers. "The practice cannot be defended, but stations involved felt both the dailies and Canadian Press had weakened their position by tacitly allowing the practice to newspaper-owned broadcasting stations. There was no attempt at legal action by the dailies" against the offending stations.⁶⁷

But, the papers did lobby the CRBC. In return for more CP news for its network, the Commission issued a regulation in 1934 which further restricted private radio. Stations were prohibited from carrying any news except: (a) bulletins expressly released by CP bureaus for broadcast

use; and (b) local news obtained with the permission of newspapers or news gathered by employees of the station. There was to be no sponsorship of newscasts and no news period could exceed five minutes.

One clause in that regulation became an unintended loophole. A proviso, "permitting stations to carry news obtained from an agency employed by the station", was interpreted by private broadcasters as permission to continue using wire services such as Transradio and British United Press.

Transradio started providing American stations with national and international news when Associated Press (AP) had refused service to U.S. broadcasters. Soon, 25 stations and one newspaper in Canada subscribed. Transradio opened an office in Toronto and began hiring Canadian reporters.

Transradio distributed its news by telegraph, teletype and special frequency radio. Most Canadian customers chose to receive Transradio through the latter medium because it transmitted news in both voice and morse code. They picked up the service by tuning-in to Transradio transmitters located in Hicksville, New York and San Francisco. What alarmed the newspapers the most was that this service was available during the daytime hours.

But, by mid-1934, the writing was on the wall for the CRBC.

The Commission with its three-member executive (the

assistant commissioners from the provinces were never appointed) through mismanagement and a lack of finances, didn't succeed in transforming the dream of national radio into reality.

In a letter to the Prime Minister, Commissioner Thomas Maher summed up one of the most important shortcomings of the CRBC, "(The) Commission was in the curious position of regulating its own stations which were at times offenders against its own rules."⁶⁶

Dissatisfaction with the progress of the CRBC in developing national radio led to the formation of the Second Commons Committee on Broadcasting in March of 1934. When the House failed to amend the Broadcasting Act, Commissioner Maher resigned in August. But Maher did have the support of that committee's chairman, R.D. Morand.

Tory MP Morand also wrote to R.B. Bennett suggesting that the operating and regulatory functions of the CRBC be separated and that "a broadcasting enterprise subsidized by the state should not be in competition with private enterprise." (sic)⁶⁷ Nothing happened and the 1935 election intervened.

Maher's boss, CRBC chairman Colonel Arthur Steel, also conceded the CRBC had an ill-conceived mandate. "The original report envisaged all stations in the country being owned by the Commission as was the case with the BBC in England. But we quickly realized such a system would not

work in Canada. The funds simply weren't available."70

In 1936 the government changed hands. The Tories were out and the Liberals under Mackenzie King were back in. And an unfortunate incident during the 1935 election campaign had put the CRBC into the Grits' bad books. The Commission had aired Tory commercials, known as the "Mr. Sage" or "Uncle Sage" series, which had personally ridiculed the Liberal leader. The first run of those ads had omitted to inform listeners that these political messages were broadcast on the behalf of the Conservative Party.

On May 26, 1936, a Liberal-dominated Commons Committee on Broadcasting reported there had been serious abuse of radio for political purposes during the 1935 campaign and that the CRBC was to blame for this lack of control. It meant the end for the Commission. The Committee recommended the creation of a new corporation.

That Committee also heard from the newspapers. Directors of Canadian Press, in an attempt to force the CRBC to get tougher on the private stations, launched an attack on Transradio News.

CP alleged Transradio's stories frequently had an anti-British slant, which was considered a very grave charge in Canada in those days. And according to Allard, "for what purpose it is not clear, but CP made a point of attempting to demonstrate" that CP service was superior because Transradio's headquarters were located in the

Bamburger Department store in Newark, New Jersey.⁷¹

Representatives from Transradio told the Committee not only did it have no connections with Bamburger, but that its offices were on Madison Avenue in New York. It also calmed the Committee's fears by saying it wasn't anti-British and in fact had no editorial policy at all.

Transradio's president, Herbert Moore, also told the 1936 parliamentary committee on radio that he felt radio stations in Canada should have the same access to news as newspapers did. "A glance at any leading Canadian newspaper will reveal the fact that most of them depend as much on American news services as they do the Canadian Press, and the same situation prevails in the Canadian radio field. The Canadian Press in itself is not adequate for publishers or for broadcasters," said Moore.⁷²

Although the Committee permitted Transradio to continue its Canadian operations, the then chairman of the CRBC, Hector Charlesworth, had assured CP that "at the first sign of any anti-British propaganda" or "anything likely to be offensive", he would "cut them out, buzz them right off" Canadian airwaves.⁷³

Two further developments in 1936 also annoyed the newspapers. United Press, through its international subsidiary-BUP, decided to expand its broadcast news service by adding bureaus and correspondents in all Commonwealth capitals including Ottawa. And Transradio and

BUP had quickly learned to write specifically for radio. They were writing for the ear, while CP and AP's style was still designed for the eye and for print.

For stations such as CKCK in Regina, Transradio enabled them to add national and international news to their broadcasts. Newsman Bert Hooper would sit with his earphones on, listening to the code coming through the Transradio signal, while typing out the CKCK newscast.

The CRBC was still relying on CP newscasts by the time the private stations began expanding their news operations. Gerry Quinney, a newscaster who moved from Vancouver to Regina in 1936, thinks a Prairie station may have started the first radio newsroom in Canada. "I think the first responsible broadcasting of news to originate WITHIN a station may have happened at CFQC in Saskatoon. They were the first to say, 'We're going to put in a news editor and give him a staff.' After that, the other stations started to follow suit."⁷⁴

Most radio reports were aired *live* in the 1930s because magnetic tape recording did not come until after the Second World War. But, stations did have disc-cutting equipment. Disc cutters were used sparingly to record newsmakers for news purposes. When Quinney was at CKWX in Vancouver, that station had made its own disc-cutting apparatus "by spraying a mixture of Duco-black automobile paint on flat steel and when it reached the right viscosity

we would cut the disc. That may have been the first acetate machine in Canada."⁷⁵

Around the same time, G. Lovatt in Toronto had made CFRB's first recording machine, but the discs were made of lacquer, "with a lot of plasticizer in it and they were on an aluminum base. When talk of the war became rampant they went to glass. The glass discs were all right, but were pretty breakable and hard to handle".⁷⁶

While the disc-recorders were too heavy and fragile for radio reporters to use outside the station, radio was becoming mobile for the listeners. By the mid-1930s, companies such as Philco-Ford began installing radios in cars. The first car radios not only used an enormous amount of battery power, but were so large they had to be separated into three components (speaker, receiver and tuner) in order to fit inside.⁷⁷

The car radio was actually invented in 1928 by William Lear, whose name we associate more with the Lear jet. By 1929-30, Lear had co-founded a company to mass produce radios. Motorola which had a rolling ring to its name became synonymous with mobile radio equipment for nearly half a century.⁷⁸

Perhaps it's odd, but the most important accomplishment the CRBC will be remembered for is a news story it covered just prior to its demise. Odd, because the CRBC didn't have a news department; it only had announcers

who read CP stories. In April 1936, the Moose River Mine Disaster occurred in Nova Scotia. All of Canada and the U.S. tuned-in as the CRBC broadcast 69-hours of reports on the three miners who were buried alive.

The make-shift reporter was Frank Willis who stayed on the story until the men were reached ten days later. "I take no special credit for my part on the story as I was the only CRBC staffer east of Montreal when the story broke. When I arrived at the rescue site the story was already several days old- because there had been some question as to whether or not the CRBC should cover the story in competition with the print media," said Willis, whose usual role was that of regional director of entertainment for CRBC radio shows from the Maritimes.

Willis had to negotiate with the press corps for use of the only telephone at the mine. "I was an unwelcome addition to the swarm of newspapermen already on the spot and their first instinct was to prevent me, by force if need be, from having the use of the single iron-wire telephone line which connected us (at the shaft) to the outside world."79

The Moose River incident finally proved radio could scoop the papers on an on-going story, even though Willis' voice was getting very rapsy toward the end of the real-life drama. His historic hourly radio commentaries are seen by many as the first noteworthy example of reporting news

events from the scene by using the telephone.

On June 23, 1936, the Liberals' new Broadcasting Act received Royal Assent. The bill, which contained most of the recommendations of the second Broadcast Committee, did however, permit news agencies such as Transradio to stay in business in Canada, despite the protests of the newspapers and the Radio League.

In the dying days of the CRBC, Canadian Press responded to the Transradio-BUP threat by making a news service available to all broadcasters. By way of a joint agreement with CN and Canadian Pacific, CP started its own *ticker* wire. On it, CP ran three 1,000-word news bulletins daily. Stations were advised by CP to use the material for their 12:30 p.m. and 5 p.m. newscasts and under no conditions could the stations use the material before 8 a.m.. Stations paid \$10 a week for the service with that revenue divided between the two railway companies.

Hugh Bremner began reading the news at CKPC in Brantford, Ontario in 1936 and he remembered how he handled the CP tickertape:

"It used to come in on a long ribbon-like roll of paper. When it came time to do the sign on news at eight in the morning, there'd be miles of this ribbon on the floor to go through. You were supposed to put it through a glass tube with water in it and over a little felt pad and stick it on a sheet of paper so it could be read normally. You could manage this if you had lots of time, but most often you didn't. You'd go on the air reading straight off the ribbon, which you'd be pulling through your fingers. In the

meantime you'd be going crazy as it would be tying itself in little knots."so

Bremner, like so many news readers of that time, used to read while standing up at a lectern to get better voice projection. He admitted his station didn't do much in terms of local news, but it had worked out an arrangement with the Brantford Expositor, which would send over a summary of local news for his noon newscast- well after the paper had been delivered.

On November 2, 1936, an Act of Parliament presented the country with a new crown company: the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. As Jim Allard would say, "Again, the phantom army won." The CBC took over the entire CRBC service, which at that time included seven stations and two networks. There were 37 privately-owned stations affiliated on the Eastern Network and 25 more on the Western.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)

For the first 22 years of its existence the CBC was saddled with the same dual functions that had forced the CRBC to a permanent *sign off* - that of owning and operating a national radio service, while at the same time regulating and controlling its competitors: the private stations.

The first CBC Board of Governors wasted little time acting in both capacities. In December 1936 it disappointed the dailies by beginning daytime broadcasting and it

further restricted the private sector by revising the regulations concerning news broadcasts

Now, under CBC control, the private stations could carry only: (a) news supplied by the CBC which the Corporation received free of charge from CP. These bulletins were to be aired without commercial sponsorship; (b) local news and sports, obtained by employees of the station or through agreements with local newspapers. All arrangements with the papers had to be filed with the CBC; and (c) news from other sources with the written permission from the CBC. This included news from Transradio, BUP and other similar agencies. And in all cases, general advertising was permitted only at the beginning and end of a newscast.

But apart from the touchy issue of news, the CBC announced it was prepared to play fair with the private stations. It agreed to lift the power restrictions and allow private broadcasters to go up to 5,000 watts. And it favoured giving the private sector the use of *FM* once that mode of broadcasting had been perfected.

Meantime, the CBC quickly exercised a power the CRBC never had to improve its service. By borrowing capital funds from the government, it built two new high-powered transmitters in Toronto and Montreal. And it opened its own stations in those two cities: CBL Toronto and CBF Montreal, around Christmas of 1937. The two 50,000 watt transmitters

for those stations were built in Hornsby, Ontario and Vercheres, Quebec, respectively.^{a1}

A 5,000 watt^{er} went up in 1937 for the CBC station in Vancouver. Two more 50,000 watters were shortly added: one for CBK at Watrous, Saskatchewan in 1938 and the other one for CBA at Sackville, New Brunswick the following year.^{a2}

Just with the new transmitters in Toronto and Montreal, the CBC had increased its national coverage from 49 per cent of the population to 76 per cent.

By December of 1937, the general manager of Canadian Press, J.F.B. Livesay, had already begun complaining to Alan Plaunt, who had been appointed to the CBC's executive board. Livesay listed three areas in news he wanted the CBC to address: He considered Transradio detrimental to CP; he thought the CBC's news coverage in Toronto was poor; and he wanted an end to alleged censorship of CP news by the CBC

* NOTE: Due to financial constraints caused by the war, the CBC did not expand its operations into Manitoba, Alberta and Nova Scotia until 1948. The CBC took over CKY Winnipeg on July 1, 1948. CKY had been operated by the Manitoba government since 1923. On September 3, the CBC began broadcasting from the 50,000 watt transmitter at Carman, Manitoba and it changed CKY's call letters to CBW. Soon after a new private station signed on as CKY Winnipeg.

In Alberta, the CBC opened CBX on September 8, 1948 with a transmitter at Lacombe. But, the transmitter was plagued with technical problems and never did properly serve Calgary or Edmonton. In October 1964, the CBC opened two new 50,000 watt stations in Calgary and Edmonton to replace the old CBX transmitter at Lacombe. The new station in Calgary became CBR, and CBC Edmonton kept the CBX designation.

And in November 1948, CBI began at Sydney, Nova Scotia at 1,000 watts. (courtesy CBC Public Relations, Ottawa)

in Montreal.

Livesay urged Plaunt to use the CBC's powerful, new transmitter at Hornsby to broadcast CP-supplied material to the Toronto market in the daytime as a way of giving Transradio and the private stations more competition. He also accused the CBC's French network based in Montreal of actively censoring CP dispatches and he expressed his fear that the CBC was under pressure from the Premier of Quebec and other officials to slant the news, "in particular the order has been put out nothing must go on the air about Mr. (Maurice) Duplessis and...presumably also Mr. (Mitch) Hepburn (Premier of Ontario) and Mr. King."ea

In 1938, the CBC had to deal with applications for power increases by three private stations in Vancouver. CKMO, CKWX, and CJOR simultaneously wanted to go up to 1,000 watts. But, two dailies in that city, the Vancouver Sun and The Province (then separately-owned), also held broadcasting licences. Those papers were willing to close down their stations if the other Vancouver outlets agreed to enter into a news sharing arrangement with them.

CKMO and CKWX agreed, but George Chandler of CJOR felt this was nothing but a newspaper ploy to squeeze Transradio and BUP out of Vancouver. Chandler suspected the dailies wanted to give the CBC's Vancouver station the bulk of their news for promotional purposes and renege on the their promise to supply the three private stations.

The CBC's Board gave CJOR an ultimatum. Either sign a deal with the papers or the other two stations would each get the 1,000 watts and CJOR would be assigned a less favourable frequency on the dial at even lower power. Chandler capitulated and all power increases were granted.

The Vancouver case was the beginning of many the CBC was asked to resolve. Broadcaster Andy McDermott later said that all things considered, the CBC could have used its power to crush the private stations. "The private people protested loudly that it was wrong for a competitor (CBC) to regulate the competition. They demanded a separate regulatory body. But a lot of them later wished they hadn't because the CBC was like a benevolent father who gave in a certain amount. The ones who had hollered the loudest realized after the Board of Broadcast Governors came in (1958) that they'd probably bought a pig in a poke."⁸⁴

Unlike the CRBC, CBC management realized from the beginning the development of national radio would take a lot of money. Not only did the Corporation borrow from the federal government, but it announced in 1938 its commitment to commercial broadcasting. The dailies, which had become enthused over public radio because it was presumably to be funded by the public purse rather than by commercials, felt betrayed. In "a tantrum inspired by a sense of...fear, the battle with radio...was fought over the issue of sponsored newscasts", remarked Paul Rutherford.⁸⁵

And if commercial revenue and loans from Ottawa weren't enough to pay for the expansion of public radio, the government boosted the annual receiver fees from \$2.00 to \$2.50 on April 1, 1938.

Meantime, CBC representatives had been sent to Havana, Cuba, to negotiate on Canada's behalf the revision of international radio frequencies and power allocations with their North American counterparts: U.S., Mexico and Cuba. The CBC wanted to sign a treaty which would have given its stations the best frequencies at maximum power. It was "willing to trade off the interests of existing and future non-government stations to attain this. Such negotiations left this country at a permanent disadvantage."⁶⁶

The international radio treaties Canada has signed in the past 50 years, such as the 1937 Havana accord, have had negative impact on our private stations. Not only do most stations have to reduce power after sunset, but only a few stations are assigned a *clear air* channel or Class 1-A licence. Clear channels are those which are exclusive to one country in the broadcasting zone that country is located. In Canada, a station that hasn't been put on a clear channel might be forced to use the same frequency as an American station. Therefore Class B private stations cannot go up to full power because they might interfere with U.S. stations also using that frequency.

While the Corporation kept busy flexing its new

authority, the private sector kept finding new things to do with radio. Harvey Dobbs became part of two developments while at CJCB-Sydney, N.S. "In the late thirties I started a show called the "Havelock Home Reporter" in which I used the phone to carry on two-way conversations with listeners. As far as I know this was the first time anything like that had been done...We were years ahead of anyone in using the phone as part of the broadcasting pattern." Dobbs stopped using the phone as part of his show because he had heard rumours its use was illegal.

Then in 1939 in partnership with Ralph Snelgrove (the R of Ralph with the V of Val, his wife, were used in 1955 as the last two call letters of Snelgrove's CKVR-TV station in Barrie). Dobbs started one of the first radio schools in the country. "A lot of young people went directly from there (the Grenville School) to jobs in radio." ⁸⁷

In time, these *radio grads* began infiltrating stations and ridding them of amateurish and sometimes vulgar performances. Ramsay Lees had noticed such problems while at CHML Hamilton in the early 1930s. "at first there were no professional radio writers. They were primarily newspapermen. A lot of mistakes were made because the material we were given was written by people who didn't know how to write copy that was to be read aloud." ⁸⁸

However, radio journalism still had a long way to go as typified by Francis Martin who assembled news for CJCJ

Calgary in 1938 (later renamed CKXL). It was owned by The Albertan and "I was nicknamed 'Scoop' because I plagiarized the Canadian Press which had a bureau at the Albertan."

Having no radio news wire at CJCJ, Martin would rewrite the Calgary dailies because "the newspapers were very jealous of their news service (CP). Still, you couldn't stop radio from stealing news." As it became evident Europe was headed to war, the Albertan provided the station with a radio news wire and getting a newscast together became hectic. "I used to paste it up from local stories in the Albertan and world news off the machine. It wasn't too great a newscast. I was no news editor. I just rearranged the lead and let the rest of it go."⁸⁹

And sometimes technical problems would result in not only comic relief but spontaneous creativity. Fred Usher remembered one such occasion when announcer Barry Woods was in the CKCK studio in Regina doing a newscast, "reading it as it came off the wire. He was right in the middle of some battle the Chinese were fighting when suddenly the teletype stopped dead. There was nothing coming. Barry never batted an eye. He made up the rest of the battle, and did a beautiful job!"⁹⁰

Meantime, with so much of the Corporation's news material coming from CP, even the CBC's own staff became restless about its passive news gathering role. To subdue those internal complaints, the CBC modified the CP news

agreement that it had inherited from the CRBC.

Starting March 1, 1939, this new deal allowed the CBC more leeway; no longer would it be limited to just several pre-packaged ten-minute news resumes per day from CP. From now on, CP placed its entire news service at the Corporation's disposal, in much the way newspapers had access to the complete CP file. The new arrangement also gave the CBC the use of CP's regional and local coverage which it could insert into local newscasts. And unlike the previous contract, the CBC was now free to use any of the CP material and at anytime. It could also edit CP copy and add its own live actualities and recordings.

CP also offered its member newspapers a supply of news for use at their stations. CP provided it at cost only if the newscasts weren't sponsored. In return, the CBC promised to persuade its privately-owned affiliates to use CP. However, by this time two new danger areas had emerged which further complicated the battle for news.

One was the development of something called *facsimile* broadcasting which was already operating in the United States. This system was the crude equivalent of today's fax machines which send printed material over phone lines. With facsimile radio, home subscribers could tune-in to a special frequency and receive what the sender was broadcasting. Teletype machines, attached to the radio receivers, printed the data. Newspapers feared these

facsimile services would eliminate the printing and delivery of their product. Thus the new deal with CP didn't permit the CBC to do anything but *sound* broadcasting.

Secondly, in technological terms, television had become a reality. In the Encyclopedia of Radio and TV Broadcasting, Robert St. John says NBC broadcast the first regularly-scheduled TV program on April 30, 1939 with U.S. President F.D. Roosevelt speaking from the World's Fair in New York. Also that year, CFCF Montreal had applied for a renewal of its 1923 experimental TV licence.

Private radio thought that it should be allowed to start TV because it had conducted the first tests on this new medium. Meantime, the papers thought it was logical that they should be allowed to inaugurate facsimile because this service transmitted text and not voice. But, in July, the CBC Board decided private interests would not be granted facsimile licences and it turned down CFCF's request to carry on with its experiments in TV.

On September 1, 1939, Hitler's Nazi Germany declared war on Poland. Canada quickly joined her allies and World War Two dominated the news for the next five years.

The war delayed the development of commercial TV as the military took over many new technical inventions. Had it not been for the war, radio news probably could have used magnetic tape recorders much sooner. War also brought domestic production of radio equipment to a standstill.

Instead of commercial TV and FM radio, the war gave us radar for defence purposes.

On the other hand, having Canadian troops involved in an overseas conflict greatly increased the public's demand for information. During the first half of the war, radio stations doubled the number of news programs. This meant radio had to develop even faster and more extensive news gathering systems.

In addition to offering fresh news from the war front, radio stations could further exploit the big-name, show-biz aspect of presenting news which they had begun in the late 1930s. Bill Baker, an early CFRB employee, says the station captured huge audiences by having authoritative celebrities present the news. "in the thirties, we always had 'star' personalities at CFRB; people like Jim Hunter, who was our top newsman for years. You can't imagine the appeal he had. Everyone dropped what they were doing to listen to him read the news. And during the war (in addition to Hunter) there was an announcer called John Collingwood Reade, who was English...everyone could go to bed with an easy mind because we believed him."⁹¹

Ex-Toronto Telegram reporter Jim Hunter had become famous on CFRB by being the only private broadcaster at the Moose River disaster. He was sent there because the story had a local bonus-- one of the three men trapped in the mine (one died) was David Robertson, chief surgeon of

Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children. The doctor had gone to inspect the mine, of which he was half-owner.

In his book about CFRB, Donald Jack recounted the impact Hunter had on his audience because of the Moose River story, "until the day he died in 1949, the public never forgot, or let him forget, those vivid and intense on-the-spot broadcasts."

Jack also explained why Hunter had the highest-rated newscast in North America from 1934 to 1949. "on the air, Jim Hunter's personality had a power that electrified the audience. It continued to jolt and fascinate up to one and a half million listeners week by week. Whatever he said was the truth. He could do no wrong. He could be forgiven any excess because he was Jim Hunter."

Before signing on as a regular CFRB newsreader, Gordon Sinclair used to broadcast some of his experiences as a Toronto Star reporter. Sinclair said Hunter abused his popularity to publicly vent his own pet peeves. "When a restaurant was found to be unsanitary, Jim would give its name and address over the air...He'd make it his main story (this in spite of a war going on). He'd libel those restaurants right and left, but I never heard of any repercussions. And that was his great delight."²

However, radio, like most of the country, was not fully prepared for war. In Quebec this caused problems for stations trying to cover the war in French because CP still

didn't have a radio news service in that language. In The Canadian Encyclopedia, professor Peter Johansen reports that although CP was founded in 1917, it didn't begin its French-language service until 1951. For French-Canadian newsreaders, such as Yves Bourassa of CKAC-Montreal, it meant being bilingual, "we couldn't take the time to translate it properly. We'd just tear the English copy off the machines and translate it on the air as we went along...we had all the newspapers, a pot of glue, and the stuff that was coming in on the wire. It was hectic."⁹³

Prior to the installation of CP's English-language wire service at CKAC in 1933, that station always mentioned over the air that it got its news from La Presse- its owner, Canadian Kilocycle America Canada ended bilingual programming in 1928. Perhaps CKAC was forced to use the CP wire because in 1932 CP had complained to the CRBC that CKAC was stealing news from the Montreal Gazette and CP.

The war prodded both the private and public sectors to take action to improve the way news was gathered for Canadian radio. But, it also brought more government control of broadcasting.

With the outbreak of the war in September, 1939, the mass media in Canada was placed under the Defence of Canada regulations. The government's censorship authority over the news media was derived from the War Measures Act.

And soon after the war started, a separate division

of the CBC was set up to direct the wartime censorship policy. Known as the Stations Relations Department, it was the liaison body between the Radio Broadcasting Censor and all Canadian radio stations. In other words, that CBC division became the clearing house for all instructions passed on to radio stations from the censors.

Three areas of information were censored most often on radio: "the spoken word, platform addresses and weather forecasting...broadcasts in other than the two official languages of Canada were forbidden...while weather information was allowed in newspapers, it was excluded from radio, largely because it might provide assistance to marauding U-boat packs."⁹⁴

However, private stations, especially those affiliated with the CBC, didn't seem to mind the wartime restrictions. During the war CP wire services were provided free of charge. This helped local stations because none of them had the money to send correspondents to the battlefields. "It was a perfect marriage between fiscal probity and moral cowardice," said broadcaster-turned-historian, Warner Troyer. "Nor were the private radio stations much displeased by the arrangement. They were, for openers, terrified of running afoul of wartime censorship regulations, a pitfall totally obviated by their use of pre-digested CBC and CP copy."⁹⁵

With a war raging, the private broadcasters realized

they couldn't continue much longer with foreign-owned news services, such as Transradio and BUP. They also feared that since the CBC was co-operating with CP, the newspapers were in a good position to start the first major Canadian radio news wire.

Meantime, the CBC had seen the American networks and the BBC begin their own news departments. On March 1, 1934 NBC and CBS jointly formed Press-Radio Bureau to provide with news. And in 1930 the BBC had organized a small news bureau. Carleton University journalism student Robert Albota reports in his master's thesis, concerning CBC News during the wartime years, that in 1938, CBC newsreaders Terrence O'Dell and W.J. O'Reilly recommended to their supervisors that the CBC should start up its own news service as a way of getting more autonomy from CP.

In 1940, the Western Association of Broadcasters, a sometimes renegade affiliate of the CAB, put together a plan to create a radio news gathering service of its own. It wanted to give broadcasters a service equivalent to CP's print wire, with eventual participation nationwide.

Later that year after meeting with delegations from CP, CAB and Transradio, the CBC made two major moves.

First, after hearing from senior managers from its Ottawa office, the CBC decided to ban Transradio and BUP from giving news to Canadian stations. It had been alleged Transradio was now pro-German because it was getting some

between news and other forms of communication (such as entertainment, fiction, history, propaganda, commentaries and libellous remarks), reporters are trained to apply a kind of litmus test to help them determine what is news: "It must be made to fit the quality and criteria of news: it must be an accurate, fair, balanced, and objective presentation, and it must have a relatively high degree of news value based on such criteria as prominence, proximity, consequence, timeliness and human interest."¹⁰⁰

From the time the Aird Commission recommended public radio, the objectives of government's intervention in broadcasting have remained consistent. Phrases such as "national unity", "national spirit" or "national interest" have always been used by politicians, bureaucrats and public radio advocates who favoured state-run broadcasting and government control of the private sector.

However, those vaguely-worded yet seemingly patriotic phrases cannot mask the fact that persons with power and influence engage in nation-building as they see fit. And often times, those with privilege exercise their power in ways which don't accommodate the politically or economically disadvantaged.

Under the guise of "national unity", the CBC was set up as an instrument of nation-building by the dominant forces of that time. In particular, in 1941, the CBC News Department was established to help promote the war efforts

war stories from Trans-Ocean News, which had a bureau in Berlin. BUP was considered undesirable because it wasn't Canadian-owned. But, the CBC told BUP it could appeal its status if it could prove that its owners were on the Canadian side of the war.

Vic George, who had seen CN Radio gobbled-up by public radio in 1932, was working for Transradio when it was suspended by the CBC on June 1, 1940. George, who claimed responsibility for bringing the Transradio service to Canada, "maintains that 'if the man who ran it was pro-Nazi, he certainly kept it a dark secret from me.' Undoubtedly, Herbert Moore had shown that he was an aggressive newsman and a strong competitor for the print wire services." But, according to George, "all he was doing was being pro-news instead of being pro-American or pro-whatever you like."⁶⁶

And being pro-radio news is probably the real reason Transradio was ordered to stop. A letter from J.F.B. Livesay, general manager of CP, to the CBC's Alan Plaunt, gave CP's true concern over Transradio: "Of course a great advantage Transradio has over us is news is the best seller of advertising on the air. There we cannot compete...News should not be sold as a commodity on the air, because there is not...the responsibility, the tradition, that governs the daily newspaper."⁶⁷

Meantime, BUP had re-applied to the CBC and was back

in operation in Canada by July. But to further restrict private stations from using BUP and Transradio, the CBC prohibited them from placing advertisements within the body of newscasts.

Certainly Transradio, in the six years it provided 22 Canadian private stations with news, was a pace-setter in North American radio journalism. By 1939, its service was almost nationwide in Canada. Transradio helped radio news make an important leap forward by writing in a style that was meant for the ear. And its presence helped, at least temporarily, to disrupt the alliance between CP and the CREC and later the CBC. That's because the papers, which owned CP, eventually became annoyed of providing news to the CBC free of charge. If Transradio was making profits selling news to private radio, the newspapers also wanted CP to demand payment from the CBC. On the other hand, the CBC felt it had been locked into a *quid pro quo* agreement with CP. In return for free news, it had to regulate private radio in a manner which pleased the dailies and CP.

In the U.S., Transradio's rivalry had forced United Press and International News Service to begin supplying American stations with news in 1935. And later in 1940, AP ended its hold-out and began selling news to radio.

Secondly, the CBC released its own plan for a "national unified broadcast news service."

Called the CBC News Department, it was to have its

headquarters in Toronto with branch offices in Halifax, Montreal, Winnipeg and Vancouver. Privately-owned CBC affiliates were to use news from this department exclusively. The department was to be fed news from CP, a re-licenced BUP, and whatever CBC could gather itself.

The private stations not on the CBC networks were allowed to continue their arrangements with CBC-approved news agencies, but on an unsponsored basis. And stations were not permitted to air newscasts until 30 minutes after the latest edition of a CBC newscast.

The CBC's plan for a news department drew immediate stiff opposition. Private broadcasters accused the CBC of unfair competition by not permitting them to broadcast news before the Corporation's newscasts.

The Attorney-General of Manitoba feared the CBC's new department would cause BUP facilities in western Canada to close down. He felt the vast teletype network BUP had put in place in the Prairie provinces was largely responsible for the popularity local radio newscasts had enjoyed in three of the western provinces.

In the House of Commons, the CCF's Tommy Douglas and M.J. Coldwell supported Transradio. Coldwell said Canadians had become used to this "friendly" news service and that without such a rival to keep it honest, the objectivity of CBC newscasts would be brought into question.

But on January 1, 1941, the CBC went ahead as planned.

CHAPTER THREE

1941-1958: CBC NEWS, the War, and the start of TV

In this period the CBC retained its role as both public broadcaster and broadcasting's regulator, and it expanded its news department into a legitimate radio news gathering service.

Canadian Press stopped its news war with private radio, and radio journalism entered the modern age with the advent of magnetic tape, FM, and broadcast news wires.

Commercial television also came on the scene.

Were the reporting activities of CBC Radio, during the war, motivated by journalistic aspirations or by political pressure to help Canadians support the government's war effort? To help answer that question, a definition of what is news is appropriate.

"News is that which 'gatekeepers' decided should go into the stream of communication on any given day on the basis of what the audience is willing to read, hear or watch."⁹⁸ Therefore, editors, reporters, station owners, regulators and censors play an active role as *gatekeepers* in deciding what is treated as news.

Professional reporters may believe in a slightly modified version of that definition: "News is that which an individual is willing to pay for with time or money in order to read or hear or watch."⁹⁹ To make a distinction

between news and other forms of communication (such as entertainment, fiction, history, propaganda, commentaries and libellous remarks), reporters are trained to apply a kind of litmus test to help them determine what is news: "It must be made to fit the quality and criteria of news: it must be an accurate, fair, balanced, and objective presentation, and it must have a relatively high degree of news value based on such criteria as prominence, proximity, consequence, timeliness and human interest."¹⁰⁰

From the time the Aird Commission recommended public radio, the objectives of government's intervention in broadcasting have remained consistent. Phrases such as "national unity", "national spirit" or "national interest" have always been used by politicians, bureaucrats and public radio advocates who favoured state-run broadcasting and government control of the private sector.

However, those vaguely-worded yet seemingly patriotic phrases cannot mask the fact that persons with power and influence engage in nation-building as they see fit. And often times, those with privilege exercise their power in ways which don't accommodate the politically or economically disadvantaged.

Under the guise of "national unity", the CBC was set up as an instrument of nation-building by the dominant forces of that time. In particular, in 1941, the CBC News Department was established to help promote the war efforts

of the Canadian government. Thus, it may have sounded convincing to some when the CBC-CP alliance charged its news competitor, Transradio, of having a pro-German bias.

Unlike most Canadian dailies and the private stations, the CBC was set up as a non-profit organization. In the private sector, whether it be print or electronic, an important criterion in selecting news is- will it sell? But what was the CBC selling? In terms of news, certainly not always stories that would catch and hold the attention of its listeners. It had to sell Canadians on someone's concept of what were the positive ideas of Canada. The war gave the CBC not an opportunity to make money from newscasts, but a golden chance to promote Canada with the use of government war propaganda.

The private media are not in the business of nation-building. "Telling both sides of the story is so much a part of American journalism that reporters sometimes seem unpatriotic, unwilling simply to accept the pronouncements of presidents or bureaucrats as the only statement on a matter. In war this becomes particularly difficult for leaders to understand, as the press and news media seem bent on reporting the successes of the enemy as well as the failures of compatriots."¹⁰¹

Fair and balanced reporting sells news. Waving the flag may fill some audience need, but it doesn't sell news very well. A democracy functions better and is made

possible when its participants have an independent and diligent news industry to keep it informed.

Before the war, it wasn't merely a coincidence that nearly every time the CRBC or the CBC launched a major technical innovation, they chose a nationalistic event as the site or reason to inaugurate such improvements in broadcast technology.

On May 6, 1935, the CRBC achieved the first Atlantic-to-Pacific radio hook-up. "The occasion was the silver jubilee of King George V, and the program content consisted of the singing of 'O Canada'."¹⁰²

In 1939, the CBC broke new ground in the broadcasting of actuality sound by covering the Royal Tour of the King and Queen for an entire month from coast-to-coast. "The Mackenzie King government was determined to use the royal tour to rally support for King and Empire, and the CBC had to play its particular role in that."¹⁰³ Ottawa was also in the throes of the Great Depression which had left one million Canadians out of work. Today, the recession is remembered as a far more important news story than the 1939 Royal Tour. But, the CBC didn't treat it that way then.

To prepare for that tour, CBC reporters were sent to Ottawa to learn royal etiquette and the Corporation procured an extraordinary amount of new equipment to handle that assignment. Hundreds of CBC staff, including 13 announcers, produced 91 broadcasts while following the

royal couple 7,000 miles back-and-forth across Canada.

In his essay Radio-News and State-Power: A Canadian Case Study, Carleton University professor Peter Bruck concluded it was the CBC's political mandate which caused it to over-react to the Royal Tour. "What was developed, deepened, and maybe even established at that time was also a particular co-ordination between the newswriters' understanding of what constitutes occurrences to be reported, and the agenda of the Canadian state, its definition of national interest and public importance, and its legitimization requirements."¹⁰⁴

Some have argued that having the federal cabinet exercise control over the news content of CBC is too much political intervention, and that this could lead to possible serious abuse. Others have said that handing over the CBC to a board of civil service managers is too little political control. In the former case, we have the potential for politicians to use the CBC for their own purposes under the excuse of promoting national unity. And in the latter case, Ministers of the Crown cannot be held accountable for using taxpayers' money to fund the CBC because so-called "neutral" public service broadcasters are supposedly independent of cabinet influence regarding journalistic policy.

The question of who defines what is "national unity" remains. And which institution can watchdog over the CBC to

see if it stays in its mandate? Certainly private radio, which was regulated by the CBC until 1958, felt it could not scrutinize the CBC without impunity.

Professor Bruck suggested that it was only during the early 1970s that the CBC freed itself from this nationalistic straightjacket. So much so that Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau asked the CRTC in 1977 to conduct an investigation into the validity of rumours emanating from Montreal alleging that Radio-Canada news editors were partial to the independence movement in Quebec. The CRTC's Committee of Inquiry into the National Broadcasting Service concluded, from a content analysis of CBC news by Arthur Siegel, that there was no evidence to warrant censuring the francophone news service of the Corporation over its coverage of political stories. The committee reported that Radio-Canada reporters, like other journalists, are sometimes not as objective as they should be. The CRTC's report said the CBC was not violating the national unity provisions of the Broadcasting Act by airing news stories and opinions which contained pluralistic views on Canada's political formation.¹⁰⁵

Radio News as a form of talking about the News

Canadian radio news did not sound like radio news until radio reporters trained to write for the ear came on the scene. Until then, newscast preparation was based entirely on the production of newspapers. The practices of

print news were transferred with little or no alteration to the new medium of radio. To use Professor Bruck's observations, "Radio was not allowed to develop as a medium which could speak its own news discourse. Rather, it was confined to reproduce the discourse of its written ancestor...thus establishing a...practice which would last till the days when television was taken as a new model...For the first decades of radio...news was not to be gathered by tape and microphone, but by notepad and pen. It was to be announced from the typed page."¹⁰⁶

Therefore, we could say that although there was news on radio during the first 20 years of broadcasting, there was little radio news on radio. What we had was newspaper news, both in content and style, read on radio.

The close link between CP and both the CRBC and the CBC was a main reason why newspaper discourse was being used on Canadian radio. Equally guilty of this were the local stations which scalped stories from local dailies.

Today, radio stations still monitor the dailies for their news coverage. But, radio stations will usually use a newspaper story only after doing two things-- first, contacting the source(s) quoted in the print story (usually the reporter will do an interview using tape recorders). And then after independent verification of the facts has been made, the reporter re-writes the story in broadcast style and puts the newsmaker's voice on the air.

However, there is more to this than radio not wanting to sound like a talking newspaper. The co-authors of Mass Media say, "Different media emphasize different categories of news."¹⁰⁷ Newspapers generally tend to give more coverage of crime and justice than TV. Network TV contains more government and politics stories than local TV. And radio has more breaking or urgent stories than print.

In the early days of radio in Canada, many stories were read on the air that would not make a radio news lineup today. The close co-operation between public radio and CP was a main reason why newspaper categories of news appeared on the radio waves. The early CBC did not have the means to cover the news beats that are typical of today's radio journalism. Newspapers not only dictated what kind of language radio had to use, but they selected the categories of news to be broadcast.

Today, all three news media might cover the same story, but each medium would treat it slightly differently. Newspapers gather more detail and background. TV seeks the visual action and drama, while radio captures the sounds and the immediacy.

For example, if the story is about a bank robbery, newspapers will have a complete wrap-up of the crime the next day. TV will try to show the robbery or talk to eyewitnesses that same night. Meantime radio will constantly update the story until a suspect is caught and

and a trial date is fixed. The most immediate angle is put into the lead of radio stories.

With the supply of news from CP and the papers, radio news in the early years of broadcasting was in no position to exploit the advantages of its medium. Radio stories can lose their timeliness soon after they have been prepared. Most newspapers publish one edition daily. But, for radio, with its capability of doing live news flashes, every minute can become a deadline. Early radio suffered by having old news supplied to it by newspaper interests.

Not only were listeners getting stale information from the CP bulletins, but the method of writing print stories often meant listeners would miss the most important part of the story. A newspaper story is organized by using an inverted pyramid structure. The most important part of the story is told at the beginning. That's fine for the eye, but not necessarily suited to the ear.

Communication designed for eye reception must be structured in quite a different way from information meant for the ear. "Unlike the eye, which focuses immediately, the ear needs time to become accustomed to sound. So radio news copy generally backs into a story, giving the ear time to warm up for the important element of the sentence."¹⁰⁶

Before CP began giving radio news written in radio format, many of the CP stories read over the air must have

gone over the heads of most listeners. For example, a newspaper lead would begin: "Mackenzie King is winning the election, according to the latest figures." The lead for radio might begin by: "The polls in most of the time zones have been closed for several hours now...and according to the latest figures, Mackenzie King appears headed to re-election tonight." Try saying the newspaper lead to a friend. Unless you already have your friend's full attention, he or she will probably ask you: "What did you say- who won what?" Early radio, based on print style, must have had some terrible communication gaps.

However, despite those growing pains, radio news in the late-1930s was a powerful enough medium not only to excite but, in some cases, to scare listeners.

"War of the Worlds"- Radio Prank creates Panic

On Halloween night, 1938, tens of thousands of radio listeners in eastern Canada tuned-in late to a CBS radio drama and became frightened by what they heard coming from New York City.

Those who were listening sharp at 8 p.m. did not panic during the program because they had heard an announcer introduce the show:

"The Columbia Broadcasting System and its affiliated stations present Orson Welles and the Mercury Theatre on Air, in a special radio adaptation of an imaginative novel, War of the Worlds, by British author, H.G. Wells."

Orson Welles began the show by discussing the possibility

of life existing on other planets. Then by design, a routine weather forecast was read and CBS continued by playing dance music. At about 8:30 p.m., again purposely, the music was interrupted by the announcer:

"Ladies and Gentlemen. We interrupt our program of dance music to bring you a special bulletin from Intercontinental Radio News...Professor Farrell of the Mt. Jennings Observatory in Chicago reports observing several explosions of incandescent gas occurring at regular intervals on the planet Mars..."

After that initial fake news bulletin, the studio returned to the dance music. Frequently the music was interrupted by additional so-called news updates. Suspense was building with each subsequent news report of an object from Mars getting closer to Earth.

Finally the make-believe news bulletins reached the climax of the radio drama when an object was reported to have crashed into a field in New Jersey and strange-looking creatures began emerging from "a space capsule":

"...Our army has been wiped out. Artillery, air force, everything has been wiped out. This may be our last broadcast. We'll stay here to the end..."¹⁰⁹

By this time, thousands of people in the United States, who didn't know this was a spoof began panicking. Even police departments, newspapers and radio stations in eastern Canada were flooded with calls from listeners who were seeking advice on protective measures. Next morning the incident became front page news on most Canadian newspapers headlines such as: "Radio Listeners in Panic, Taking

War Drama as Fact."

Due to the wave of mass hysteria generated by this broadcast, a research group at Princeton University spent two years investigating what had gone wrong. In the group's report, The Invasion from Mars, it found out that, "about 42 per cent of the listeners interviewed tuned-in late. Most of these people thought they were listening to news, not drama. More than 88 per cent of those who heard the program from the start were aware it was make-believe."¹¹⁰

The Princeton group concluded that with Europe apparently ready to go to war, listeners had learned to expect that all kinds of broadcasts would be cut off in a serious emergency. They had grown to rely more on the radio than on newspapers for urgent news. News bulletins were treated very seriously in the pre-war period.

The War of the Worlds program taught broadcasters two very important lessons: (1) Radio has much more power over the minds and behaviour of its listeners than most listeners and broadcasters had realized, and (2) because of this influence, panic can be easily generated, even unintentionally. "From then on most broadcasters treated radio as the powerful instrument they now had proof that it was."¹¹¹

There is also a lesson that newscasters learned from this broadcast. Had this story been real, the way in which it was handled, scripted and voiced, it would have had the

same effect. It would have poorly informed people, and have caused them to panic. War of the Worlds prompted radio journalists to begin thinking about how to communicate serious, important matters without inducing instant shock.

And listeners, as a result of the scare, started to listen more carefully and intelligently to what they heard on radio. For them it began to sink in that whole countries were being subverted by men such as Hitler and Mussolini who used the power of radio to get power.

In Canada, the 1938 radio prank made people reflect on how William Aberhart used radio in 1935 to help sweep his controversial Social Credit Party to power in Alberta. Meantime, others would seize on radio to advance their causes. One of them was Joey Smallwood who swayed his fellow Newfoundlanders into joining the Canadian confederation in 1949, largely by his appeals on radio.

Today as a result of the bogus invasion from Mars broadcast, radio treats news very seriously, except for the annual tradition of airing April Fools' Day news spoofs.

Start of the CBC News Department, 1941

When we speak of radio news being a distinctive genre of journalism, we are referring not only that the news copy is written in broadcast language, but to audio elements as well- to the use of voice and actuality sound.

In radio, the use of newsmakers' voices or that of

reporters, either *live* or recorded, are equivalent to the quotes or bylines found in newspaper stories. Such voices are called *actualities*. The other sounds heard on radio news helps to form mental pictures much the way still-photographs assist newspaper text. These sounds can either be called *raw* or *background* sounds. But, unlike the sound effects heard on radio plays and dramas, sounds contained on radio newscasts are real. They are not staged.

Thus by combining copy written for the ear with actual voices and real sound, radio news can be said to be its own genre of journalism. No other medium communicates news by using just sound. It's then no wonder that all things being equal, radio reporters prefer to cover stories which generate a lot of natural sound. An event that is visually appealing but silent, is said "to make for bad radio".

However, only two basic forms of human communication come naturally without the use of some mechanical device—talking and body language. Radio depends on technology to reproduce voice and sound.

The 1927 Dominion Day broadcast on the CN Radio network illustrated the potential radio had to take advantage of its chief characteristic—the direct mechanical representation of voices and sounds. That nationwide broadcast, marking Confederation's Diamond Jubilee, meant that for the first time Canadians could hear their Prime Minister without seeing him in person. People

could finally put a voice behind the newspaper quotes of Mackenzie King. That program also afforded Canadians the chance of hearing the bells of the Peace Tower without being at Parliament Hill.

When the CBC began its own news department on the first day of 1941, the use of disc-recording technology was just coming into use for radio news. Prior to that the making of records was limited to the pressing of discs for mass circulation by the music industry. Disc-cutting was just too time consuming and expensive for use by most private radio stations for the recording of voices/sounds for newscasts.

The start of World War Two gave the CBC its chance to add recorded actual sounds to its newscasts. Wars are very noisy events. And the CBC's new news service exploited this by improving the technology required to record and play back sound. They made disc cutters lighter, and put them in trucks which they shipped to London.

Until this time, the most famous use of disc recordings for news purposes was in the United States. On May 6, 1937, an announcer from WLS Chicago had arrived in Lakehurst, New Jersey to record the passage of the German dirigible, the Hindenburg. Herbert Morrison was there hoping to demonstrate the practicality of making recordings in the field. He was not equipped to do a live broadcast.

When the Hindenburg burst into flames while docking,

the blast actually jarred the needle off the disc, momentarily interrupting the recording. But, Morrison's engineer put the needle back on the record and Morrison resumed his report. Hours later it was sent over to the NBC's Blue Network station in New York and put on the air. It was the first time a radio network had used recorded news material.¹¹²

An experiment with *mobile* disc recorders in December 1939, persuaded the CBC to rely heavily on recorded sounds for the remainder of its wartime newscasts.

Reporter Bob Bowman and engineer Art Holmes went to Halifax Harbour to do a special CBC broadcast on the departure of Canadian soldiers to England. They used a disc-cutter which enabled the CBC "to liven up the broadcast of the hurried, secretive operation with vivid dockside sounds of marching soldiers, roll calls, clanging machinery, ships' whistles and a farewell skirl of the bagpipes."¹¹³

For security reasons, the broadcast was not aired until December 18, nine days after it was recorded and one day after the troops had arrived safely in England. Later Bowman and Holmes were sent to London to catch the sounds of that city being bombed by the German air force.

This meant that finally radio could compete with motion picture newsreels in providing a sound representation of a news event. By 1937, Eugene Castle,

formerly with Fox-Movietone Newsreels, began making news films available to those with home movie projectors.

By late 1940, Bowman and Holmes had become the first CBC crew to cover the war from the battlefield, which at that time was the skies over England. For engineer Holmes, the war was the biggest challenge of all. "There was no tape at the time, all we had were these big disc recorders which were awkward and had to be kept level at all times...When the bombing of London was going on, I got the idea that it was important, historically, to get those sounds recorded...We were aware that this was the first time a war was being reported complete with sound. Even the BBC wasn't doing it."¹¹⁴

As political scientists point out, most wars are extraordinary activities which generally permits governments to invoke emergency powers over its citizens under the excuse of protecting national security. For the CBC, war meant not only censorship of its news, but pressure to broadcast pro-Canadian programs.

The war made news the most important type of programming on radio. Radio news needed the war as much as the Canadian war effort needed the support of the CBC newscasts. "The CBC was to become the main instrument for keeping the home fires burning and maintaining the nation's confidence and morale. As such, it was to be drawn tighter into the open arms of government; war-time restrictions,

including censorship, made such a shift inevitable."¹¹⁵

World War Two strengthened the CBC at the expense of the private stations. To assist its war effort, Ottawa used the CBC as a vehicle to distribute propaganda to Canadians. And although CBC managers resisted attempts by the government to compromise the news department's integrity, the government did influence the CBC by financing and encouraging CBC News to expand. Aside from wartime censorship of news, the war prompted the government to neglect private radio. Unlike the CBC, private broadcasting didn't have the money for extensive war coverage.

But had it not been for war, the use of recorded sound on radio would probably have been limited to music or syndicated game shows. "But, under pressure to produce a discursive practice which would engage listeners to a much higher degree, 'actuality sound' was rediscovered...The CBC war recordings became classics...Ernie Bushnell (then a CBC executive on loan to the BBC) saw these recordings as part of the effort to drag the U.S.A. into the war," wrote professor Peter Bruck.¹¹⁶

A long-time broadcast producer, Warner Troyer, noted in his history of the electronic media that Canadian war correspondents handled their radio reports slightly differently than their counterparts from other countries. With the ability to record the sounds of the war's destruction, CBC reporters posted in the war zone could

catch-up on their sleep and wait until it was daytime in Canada before sending their reports. Reporters from the other networks had to file their stories as they occurred.

Troyer says that during the Nazi's *Blitz* of England in 1941, even veterans of war reporting, such as the CBC's James M. Minifie, "were somewhat cavalier (jaded) about the events around them" because their crews had the luxury of having bombings pre-recorded on disc. They didn't have to wait until the shelling resumed to file live reports.

Minifie, who had covered the Spanish Civil War, told Troyer that one night Edward R. Murrow of CBS and several other correspondents invited him to watch the air raid from the roof of a London hotel and later join them in the bar at the Savoy for a drink.

But, because his CBC crew had already recorded some fresh sound effects from a recent German air attack, Minifie decided to sleep a few hours instead. The other journalists reported the bombing *live*. He was scheduled to get up in the middle of that night to broadcast his next report, including the recorded sounds, back to Canada. Minifie regretted not staying up with the reporters, "While I was sleeping, a block-buster landed somewhere nearby and blew-in my hotel windows, and a shard of glass took my eye out as I lay in bed. I've never turned a drink down since!"¹¹⁷

In The Sound & The Fury, Troyer said those CBC

reports, compete with *wild* sounds, created an insatiable appetite in listeners for war news. The Americans entered the war two years and three months after Canada, which meant that during the first half of the war there wasn't as many war stories on American radio as there was here. Canadians got more coverage from their own stations.

Meantime in the private sector, the battle over who was to supply news to radio was drawing to a close. With Transradio dead and BUP flourishing, private broadcasters made a move to get into the Canadian radio news wire market. In a bid to rival the CBC's news service, the WAB had persuaded several eastern stations to join them in creating an all-broadcasting news co-op.

CP had no choice but to give-in to the broadcasters. In 1941 it abruptly shifted its position on denying private stations a supply of news. CP set up Press News Limited. This wholly-owned subsidiary had the sole purpose of delivering news to broadcasters in radio format. And by November, the CAB and CP had asked the CBC to remove the ban on commercially-sponsored newscasts. Perhaps the CBC's Board of Governors felt betrayed by this newly-formed alliance and denied the request.

Initially CP's move into radio news was seen as a sign of submission. But to communications professor Paul Rutherford, "Ironically, the surrender strengthened CP's position as the prime news source in the country, and

enhanced the revenues of the cooperative."¹¹⁸

If "World War Two was a radio war for journalists"¹¹⁹, it was also a time for politicians to control radio news. The influence of the state during a war need not be discreet or subtle. C.D. Howe was the federal minister in charge of munitions and on his intervention, the time of the CBC National News was moved ahead one hour to ten p.m. "Eleven o'clock was much too late in the industrialized areas of Ontario and Quebec, that everyone should be asleep by then so that he or she could contribute a full day's work to the war effort."¹²⁰

So Lorne Greene, by then the regular reader of the National, began his CBC newscast at ten. His deep voice and serious tone soon earned him the appellation- "The Voice of Doom". In the early years of the war, most of the news was not encouraging. Greene said the "doom" part of his nickname "was started by one of the newspapers in Winnipeg during the 'Battle of Britain'. London was being destroyed by bombs...and as far as I was concerned, bad news was bad news and I wanted the listeners to know it."¹²¹

While at the CBC, Greene was also credited with developing a clock that would show newscasters, while they were reading, how much time was left in the newscast. On network radio this was important because newscasts had to end precisely on-time. Programs that followed the news would start at their scheduled times regardless of when

the newscaster finished. His timepiece counted down the time left in the newscast instead of telling the reader how much time had expired.

By the end of 1941, the time allocated to news on the CBC had doubled. News was taking up about a fifth of all programming. In addition, the National War Finance Committee used CBC airtime to persuade Canadians to buy victory bonds and the Wartime Prices and Trade Board had regular feature programs to educate the public about rationing. Ottawa's Wartime Information Board also used CBC airwaves to keep citizens aware of its policies.

The CBC's annual report of 1941, dated March 31, shows the Corporation at least made a half-hearted attempt at setting up its news department. One month before the news service was launched in January 1941, five senior CBC news editors had taken a short crash course in organizing it.

The annual report reveals a deliberate attempt to understand that radio news was no longer just something to be read, but to be gathered. "An effort was made to establish an acceptable style for the CBC news bulletins and all those present had much practice in writing copy in the idiom and rhythm of ordinary speech, intended for the ear rather than for the eye."

The report also touched on the establishment of a news reference library. This egg of an idea has now hatched into one of the largest news reference collections in the world.

The report said the news editors wanted such guidebooks "in order that CBC bulletins should be more than mere re-writes of news dispatches, a library of up-to-date reference books was established at each bureau, together with a file of clippings on domestic and foreign affairs, personalities, etc., which would provide background material for quick and authoritative reference."

Covering the war also meant the CBC was having difficulty in the handling of foreign names and places. The 1941 report reveals that from the very start of its news service, the CBC had given accuracy in pronunciation priority. Employees were instructed to consult the best available printed and personal authorities to help them say names, words and places the proper way on the air. "and to pronounce foreign names with such an approximation to the correct pronunciation as will leave the announcer free from the charge of either conscious superiority or careless ignorance. It is always to be borne in mind that a foreign name must not be so pronounced as to be unrecognizable to the ordinary listener."

In 1941 the CBC also put on paper a set of ten policy directives for its staff to follow when preparing and presenting newscasts. It is interesting to note how many of these guidelines remain viable today and how many of them have grown obsolete due to changes in our society. Here are the most important ones:

- a) Only news from CP, BUP or CBC news staffs should be used. No one outside the CBC "may be given payment for news, direct or indirect."
- b) "Crime stories, where they have sufficient general interest to be used at all, should be handled with discretion. Remember that they go into the home, and may be heard at unsuitable times."
- c) "News should be handled so as not to create alarm."
- d) "Domestic political news must be treated with absolute impartiality. In controversial stories, both sides of the issue must be given equal emphasis."
- e) "No libelous or scandalous news should be permitted ...nor should voice inflection be allowed in any way to colour the news."
- f) No suicide stories- unless about prominent figures, and even those should be handled very carefully.
- g) "The canons of good taste should apply, particularly in referring to physical handicaps or deformities."
- h) "No stories about lotteries, gambling odds, or any reference to any sports news that would cause people to gamble on the outcome."¹²²

Looking back at these 1941 directives, it is interesting to note, in "b", that the CBC's policy neglected to consider if there were suitable times for reading crime stories in newspapers. Directive "c" seems to be in response to the 1938 War of the Worlds program, as well as bad news about the war. Directive "d" clearly should have helped those who wanted Canada to remain neutral in World War Two. But in 1939, people who voiced such views were considered too controversial to be given equal time on the CBC. And directive "h" would have prohibited coverage of the Queens' Plate horse race and the Irish Sweepstakes.

Before he resigned from the CBC and died of cancer in 1941, Alan Plaunt had also persuaded the CBC's executive to institute a policy of equal time for various political

parties and to allow them to buy airtime between elections.

However, in April 1942, the CBC broke this policy by allowing Prime Minister Mackenzie King's cabinet to use CBC airtime to make speeches in support of the "yes" side of the conscription plebiscite. Canada had run low on enlisted men in the armed forces for its war effort, and in an attempt not to betray Quebec, the federal Liberals placed the question of mandatory military service to a national referendum. King himself made two speeches on radio in favor of conscription, "but the CBC...deliberately breaking its own equal-time policy, refused to permit any foe of conscription so much as a moment of air time."¹²³ So even CBC rules were meant to be broken from time to time.

The start of News on the Hour, every Hour

The important fast-breaking events which led to the declaration of war against Germany were too significant not to be broadcast on the CBC immediately. Such news was too vital to wait until the noon, supertime newscasts, or the 11 p.m. "National". So by using hurriedly-prepared bulletins from CP, CBC interrupted normal programming to give listeners the latest developments.

For example, when Germany and Russia signed a non-aggression pact in August, 1939, the CBC aired a total of 82 flashes and 42 bulletins as that story unfolded. Similarly when the British and French governments were

negotiating the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, with Hitler during the Munich talks of September 1938, the CBC aired over 80 special news bulletins throughout the duration of that event. More bulletins were broadcast as Germany invaded Sudetenland that October.

When Germany occupied Poland on September 1, 1939, CBC news bulletins were aired every 30 minutes. By the time Canada and its allies had declared war on Germany, in the days that followed the Nazi invasion of Poland, the CBC was interrupting normal programming with news flashes at a rate of one per hour. These sudden, unscheduled announcements alarmed many listeners. To reduce some of the fear, the CBC made it policy to air bulletins only at the top of the clock, instead of unfixed times.

When the Japanese air force attacked Pearl Harbour in Hawaii on December 7, 1941, the CBC aired 13 special bulletins. During the week that followed, when the U.S. declared war first on Japan and then on Germany and Italy, CBC news bulletins were broadcast every hour. Prior to the raid on Pearl Harbour, CBC bulletins concerning the Battle of Britain were aired precisely on the hour, but not every hour. But with the U.S. engaged in war, the CBC began exchanging stories with American networks. The CBC used NBC and CBS coverage from the Pacific, while the U.S. networks picked up stories from the CBC's Overseas Unit which was posted throughout Europe. Radio can trace the practice of

using scheduled, hourly newscasts to the hourly bulletins aired during the attack on Pearl Harbour.

Austin Weir described, how in one event-packed year (1941), the CBC news department adapted its theoretical policy to actual use. "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 sedulously avoided as was 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."¹²⁴ Weir's description more aptly suited the CBC's coverage of post-war events than its record in covering the war.

The Dieppe raid of August 19, 1942 proved to be not only disastrous for the Canadian soldiers involved, but for the CBC as well. The first report carried on CBC Radio described the landing on French soil as a great victory, when in fact it was a slaughter. Only a third of the Canadians who landed at Dieppe made it back. Over 900 were killed and nearly 2,000 were taken prisoner by the Germans. "Army censorship was partly responsible, but the war's propaganda climate influenced many, like Ottawa-born Rooney Pelletier, to depict a 'good show' in the army's first major battle of the war," according National Archives.¹²⁵

To correct the loss of credibility caused by this patriotic, but inaccurate report, the CBC attempted to improve its standards by putting together a manual on journalistic policy. The directives in this policy manual were left virtually intact until the 1968 Broadcasting Act was implemented.

The CBC even advertised its new reporting policy in the newspapers. It told its listeners to expect factual, reliable and unbiased journalism with no editorial comment. On the touchy issue of Canadian fatalities, it said the names of soldiers killed in action would not be released until the armed forces had contacted the next-of-kin.

The CBC's coverage of the Italian Campaign in late 1943 and early 1944 reflected the News Department's desire not to repeat the mistake at Dieppe. And the news reports from the front had colour. Matthew Halton faced German machine guns as he captured the sounds of Canadians fighting their way across Italy. Although his reports for the CBC expressed strong empathy for the soldiers around him, "Halton's legendary war reports combined vivid description and stirring location sound to create an intimacy unmatched in newspapers or newsreels."¹²⁶

For Radio-Canada, Benoit Lafleur became a leading war correspondent along with Marcel Ouimet and Paul Barrette. The war had created a need not only for the CBC to hasten its development of radio technology, but to make French-

Canada part of the war effort. Just as Art Holmes had to learn how to record the sounds of bombs on a disc-cutter, Lafleur, a former newspaper reporter, had to learn how to use a microphone on the battlefield.

In retrospect, covering a war with this new equipment was a giant step forward not only for radio but for reporters. The first persons to use new technology have to invent a methodology. Just because the CBC crew in London had the ability to record sounds on discs, it didn't mean they were trained to put those sounds in the context of a news story. They had to learn on the spot how to match the sounds with the reporter's script. The background sounds of the war had to be explained and those sounds could not be allowed to take away from the narrative.

The people who are the first, to find practical uses for new equipment, set the standard for others. The methods of the pioneers are institutionalized until better ways are found. Newcomers tend to select role models from among seasoned reporters, both for style and use of technology.

Meantime with the CBC being cluttered with wartime programming, privately-owned stations, along with the CAB and Canadian advertisers, lobbied the 1942 House of Commons Broadcasting Committee for airtime on an alternate radio network. This pressure led the CBC to establish a second publicly-owned network.

On January 1, 1944, the Dominion Network of the CBC

went on the air. It had only one CBC station (CJBC Toronto) but 34 private affiliates. The old National Network became the TransCanada Network with six CBC stations connected to 28 outlets in the private sector. The CBC French network was enlarged to include three Corporation and ten private stations. Half of the 21 hours that the Dominion Network operated per week, during the prime-time evening hours, was used for CBC programming. That left only an average of one-and-a-half hours per evening for the benefit of private broadcasters and their sponsors.

As the war dragged on, it was a young Earl Cameron, whose face later became synonymous with CBC TV News of the 1950s, who delivered the CBC's *D-Day* newscast. Although he was new to broadcasting, Cameron had worked hard to fit his reading style to match the existing CBC model to perfection. Like Lorne Greene, Cameron set the tone for CBC newscasts for decades to come. There was no mistaking the Corporation's news style- serious, factual, formal and unhurried. It became a CBC tradition. And CBC announcers, such as Rex Loring, Ken Haslem, George McLean and Colin Parker, followed in Greene's and Cameron's footsteps.

On June 6, 1944, while Cameron was reading at the CBC, Gordon Sinclair was in another part of downtown Toronto making his debut on CFRB News. His *D-Day* newscast was much more lively and vivid, reflecting a more entertainment-oriented style which by then had become a trademark of

private radio.

When Sinclair took over "Red" Foster's spot on CFRB's ten-to-twelve news, the station had gone through most of the war with only four newscasts a day-- Jim Hunter at 8 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; "Sinc" at 11:50 a.m.; and a 11 p.m. newscast from the recently combined Globe & Mail, read by Douglas Marshall.

So it was a big concern to CFRB when the sponsor of the 11:50 a.m. news, a Toronto dairy, became outraged at Sinclair's on-air delivery. It so angered the president of that company, he confronted Sinclair at the station and said, "We've been getting a lot of phone calls about you...your grammar is bad, you're vulgar, you use slang." Sinclair replied, "You haven't heard anything yet. It's going to get worse."¹²⁷ The dairy cancelled and "Sinc" got another sponsor for his show. Not only did Sinclair get a raise, but he was pleased his new sponsor, Alka Seltzer, wasn't listed in the phone book. This meant irate listeners couldn't complain directly to the sponsoring company.

Fortunately for CFRB, the station had other announcers in its stable to offset Sinclair's temperament. CFRB's biographer, Donald Jack, painted this colourful vignette of that station's newsroom during the 1940s: "John Collingwood Reade dictated his news copy while walking up and down; transmuting some leaden dispatch off the wire into graceful essay that gleamed with expensive phrases...Just as Sinc's

as Sinc's blunderbuss approach was nicely balanced by Jack Dennett's sonorous sincerity, so Jim Hunter's dynamic parochialism was balanced by Reade's sophisticated international outlook. It was a brilliant newsroom."¹²⁰

By today's standards, Sinclair and his peers, being mostly ex-newspapermen, actually wrote and read their news in what could be termed a columnist style. They were allowed to inject personal remarks about events in the news. This influence on CFRB belied that Toronto station's claim to being "Ontario's authoritative news voice."

CFRB made a name for itself away from the studios as well. When Joe Atkinson, owner of the Toronto Star, took majority control of the station after the death of Ted Rogers in 1941, the station acquired the use of some Star reporters. One was Jocko Thomas. His 30 years of reporting the police beat for CFRB made him famous.

Although Thomas had won three national newspaper awards for his stories, he admitted he had become better known through his radio work than through all of his Toronto Star bylines. But his start on CFRB was a little shaky. "I had no radio experience when I started...but, when Gordon (Sinclair) first went on 'R.B.' as a newscaster in '44, I thought he'd never last. Hell, when you compared his voice with Lowell Thomas (NBC's 'Million-Dollar-Voice' of the 1930s) or Lorne Greene-- well, I was even worse than Gordon. And to make it worse, I did it over the phone, not

even over the clear airwaves."¹²⁹

But, it didn't take long for Toronto listeners to accept Thomas and his telephone reports from the courts and lock-up cells. His quacking sign-off: "This is Jocko Thomas reporting to CFRB from Police Hed-Quatters", became a tradition in the city.

Elsewhere in Canada, stations did whatever they could to get news on the air during the war. Art Crighton, who joined CKCK Regina in 1942, admitted that station didn't do much on provincial or federal affairs "because we didn't have the staff, but we could and did cover the city council...Sometimes, if a hockey game was running late we had to take the news down to the arena for the announcer to read it from there because we were so short of staff and all the equipment was at the arena."¹³⁰

As the war was nearing its end, the Liberal cabinet minister responsible for the CBC, and enforcing the Broadcasting Act, still had doubts about public radio. "For nine years, the CBC skittered from one crisis to another like a gin-sodden filly on ice; and several times slithered within whispering distance of oblivion," said Transport Minister C.D. Howe.¹³¹

Private broadcasters, such as Jim Allard, found it confusing to watch the CBC operate as its competitor and regulator. "The Corporation's objective was to provide 'a national broadcasting service'. That foggy phrase has never

been defined. At various times it was alleged to mean 'nationwide'— which argued for physical facilities throughout Canada. Sometimes it is said to mean provision of Canadian programming...with method of distribution (being) immaterial...Lines of authority were blurred. The CBC was part corporation; part government department; its legal status unclear," wrote Allard.¹³²

The Birth of F.M. Broadcasting

Unlike AM commercial broadcasting, the United States began broadcasting of the FM band before Canada did.

In 1933, Major Edwin Armstrong developed the FM technique in the U.S. After years of demonstrating FM's practical application, Armstrong's invention became a commercial reality in 1940 when Washington permitted its use. But, for the first 25 years, FM was used primarily as an auxiliary service to simulcast the programming carried on AM stations.

Radio signals have two fundamental characteristics— frequency and amplitude. FM stands for *frequency modulation* while AM is short for *amplitude modulation*. Frequency refers to the number of vibrations per second. It is measured in Kiloherztz (thousands of cycles per second) on AM and in Megahertz (millions of cycles) on FM. Amplitude, measured in watts, refers to the strength or or intensity of the signal.

AM transmits different sounds by varying the intensity

of the signal. For example, if an AM station is authorized to broadcast using 50,000 watts of power, it might transmit sounds with low, deep tones (in the bass range) at 49,500 watts. High-pitched tones (those characterized as being treble) would then have to be transmitted at 50,500 watts. On AM, the wavelengths of a station's transmission are always of a constant length. For example, if a station is given the 900 KHz spot on the dial, its signal will always contain 900,000 wave cycles per second. It's the peaks and valleys of that radiowave that are raised and lowered by adjusting the wattage. In that way, AM can broadcast the full spectrum of tones audible to humans.

FM, on the other hand, transmits different tones by varying the frequency of the signal. For instance, a station assigned the 101.1 MHz frequency, might transmit low tones at 101.05 MHz and the higher tones at 101.15 Mhz. On FM, the intensity of a station's signal, as seen by the wave pattern on an oscilloscope, remains constant. The peaks and valleys of the soundwave always have the same shape because the amount of watts needed to push and carry the emission remains fixed. However, the number of vibrations, or MHz per second, is always fluctuating. Therefore, FM stations require channels approximately 20 times wider than AM stations.

AM signals are beamed straight up to the ionosphere from a station's transmitter. These signals are picked up

by receiver sets after they bounce back to earth. Therefore, AM signals are susceptible to atmospheric interference or to electromagnetic devices located on the earth's surface.

FM produces a superior sound because its signals are beamed directly to radios located in the coverage area. Like TV, FM radio stations transmit their signals in a *line-of-sight* trajectory. And because the signals are directed horizontally to the receivers, FM is almost immune to interference unless an object blocks the signal.

FM also has much higher fidelity than AM because FM signals use a wider band of radio frequencies. FM's use of a wider band of frequencies also permits stations to create a superb stereo effect by sending two separate sets of signals inside its allocated position on the FM dial.¹³³

By 1943, CFRB Toronto and CFCF Montreal had received approval for experimental FM licences. This permitted them to carry only rebroadcasts from their AM transmitters. A year later, stations, such as CKWS Kingston, were given the right to use FM to carry their AM signal from the studio to the transmitter. In CKWS's case, it meant that station didn't need land lines for its studio-to-transmitter link-up. It could use FM to get its signal to the transmitter which was located on an island several miles from the station- whose call letters, C.K.W.S., stood for the Kingston Whig-Standard newspaper, its owner.

In Winnipeg, CKRC was given two FM licences. One was for a back-up studio-to-transmitter link, and the second one was for a mobile pick-up; this enabled a station to originate a broadcast away from the studio and transmit it from the remote locale back to the studio for broadcast on AM without using phone lines.

In 1944-45, the Commons Committee on Broadcasting began developing government policy on the use of FM. It invited representatives from the CBC, private stations and radio manufacturers to submit ideas. The newspapers were not asked to participate.

The development of FM in Canada was held up not only by the war, but a 1943 amendment to the Radio Act. That order-in-council prohibited one person from operating more than one commercial radio station, unless permission was granted by the minister upon recommendation of the CBC.

Newspapers thought that the regulation meant they couldn't own FM stations in the same cities where they had AM stations. Professional management companies, such as the Taylor, Pearson and Carson group, which operated stations on behalf of their owners (including newspapers who were broadcasters), also thought the new "one station-per-person" law applied to them. Thus, the climate was not right for existing AM operators to try to launch FM stations in the same market.

The CBC started FM broadcasting soon after the war

opening stations in Montreal and Toronto.

Canada's slow entry into FM broadcasting can also be traced to developments south of the border. Ottawa and the CBC were not anxious to step into FM until the Americans had resolved their master plan for this new band of broadcasting. Canada didn't want to embark on an FM system that in time might become incompatible with FM in the U.S. Since most radios at that time that were sold in Canada were manufactured in the States, Ottawa didn't want to paint itself into a corner by approving a system for FM that didn't coincide with American technical standards.

Major Armstrong held several patents on FM and battled with RCA-Victor for nearly 20 years after his discovery. RCA, which owned NBC, realized it needed the FM band to broadcast commercial television.

In 1939, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in Washington was asked to resolve the dispute over which part of the FM band would be allocated to TV and which part would be used to carry radio signals. The FCC prohibited TV from using Channel One of the proposed one-to-thirteen TV dial and gave it to FM radio. In Channel One were the frequencies from 42 to 50 MegaHertz (MHz). Before the U.S. had gone to war, manufacturers began selling FM radio sets equipped to receive signals the 42-50 MHz range.

But, in 1945, the FCC moved FM radio to a different range of frequencies. FM was given the frequencies between

88 to 108 Mhz, which it occupies to this day. The Channel One frequencies (42-50 Mhz) were given back to TV for future use. For Armstrong this was a major set-back. After the war, the FCC didn't allow FM stations to use the 42-50 MHz range. Therefore, over half-a-million 42-50 MHz FM sets built and sold before the end of the war became useless. He had a huge problem convincing listeners to regain their confidence in FM and buy the new 88-108 MHz receivers.

In Canada, the idea of private broadcasters getting into FM, right after the war, was still very much in the discussion stage. CFCF's Vic George said the introduction of FM was one of the mildest of many nerve-wracking developments of his radio career. According to him, the private sector got a taste of FM in 1946 when Canadian Marconi, which "had the Canadian rights to Major Edwin Armstrong's FM patents, decided to put on a demonstration for broadcasters at the CAB's convention at Jasper."¹³⁴

Later that year, the private sector began commercial FM with stations CIRK-FM Edmonton, CFMK-FM Kingston and CKLW-FM Windsor among the first few. In 1947, a few more signed on including CKPC-FM Brantford and CFCF's CFQR-FM in Montreal. Also that year, the CBC added two more outlets: CBU-FM Vancouver and CBO-FM Ottawa.

In 1948, at least six more stations popped-up on the FM dial: CKUA-FM Edmonton, CKXM-FM and CJOB-FM in Winnipeg, CFPL-FM London, CJSD-FM in what is now Thunder Bay, and

CJRT-FM Toronto. The most listened-to FM stations in Toronto, if not the country (according to BBM ratings of the past 20 years), began much later CHFI in 1957, CKFM in 1961 and CHUM-FM in 1963.¹³⁵

In the meantime, Armstrong and RCA were in and out of the courts and negotiating with the FCC. RCA wasn't willing to pay Armstrong royalties for the use of his patents. RCA had offered him an out-of-court settlement of one-million dollars, but the inventor was well aware his idea was worth much more than that because TV needed FM technology for the transmission of both audio and picture.

Nearly 600 FM licences were issued in the U.S. by the time American commercial TV became regular in 1948, but 212 of those stations quickly went off the air because of the post-war recession. After four separate, futile rounds in the courts with RCA, Armstrong committed suicide in 1954 by jumping from his apartment building in New York City.¹³⁶

The CBC didn't start linking up its local FM stations to form a network until well after it had launched its TV service in 1952. In 1960, it began a short-lived experiment, linking FM stations in Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa on a bilingual network. However reporters, for the CBC and private radio, found little in early FM to advance their profession because most of the stations were only rebroadcasting the programs being carried on the parent AM stations. Early FM didn't have its own identity.

Magnetic Tape Revolutionized Radio News

The discovery of magnetic tape recording was the single most important technological breakthrough for radio news. The step from live programming and disc recordings to the use of tape recorders was a quantum leap.

In many ways it far out-shadows the development of teletypes for wire service use because the teletype only transmits news stories from a central agency, while the tape recorder allows reporters to go out and actually gather news suited especially for the medium of radio.

Modern radio reporting is chiefly the gathering of voices and sounds for broadcast. The words of a script story or the text produced by teletype machines play a small part today in a radio newscast. The introduction of tape recording to radio is akin to what colour broadcasting did for black-and-white TV- it added the sensual dimension that was needed to complete its form as an auditory medium. In other words, radio news would not be radio news if the use of taped material hadn't become a reality.

So with the ability to playback taped voices and sounds, radio journalism was allowed to be its own distinctive vehicle in the mass dissemination of news. With tape, radio was no longer a talking newspaper or telex accompanied by the odd, scratchy disc recording.

However, a common problem occurs in any industry that relies on new technology- expense.

Although the tape recorder first appeared in Canadian newsrooms in the mid-1950s, many companies had continued using portable disc recording machines. In fact, Presto turntables were used in the Montreal, Hull and Toronto studios of the CBC until 1965. In 1962, the CAB stopped using its Presto portable to record interviews with MPs for its radio program, "Report from Parliament Hill".¹³⁷

To complicate matters, another form of recording sound, the *wire recorder* came into use just after the war. It worked on the same principle as the tape recorder, but the sound was magnetically imprinted on a thin strand of wire instead of on iron oxide shavings pasted on a plastic tape. Its use overlapped with the disc cutter and the tape recorder. For example Magnatone's 1948 wire recorder was still in service at the CBC in the early sixties.

The magnetic tape recorder has its origins in Germany. By 1932 the German company BASF had plastic recording tape available. And as early as 1934, the German radio were using steel-tape machines. By 1941, several German-built Magnetophone tape recorders were being used by the Nazis in radio stations.¹³⁸ Obviously this technology hadn't made its way to the BBC, the American networks or to Canada where disc cutters were still being refined.

During the last year the CNR Radio network remained in business, it provided the radio coverage of the Imperial Economic Conference, which was held in Ottawa and other

Ontario cities in 1932. Five special programs were aired from that event. Austin Weir, in charge of programming for CN Radio, handled the technical arrangements. His recollections of that coverage, from July 21 to August 10, tell of the use of a device that became one of the earliest forerunners of magnetic tape outside of Germany.

According to Weir, the conference's opening ceremony at Ottawa was fed, via land lines, to 40 Canadian stations. Marconi's trans-Atlantic radio beam relayed the program to Great Britain for the BBC. "The BBC had a Blattnerphone steel tape recording device- 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."¹³⁹

Other events recorded on the BBC's Blatterphone were the plenary session from the House of Commons, the dinner and concert for the delegates, and the opening of the National Research Building. Later as the conference moved westward, the opening of the new Welland Canal was also sent to Marconi's shortwave transmitter in Quebec and then relayed across the ocean to the BBC.

Vic George, who had worked for CN Radio and who later ran CFCF Montreal for the Marconi Company, called the Blattnerphone, "the original good quality recording device" and described the German-made machine as "a great, big awkward thing that actually recorded on tape." They were so

costly that no private station could afford them.¹⁴⁰

The first report of a Blattnerphone in service in Canada is of a CRBC machine in Ottawa. In June, 1934, the CRBC organized a goodwill tour by boat to Newfoundland. "A considerable number of well-known artists was taken along to entertain and provide the talent for the broadcast from St. John's," recounted Weir, who had taken-in that trip.

But during a stopover on Prince Edward Island before arriving at Newfoundland, "there was a dress rehearsal of the program (in the studios of CFCY Charlottetown)...this was piped to Ottawa and recorded on the Blattnerphone."

Two days later, as the same band played over the local St. John's radio station, the CRBC was simultaneously airing the Blattnerphone recording of the P.E.I warm-up show from its station in Ottawa. The recording was fed to CRBC, CBS and NBC networks. The Blattnerphone sounded so good that officials with the American networks thought they had heard the actual, live broadcast from St. John's.¹⁴¹

Later during the war, the Germans also used tape recordings to freeze sound and time for military purposes. Vic George remembered "the Germans used to cover-up damage to some of their critical places, caused by bombing, very cleverly. They played recorded stuff as if live from bombed buildings...Allies later sent men in to find out the 'secret', and found out specs and drawings for tape machines had long been available."¹⁴²

In Ottawa, the Blattnerphone was later linked-up to a small short-wave receiving station the CRBC had erected at Britannia Heights on the outskirts of the capital in 1935. When the CBC ran that facility during the war, a total of 5,315 radio reports, in French and English, from its Overseas Unit, was recorded on the Blattnerphone. More than a thousand recordings were made in the winter of 1940-41 alone. However, most of the recordings were made in the 1943-46 period. Reports from Europe continued to be beamed across the Atlantic to Britannia Heights until 1952 when the Overseas Unit was disbanded by the CBC.¹⁴³

Due to their size and cost, Blattnerphones were never used by Canadian radio reporters in the field. They were relegated to the recording of network specials, and reports from overseas, for the sole purpose of re-broadcasting.

It was only when the Allies liberated Germany that they discovered that scientists working for the Nazis had perfected a tape recorder. The early ones used a tape of paper coated with a magnetic layer instead of the spool of piano wire used in wire recorders. The German machines had a better sound and were easier to handle than disc cutters. It also recorded a far greater amount of information.¹⁴⁴

In July 1945, John T. Mullin, then in the U.S. Army Signal Corps, came across a German Magnetophone in a Radio Frankfurt station in Bad Nauheim. Mullin was impressed with this sophisticated device because it had none of the

background noise that was so typical of disc recordings.

Mullin transported two of these machines and 50 rolls of tape back with him to the United States and in 1946 showed the equipment to American engineers. By 1947, Ampex of the U.S. had duplicated and improved the Magnetophones, and the 3-M Company started producing magnetic tape.

That June, Mullin demonstrated the tape recording system to crooner Bing Crosby and the staff of his ABC Radio show. Crosby was so awed by what he heard that he persuaded ABC to buy "12 Ampex machines at \$5,200 each, to start the tape revolution in radio- all shows were recorded and edited on tape, rather than by cumbersome discs."¹⁴⁵

Soon after, Capitol and Decca became the first record companies to mix music on multi-track, tape machines. Master recordings done on tape produced better sound than discs, and they facilitated the making of vinyl disc copies from the masters.

By 1949, Magnacord and Ampex studio tape recorders were being installed in a limited number of Canadian radio stations. These American-made machines were using one-quarter inch tape at speeds of 7-and-a-half and 15-inches of tape per second (the same specifications that are used in today's reel-to-reel machines). The Magnacord was about the size of a modern 20-inch colour TV set and it could be carried outside for remote broadcasts. The Ampex meanwhile, usually stayed in the station because it was about the size

of a washing machine. Both machines recorded up to one hour of material on a single reel of tape.

It was the truly portable tape recorder which most benefited the roving radio reporter. Portable recorders, both wire and tape models, had been around since the late 1940s. Some of the early ones were the RCA wire recorder and the British Wirec tape recorder. They were fully portable because they were small, light, and didn't need an external power source. Some models were wind-up types, while others ran on batteries. This was extremely important because it allowed the radio reporter to record sound almost anywhere. However, the tape models were better because it was practically impossible to edit and splice recordings made with a wire recorder.

The first splicing block, used to edit unnecessary parts out of tape, was invented in 1949.

Unfortunately, this new technology, which gave radio reporters much more flexibility, arrived on radio's doorstep with only a technical manual on how it operated. No one had yet figured out a way to implement tape recordings into a newscast. It was all new territory.

Being portable and easy to edit, tape recorders had a greater adaptability to radio news than discs. Discs could not be edited at will, whereas, with tape, every inch or every syllable could be carved out with a razor blade.

The tape recorder forced reporters to invent, largely

through trial-and-error, a new etiquette on using voice and sound for news.

Today most radio listeners take for granted the voices of newsmakers and the sounds of events that are presented on newscasts. In fact, many of us feel cheated if the news is composed of only *rip-and-read* wire copy. When we hear actual voice of newsmakers or reports from correspondents (*voicers*), we need not be informed by the studio newscaster that those voices or sounds have been previously recorded on tape. It is as natural for us to comprehend that segments of a radio newscast are taped as it is when we watch video-taped pictures presented on a live TV newscast. But, the reporters who first used tape had nothing in terms of style and communication theory to go on.

People no longer do *double-takes* when they see radio reporters arrive on the scene to do stories with tape recorders and microphones. They have become the universal trademark or symbol of the profession. They are the tools of the radio news trade.

However, when these tools were first used in the late 1940s and early 1950s, tape machines were not typical of radio news. Imagine the difficulties a radio reporter must have had gathering material on tape during that period: How does one approach a newsmaker to make a comment into a machine which he/she may not have seen before? What kinds of questions and answers are suited to go on tape? Does one

need permission to use a tape recorder to interview somebody? How long should the person be allowed to talk into the machine and should the newsmaker be allowed to hold the mike? These kinds of questions may sound silly today, but the first reporters who used tape recorders certainly didn't have all of the answers. They experimented until they found something that seemed right.

For example, today when a newsmaker's voice is used in a newscast, either presented by the newscaster or contained in the reporter's voicer, only a significantly newsworthy quote is edited from the tape for use on-air. Using taped material for the sake of using tape is an extremely wasteful use of precious time in a five-minute or ten-minute newscast. If newsmakers say nothing newsworthy then no tape is used because there's no story. When they say something important but cannot be clearly understood, then the words and meaning are paraphrased as best as possible.

It took radio reporters years of practice to determine how long a newsmaker's taped quote (*actuality* or *sound bite*) should be allowed to run on the air. Today the rule is that unless the interviewee has something very important to say, the *clip* should not run for more than 25 seconds. The listener's attention span cannot stay in sharp focus for longer than that, unless the talker is very stirring. In the days when tape was still a novelty, editors used to let tape ramble on. With the advent of tape, journalists

had to learn not only how to introduce the *clip* in their story, but how to keep the tape editing tight.

Bert Cannings, who retired after 40 years of being a radio and TV newsman, remembered that there were no tape recorders in radio stations before or immediately after the Second World War. Cannings began his career by turning out news copy for CJCJ Calgary in 1936, which was then owned by The Albertan. When war broke out he joined the RCAF and spent the next six years writing speeches for the air force's public relations department. He left the RCAF to resume his radio work at CKWX Vancouver.

Cannings said that during the late 1940s "there was no motivation to put live voices over the air, outside of the announcer's voice" at CKWX. His first use of a recording device for news purposes was around 1950 when the station purchased a wire recorder. "At WX we used a RCA wire recorder. It was very clumsy with good trebles and poor basses. If clips were required for air we had to dub our pieces to a 14-inch disc. And it was very difficult to find the *in cues* (where a clip begins) if you used two or more clips for a newscast."

In the mid-fifties, CKWX obtained its first magnetic tape recorder- the economical, British-made Wirec. But as its name might imply, no wire was used. "It was about 14 inches long and six-by-six square and high. And it was hand-wound like an old gramophone," said Cannings. Later

Wirec brought out a battery model and the sound was even better. Cannings used the battery-powered Wirec to capture voices and sounds for two CKWX programs. "They Walk By Night" and "Why Do They Do It?" were crime series done in co-operation with the Vancouver Police Department.

To obtain stories for "Why Do They Do It?", Cannings was assigned to ride with two officers in police car No. 54. He covered hit-and-runs, manslaughters, drunks and any traffic violation. Cannings would hide the Wirec under his large overcoat and slip the microphone cord inside his sleeve. "And this involved a microphone hidden in a five-cell flashlight. Now of course, its light was welcomed by drivers fumbling in his pockets looking for his licence and at the same time it recorded all conversations...we held tapes until they went through police and appeal courts," said Cannings.

Naturally they caught many well-known people and some of the voices the station couldn't use because they were too distinctive. "One I have in mind was that of a very prominent CBC sportsman of the time," Cannings said, adding that he and the police also offered a "good driver of the week award" to motorists who exhibited safe driving habits after being followed for about a mile. And if a male driver had a lady passenger beside him, "We'd ask him: 'I guess your wife will be proud of you?' Except one guy we picked up was a judge who had a woman with him who was not his

wife. So we had to kill that tape."

Back at the station, WX had an Ampex machine which recorded excellently. But it was not portable enough for a one-person crew to carry outside. Cannings found that the German-made, portable Uher, that was released in 1958, was unreliable. When Philips came out with their portable machine, around the same time, it was too expensive for radio stations. "And always, and forever always, station engineers had to 'modify' the new machines. Really all they needed sometimes was a different microphone jack."¹⁴⁶

Another radio news veteran, Don Johnston, who began his 35 year broadcasting career with CHML Hamilton, says although he never did see a wire recorder, he did see the old hard discs being made.

The first portable tape recorders CHML had were Wirecs. Reporters began using them in the field in 1952. Johnston says they were powered much like the old Bolex movie cameras, "It was literally a Swiss-clock movement. You wound it up with a crank. With the Wirec you had to keep them wound to drive the tape and it had about three or four minutes on a wind to do your interview before your tape started to go off speed."

Soon after, CHML began using battery-powered tape recorders which were heavier to carry from story to story. Johnston said, "The first honest to goodness battery, motor-driven tape recorder that we used was the EMI which

stood for the Electronic Manufacturing Industries of Britain. It was a big, heavy brute of a thing. It had five-inch reels on it and ran on many, many flashlight batteries, but it had a *V.U. meter* (to show the recording volume) and it got pretty good results. They were rugged and if you looked after them you could go into the field and get good sound."

He says, during the 1950s, stations, such as CHML, used less tape on the air than they use today. Handling tape back then was time consuming because stations didn't have enough dubbing equipment to meet the demands of the newsroom. Reporters coming back to the studio with raw tape had to wait their turn to edit and dub their recordings. "Even good radio stations were short on editing room space. The newsroom at CHML for instance, probably had one Ampex-800 portable suitcase tape recorder which ran off AC power and you transferred your tape to that. There was only one editing deck really."

The rivalry between Hamilton's two oldest radio stations began in 1927 when CHML went on the air to compete with CKOC which had signed-on in 1922. In fact, CKOC is Ontario's oldest existing station. The competition for news between the two stations heated up when tape recorders became available. Both stations allowed their reporters to use long taped interviews on the air. To match CKOC, CHML "covered City Hall and we even covered committees of city

council on tape. We didn't try to get as many stories on a newscast as happens now, but we went into more detail. We could explain more of the story. Voicers went up to one minute, but rarely over that," said Johnston.

But in the early 1950s, radio had not yet developed well-established rules on the use of tape. And Johnston says it was hard for a reporter to learn how to edit tape properly because most of the studio editing time was booked by the programming department to do commercials which had priority over news. "There was the case of finding the time, to get the help of a good operator to make a sound story sound much better than what you brought back from the field." Usually reporters who wanted to learn more about handling tape had to use the studio equipment after business hours and on their own time.

He says in the early years of tape, there was often a tendency to let the clip or the voicer run long. The result was too much tape for some stories and no tape at all for most reports. "Like any new technology you fall in love with the technology."

When tape recorders were first used to record phone interviews, Johnston says reporters often used tape just for the sake of using it. And he says it was a Bell Telephone regulation that forced stations to warn people they were being recorded while being interviewed. An electronic beep sound would come on the line every 15

seconds to remind the interviewee that the reporter was rolling a tape recorder. Johnston says that's why a phone interview became known as a *beeper*, "and for a long time you couldn't get a phone to plug into your recorder in the newsroom that didn't have a beep on it."

The Bell regulation requiring the beeper was largely ignored after the CRTC was set up 1968. The CRTC radio regulations of May 1970 demanded that stations only had to get permission from the telephoned interviewee to use a person's voice over the air.

The excitement of putting newsmaker's voices on the air prompted many reporters to go with telephone recordings that were of borderline sound quality. "You know, growing up in the generation of print where radio was still relatively new, it was quite an accomplishment to get someone on the air from Rome or England- let's say on a trans-Atlantic phone hook-up. You would use a lot of the interview and you would use it often. Some people would call up and say they couldn't understand everything. And your reaction at that time would be: 'Isn't it remarkable that you are getting it at all?' Standards come after the novelty has worn off," said Johnston.

In 1951, CHML became the first station in North America to broadcast city council meetings. Ken David Soble, whose initials were used for the call letters of CHML's new FM station in 1964, managed the station and he

made an arrangement with Hamilton city officials allowing his station to run a broadcast line from the council chambers to the studio. In return, CHML provided city hall with a new P.A. system.

Before CHML had promoted Johnston from reporter to news director, it was his job to record those council meetings on tape at the station and package them for re-broadcast. "And we did it every Tuesday night on *live delay* and I produced it and edited it for years."

It was a real rush job for Johnston because the council meetings would begin at eight o'clock and the broadcast would start at ten. The meetings usually adjourned around eleven. "You were editing and packaging on-the-fly as the meeting was still going and trying to put together a balanced broadcast with commentary in between and with explanations leading into and out of the segments--votes, arguments and the other things. That was exciting and that was the kind of thing that was not happening in Toronto radio."¹⁴⁷

Dick Smyth, who eventually became news director at CKLW in Windsor and CHUM in Toronto, began reading news at CKSF in Cornwall, Ontario in 1953. After CKSF, he headed west. During a brief stay at the station in Oshawa, he had his first encounter with a reel to reel portable tape recorder. "You'd crank the thing up. It was a spring motor that drove it and it was totally unreliable. I mean you

just didn't trust these things."

When Smyth joined CKLW in 1956 to head its morning news team, the station had just bought tape machines to enable it to record phone interviews. "I remember they managed to buy me a couple of Webcords which were really home recorders and really not a suitable machine. It was wired into the old *beeper*. And with no one in the station with experience in using telephone clips, we had to sort of pioneer its use," said Smyth.

He says that before tape recorders came along in the mid-1950s, "it really wasn't electronic journalism. It was reading the news; ripping it off the wire really and reading it."

Even before CKLW switched over to a Top 40 rock format in the mid-1960s, all of the Windsor and Detroit stations considered that part of southern Michigan and western Ontario as one big market. Despite the international boundary, CKLW competed head-on with the Detroit stations for the same stories, advertising and audience.

Smyth says, when the big Detroit stations, such as WWJ or WJR, were still using massive Ampex-601 reel-to-reel machines to cover news events, CKLW inaugurated the use of a smaller machine. "Philips Electronic came out with portable machines that used three-inch rolls of tape, this is before the cassette even, and it was introduced in Canada before it was available in the States. The folks

there (Philips) introduced the thing here first for a test of whatever. And here was a thing about the size of a box of cigars. I saw the potential in this thing. You could take this thing over and you could do so much coverage with it. And I remember some people from WWJ and WJR literally laughing at me for using this machine. This was the ultimate in Mickey Mouse."

Stu Morrison joined CFRB Toronto in the early-sixties after beginning in radio in Moncton in 1959 and after a stint with Montreal's CFOX which then had Gord Sinclair Junior as its news director. Morrison, who later moved up at CFRB to manage Standard Broadcast News (SBN), first experienced reel-to-reel tape machines just before the cassette made its appearance in 1965.

For outside assignments he used an EMI, a heavy machine that was about two-feet long, less than a foot deep and about a foot wide. According to Morrison, although these machines were very cumbersome, they produced an acceptable sound. "It weighed a bloody ton because of the battery in it. The batteries were not rechargeable. They were huge, great big nine-volt suckers. The case was made of wood with canvas material stuck to it. So if you dropped it you had a pile of electronics and some kindling. If you were strong as an ox you could carry them."

Morrison remembers that most reporters weren't all that sure on how to operate these machines. "I god-damn

near electrocuted myself in Bermuda with one of them when I tried to attach it to the phone. I picked up the mike and I really got zapped! Of course it was hotter than the hinges of hell down there and my hands were all sweaty; it gave me one hell of a poke."

Morrison says that even in the early-sixties a reporter would have been very fortunate to have access to a recorder with the quality of an Ampex portable machine. Ampex's model 401 was housed in a case, "almost like a hard-sided, carry-on suitcase. And it was portable in the sense you could drag it out and set it up to record the glee club or if you were really desperate you could drag it out and record a long speech, because the EMI batteries were probably going to die."

However, big machines, such as the Ampex, usually stayed in the studio. To make news clips, reporters used to dub the recordings from EMI to Ampex. After editing on the Ampex, they placed the clips on another reel.

If only one clip was to be used on-air during a newscast, then the reader would operate the tape machine from the newsbooth. But if there were many clips to be aired on one newscast, then the clips would be spliced in sequence on just one reel and the operator would play the tape machine for the newscaster. It was just too difficult for the newsreader to read while stopping and starting the tape machine for more than one clip. White-coloured

leader tape was spliced in between the various clips to let the operator know the beginning and ending of each clip. Normal audio tape is brown or black.

Because it took two persons to do a newscast if more than one clip was used, Morrison says radio in the late-fifties and early-sixties "didn't contain a whole succession of reports and clips in the course of a newscast because it was just too bloody awkward. You'd give the operators the clips with leader tape on it and cued-in. So you obviously used the best clip you had per newscast or the best report you had."

The difficulty of dubbing tape material from a portable reel-to-reel to a studio machine (reporters shouldn't edit on master recordings) and then editing and splicing the clips onto another reel for on-air use, meant reporters couldn't produce a large number of clips in a short time. Therefore, the few clips that were produced were used over and over in successive newscasts until new clips were available.

Morrison says there was another reason newscasters condoned the practice of re-using the same voice material on subsequent newscasts. Taped sound was regarded in those days as the equivalent of very newsworthy newspaper pictures. "If a newspaper in a course of a day had three or four issues, and if the story is dramatic enough, it will have the same picture on the front page for all of the

editions. So why can't we use the same clip three or four times? That was the attitude."¹⁴⁸

John McFadyen, who later succeeded Don Johnston as news director at CFRB, remembers that attempts were made to produce machines that were more manageable than the 20-pound EMI. But these later-generation reel-to-reels were also technically cumbersome or costly. EMIs were replaced with machines by Philips, Uher, Stellavox of Switzerland (model SM5), and the expensive but superb hand-wound Nagra. Although the newer machines used the more compact three-inch reels, they still weighed-in at a heavy 12 pounds.

McFadyen says it was still a time-consuming process to convert the raw sound recorded on these smaller, portable machines to an edited version ready for use on-air. Because this conversion was tedious, reporters tended to feel their work was wasted if the clips and taped voicers weren't of significant length. "If you were to use it, then you were going to make damn sure that everybody knew that you had sound. You let it play as long as you could to make sure the impression was there." As a result, McFadyen says listeners never heard short pieces of tape, such as 15-second long clips. "People weren't conditioned to hear what they hear now."¹⁴⁹

Stu Morrison shares Johnston's view that, in the early days of tape, reporters used tape just because it was still a novelty. "There was a lot of crap used simply because you

had inexperienced young people, like myself for example, using tape for simply the sake of tape because we felt the listener would be really impressed with this. And maybe the listener was, but he wasn't for very bloody long."

And it may seem odd that for CFRB, the station which billed itself as "Ontario's authoritative news voice", that the "voice" referred to in that promotional slogan was not meant to mean the voices on tape, but rather the personality and opinions of its star newsreaders.

Donald Jack has written that CFRB, "owes much of its prestige as the most respected private station in the country to its generations of authoritative newscasters, and Jack Dennett...sounded the most authoritative of all. His news broadcasts were generally well-balanced and reliable, but his vocal form was so perfectly shaped that the content was often of secondary importance."¹⁵⁰

Morrison, who helped Standard Broadcasting add a wire service to its audio news feed in 1967, is still amazed at the small amount of tape some of the most famous CFRB newscasters used from the 1950s to the early-1970s. Often it was a case of an announcer wanting to read all the news himself or it was because the newsroom had ex-newspaper people on staff who thought tape was foreign to news, "because their heritage was in newspapers and they didn't understand anything about tape. They considered it a bloody interruption." And in many cases there simply wasn't tape

available on a story.

Morrison, who used to prepare news copy, gather information and take voice cuts off the audio service for CFRB newscasts, said that "Jack Dennett, one of the deans of broadcasting in Canada, never used a tape, ever, not once in all the time that I knew him and he was alive. (Gordon) Sinclair used tape maybe twice and that was on a key breaking story that NBC was really cracking on...Neither one of them used tape and there were a lot of those kinds of guys around." Having the most senior newscasters on Canada's most-listened-to radio station rejecting tape, must have surely impeded the acceptability of this new technology, long after it had been made available.

Getting tape machines to record off the telephone was not a major burden for station engineers to overcome. But having a beeping device ring on the line every 15 seconds caused a lot of inconvenience. For Morrison, the *beeper* "screwed up more stuff than you could shake a stick at. You know a guy would be feeding a succession of tapes and it would beep right in the middle of a good actuality."

The beeping noise on the phone line would also break the concentration of those being interviewed.

McFadyen says, by the 1950s, most major-market radio newsrooms had an Ampex hooked up to the phone lines. For smaller stations it took longer. "And it wasn't until the mid-sixties that all of the newsrooms of a respectable size

had one of those things on top of a filing cabinet and a phone line going into it." He suspects that stations which were owned by newspapers least understood radio's need for broadcast technology and were the ones who lagged behind in implementing tape recording.

Apart from the use of reel-to-reel tape recorders, radio implemented the use of other new technologies which helped it satisfy a steadily growing demand for news that had begun during the Second World War.

Changes in radio programming and improvements in broadcast technology enabled radio to cope with the emergence of TV- first in the U.S. and later in Canada.

After the war ended, most major stations and the CBC continued airing newscasts on the hour, every hour. The CBC added newsmagazine shows and kept its Overseas Unit operating in Europe.

By 1947, CBC news shows, such as "News Round-Up", "Capitol Report", "Week-End Review" and other commentary programs, were producing a vast and varied diet of information and opinion for a nation that was adapting to peacetime. "Many of Canada's best journalists had a part in these, including, among many more, J.B. McGeachy, G.V. Ferguson, Elmer Philpott, I. Norman Smith, James M. Minifie, Thomas Reynolds, Peter Inglis, Warren Baldwin, Wilfrid Eggleston, Blair Fraser and Robert McKeown."¹⁰¹

Reporter Jack Brickenden said the CBC's news service

was well-established by the time he had joined it in 1949 in Toronto, "which was the hub of it all. Bill Hogg and Charlie Gunning were in charge and we had a network of correspondents. In London there was Matthew Halton. In Paris, Douglas LaChance. In Washington, James M. Minifie. In Ottawa, Blair Fraser, and so many others.

"They supplied on-the-spot pieces for 'News Round-Up', a 15-minute programme that followed the 'National News'. Practically everybody in the country listened to this half-hour package, which was indeed the news Bible for many years. Earl Cameron was the national news reader. He had a believability and an authority that couldn't be matched. When he read a newscast it was like it was carved in granite."¹⁵²

Even isolated and sparsely-populated areas had developed regular radio news service after the war. Menjie Shulman began reading news on VOCM (Voice of the Common Man) in St. John's, Newfoundland in 1946. "The station would come on at eight o'clock and I would come on with the news at eight-fifteen. Nothing can ever equal the acceptance of the early morning broadcasts by the public," said Shulman.¹⁵³

Before VOCM began airing morning newscasts, Newfoundlanders were accustomed to only late-evening newscasts. One of the most popular was Oliver "Al" Vardy's nightly newscast on VONF St. John's, a station owned by the

Newfoundland Broadcasting Company since 1932. From 1939 to the mid-1940s, VONF received its international news from Transradio. Refer to the Appendix for a partial transcript of a 1939 newscast Vardy read on VONF.

By the time Newfoundland became Canada's tenth province, the island's radio stations brought in other wire services to make up for the loss of Transradio. "I remember when we first got Reuters and United Press. This was about the of Confederation (1949). To go in there and tear off the news! It was one of the wonders of the century to get news from other parts of the world so quickly," said Menjie Shulman of VOCM.¹⁵⁴

Newfoundland radio retained the right to use its pre-Confederation call letters of the VO series. In fact, some 40 years after it joined Canada, three stations in St. John's still go by the original call letters: VOAR, VOCM, and VOWR. However the CBC took over the Newfoundland Broadcasting Company's chain of stations in 1949 and as a result VONF St. John's became CBN.

Back on the mainland, the CBC broadcast the 1948 conventions of all three major parties of the time-- the Liberals, Conservatives and the CCF. The 1949 election saw the Liberals, under new leader Louis St. Laurent, re-elected. It marked the first federal election in which voting results were gathered by or supplied directly to private broadcasters. During the 1930s, private stations

most important requirements along with the ability to make something written sound like ordinary conversation...An announcer should never sound as if he were reading."¹⁵⁶

Contemporary Radio: Broadcasting after Television

By 1948, as the number of TV sets in the United States had jumped from 100,000 to one-million in just one year, the television medium was quickly replacing radio as the provider of mass media entertainment in the livingroom.¹⁵⁷

While the U.S. enjoyed a head start over Canada in the introduction of commercial TV, the exodus of many popular radio shows to TV naturally occurred first there. American radio stations, which were threatened by TV, were the first to figure out ways of staying in business. When TV arrived in Canada, many radio stations and their programmers copied the American ways of doing battle with TV.

TV added pictures to the entertainment shows it borrowed from radio, such as CBC Radio's "Front Page Challenge". Radio was forced to look for new forms of programming to help it attract new audiences and retain its advertising revenue. TV became the dominant family entertainer. Drama, plays, situation comedies, variety shows, quiz shows, general interest news and live sports were the kinds of TV programming that kicked radio out of the livingrooms during the prime-time evening hours.

Radio had to find new audiences in untapped time slots to compete with TV. Radio had to abandon general interest

both correct although 'shed-ule' seems to indicate you're from England while 'sked-ule' indicates you're Canadian- or one of us."

Brodie later established one of radio's first guidance services to help newsreaders pronounce words. He telexed all CBC stations informing announcers of the proper pronunciation of any foreign name or place that might occur in the news. "This was something the announcers appreciated greatly as it can be very unsettling to appear on the air and 'take a run' at some word you've never seen before."¹⁵⁵

Today, most of the major broadcast news wires offer a pronunciation guide to their customers. The guide, which is sent over the wire, is a list of the words and names which might give newscasters problems. These lists are updated whenever new names or terms become newsworthy. They show the proper pronunciation of words and names beside the proper spelling. Unlike most dictionaries which use diacritical markings to help people learn how to say words properly (such as the letter "e" with two dots over it to indicate the way that vowel is pronounced in a word such as "term"), broadcast guides employ the International Phonetic Alphabet which is based on phonetic spelling. IPA consists of only the letters or symbols which are available on standard typewriters. One does not have to consult *keys of pronunciation* to decipher IPA. To get a word right, a person only has to pronounce it the way it is spelled

phonetically. For example, here are some words and names that were listed in one of the daily guides UPI Radio sent its customers, in the IPA format:

CARLUCCI (Kahr-LOO'-chee), Frank, defense secretary-designate.
 GORBACHEV, Mikhail. (MEEK'-high-yeh! Gohrb-AH'-chawf), Soviet leader.
 Hormuz (HOHR'-mooz), Strait of, connects Persian Gulf with Gulf of Oman (Oh-MAHN').
 PEREZ DE CUELLAR, Javier (Hah-VYEH PEH'rehz deh KWEH'-yar), U-N secretary general.
 SHEVARDNADZE (SHYEH-vahr-nahd-sheh), Eduard, Soviet foreign minister and politburo member.

(Courtesy: UPI Radio's "World-Prono-Guide", 11-07-1987)

Such a phonetic pronunciation system enabled radio reporters to type *pronouncers* into the text of their local news copy. For example:

(RAY-al KLOO-tee-ay)
 "Former N.H.L. player Real Cloutier says he has no
 (SAHN a-mill)
 intention of returning to his hometown of St. Emile.
 (KAY-bee)
 Quebec and running for the mayor's job."

And as time went by, many radio reporters decided to type the phonetic version of hard-to-pronounce words and names and leave the proper way of spelling them out of the copy.

Steve Brodie also worked on perfecting the delivery of CBC newscasters and it was his opinion that although having a good voice was an asset, "it was one of the least important qualifications as long as it wasn't objectionable. I've felt that intelligence and interest in the things that the announcer was dealing with were the

most important requirements along with the ability to make something written sound like ordinary conversation...An announcer should never sound as if he were reading."¹⁵⁶

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Radio had to find new audiences in untapped time slots to compete with TV. Radio had to abandon general interest

programming and develop program material that would appeal to a specific segment of the total audience instead.

As TV blossomed economically, pioneers of a new radio age were blazing new trails. In order to survive the onslaught of TV, radio station owners and managers devised new strategies. The most important were the concepts of localization and specialization. To achieve this they looked for programming material that would fill-in the gaps which network TV didn't reach.

With the high cost of producing shows for TV and the fact there could be only a few TV stations operating in each market, the networks realized their product had to be designed to attract the largest possible audience. TV could not afford to offend the majority by airing programs meant for minorities. Thus radio saw that opening and "it now spoke in a variety of voices to specialized audiences."¹⁵⁰

Radio's penetration into North American life after TV was made possible by more advancements in technology. Among the most important was the discovery of the *transistor*, followed by the manufacturing of *solid-state* radios and the introduction of the clock radio which helped radio place itself into rooms of the house where TV sets weren't yet being watched.

On December 23, 1947, Bell Laboratories announced its researchers in Murray Hill, New Jersey had discovered the transistor. For radio this invention could not have come at

a better time. The transistor (coined by contracting the words *transfer* and *resistor*) allowed radio listeners to use truly portable receivers. It made the miniaturization of of electronic gadgets possible because it allowed electrons to move through solids instead of vacuum. The power consumed by transistors was far less than what was needed for equipment which ran on tubes. Thus small, battery-powered, electronic appliances became feasible.

Transistors meant radio could be listened to almost anywhere-- which was a clear advantage over TV with its bulky picture tube and high consumption of AC power.

The first transistor radio on the market was the 1953 Regency which Texas Instruments sold for \$40 U.S. So important was the transistor that it earned its inventors, Doctors John Bardeen, Walter Brattain and William Shockley, the Nobel Prize for physics in 1956.¹⁵⁹

For some reporters, such as sportcasters covering a live event or commentators at a political convention, the transistor forced changes of style. With fans in the stands or delegates on the convention floor listening to transistor radios, reporters assigned to those programs had to be more accurate. No longer could they exaggerate over the air what they were seeing. With radios in the crowd, deceptions were made easy to spot.

And to help radio track down and keep its localized and specialized audiences, General Electric, in 1946, became

the first firm to market the clock radio. It allowed a generation of post-war radio listeners the chance to be entertained by music and news as they were being awakened in their bedrooms. The radio industry capitalized on such inventions by making mornings the most important part of the broadcasting day. Radio realized that TV couldn't fill the need of providing information, companionship and music to people who were getting ready to go to work or school.

The convenience of the clock radio was so accepted by the public that manufacturers had no trouble marketing fancier models which were battery-run and portable. Later the clock radio became more sophisticated with such features as snooze alarms, built-in night lights and slumber switches, just to name a few options.¹⁶⁰

Better quality and lower-priced car radios came out in the early 1950, which allowed radio to get listeners as they travelled to work. The automobile gave radio its new prime times, which are the commuting hours of six-to-nine in the morning and four-to-seven in the late afternoon excluding weekends. In fact, the term *Drive Time* was first coined in 1957 by Gerald Bartell, a radio station owner in the American Midwest.¹⁶¹

On the programming side, radio survived the TV age by delivering a product that was geared to specific interests of specific segments of the population. Radio stations were more numerous than TV channels, which allowed them to

specialize.

TV meant general radio was dead. No longer would individual stations broadcast a variety of musical selections to please all tastes. While the whole family could gather in the livingroom and watch TV, radio was targeting its programming to the likes and dislikes of individuals. Thus radio listening became a personal experience. Inexpensive transistor radios meant each family member could have a radio to listen to in privacy.

Recorded music was a relatively inexpensive source of program material for radio stations. Music proved to be the main reason radio didn't disappear during the TV age.

However, radio's rebirth was not just a simple matter of airing stacks of records. A master plan or strategy had to be invented and put into practice. Radio had to seize the opportunity of relating to a local audience. It had to be part of the community. Radio station managers in the early and mid-1950s did this by incorporating a new form of announcer- the *disc jockey*. This was the person, the voice, that kept the station flowing in between musical selections. Although the term *disc jockey* first appeared in the July 3, 1941 issue of Variety Magazine, it was the competition from TV that finally made the disc jockey commonplace on radio.¹⁶²

With *dee-jays* at the microphones, station managers completed the concept of local radio by structuring the way

music was played. The early strategies were known as *formula radio* and later as *format radio*. The most familiar format that emerged in the 1950s was *Top 40 Radio* which was a system that rotated the playing of the current 40 best-selling tunes. The higher a hit was in the charts, the more airtime it got.

In the early-1950s, the first major division in radio programming occurred when some stations decided to air only *popular music*, while other stations, in the same market, opted for more youthful *rock-n-roll* offerings.

In 1955, a teen culture emerged in North America and some station owners used the Top 40 format to launch all-rock'n'roll stations. The idea came from American broadcasters, such as Gordon McLendon, Bill Drake and Robert Todd Storz, who had been looking for ways to revive radio. While visiting record stores and observing what young people were listening to on jukeboxes in cafes, McLendon and others discovered a trend. To their surprise, white teenagers were buying and listening to records from black *rhythm-n-blues* performers. In the white communities this kind of music became known as *rock-n-roll*.

Station owners and managers realized that TV, which offered a family-oriented bill of fare, stayed away from this kind of entertainment. In TV circles, rock-n-roll was still looked down upon and its name was regarded as an "euphemism for sexual intercourse." Rock-n-roll became the

sound of that new teenage culture, "it was a statement, an acting out of teen resentments by an inarticulate generation. Its technological symbol was the 45 record."¹⁶³

In RADIO in the Television Age, authors Joshua Mills and Peter Fornatale pointed out that for those teenagers, technology played an equal role to music in establishing their collective identity. "As important as the songs were the discs on which they were recorded."

In the early-1980s, we witnessed a "battle of the video formats" when rival manufacturers began selling home video cassette recorders. It was Sony's *BETA* versus the competition's *VHS* format. In the late-1940s and early-1950s, a similar battle erupted in the music industry over disc formats. Known as "the battle of the speeds", it began when successors to the 78-r.p.m. record were launched.

In 1948, Columbia Records introduced the *LP*. It was a high-fidelity, long-play record which turned at 33-1/3 r.p.m. A few years later RCA came out with a smaller disc which turned at 45 r.p.m. And although the 45 only contained one tune per side, it was lighter, cheaper and less breakable than the LP. Turntable manufacturers weren't allowed by the record companies to make record players that could handle all three speeds: 33-1/3, 45 and 78 r.p.m. RCA, and its allies, had the exclusive right to make players for the 45s. Because the 45s and the accompanying turntables cost less than LPs and hi-fi equipment, teens

opted for the 45 system. Record labels realized this and put rock-n-roll tunes on 45s. They were cheaper to mail to disc jockeys and jukeboxes could hold more 45s than LPs. And because rock-n-roll music coincided with the birth of the 45, "many teenagers came to view it (45s) as a cachet of their generation."

With sales of 45s in the millions, radio had an untapped market waiting to be catered to. Stations composed their playlists by finding out which were the best-selling songs. Programming directors visited cafes and soda shoppes to determine which tunes were getting the most play at jukeboxes. Armed with such information on the music scene, stations could then add the *pick hit rotation* component to their Top 40 formats. Stations became popular by playing what the teenagers considered to be *hits*.

By 1956, radio had become the prime promoter of rock-n-roll. Instead of 45s being played at dances, in record stores and on jukeboxes, teens were getting their musical cues from radio. In that year Elvis Presley made it to the top of the charts for the first time in his career. It was largely through the playing of his 45s on AM radio that Elvis became the "King of Rock-n-Roll".

Meantime, other stations began borrowing the concept of format radio from the rock-n-roller stations to exploit the listening tastes of adults. The adult audience was subdivided into its own segments and stations fragmented that

market by offering specific types of programming. Apart from rock-n-roll, listeners were able to select stations that played only popular hits, country and western, easy listening, classical, jazz, or news and talk.

Not only was radio providing a service that was not available on network TV, but it inserted regionally popular music and offered more local news than the networks.

For most of the 1950s, news played an important role in attracting adult listeners to the non-rock'n'roll stations. Following the war, it had become an important part of North American life to be constantly kept abreast of the latest events occurring in the world. And despite TV, radio became the medium by which most people first heard the news. Radio met this challenge by forever improving its method of gathering and delivering news.

In addition to using tape to improve coverage of events, radio stations began using radio-equipped cars, in the 1950s, to scour for local news. By outfitting their news cruisers with two-way VHF radios, reporters were able to provide listeners with live information from the scene of a story. Usually they were station wagons with the call letters painted on the doors and hood. Low-powered, shortwave radios truly transformed the news cruiser into a *news mobile*. They allowed information to be relayed from places where phones weren't available. It assured radio's place as the first source of rapidly-breaking spot news.

Later in that decade, rock-n-roll stations, afraid that the playing of youthful music was giving radio a bad image, turned to news to help revamp their reputation. Many Top 40 stations added hourly newscasts to help them gain respectability. The newscasts were added to impress federal broadcasting authorities, and to appease anti-Top 40 lobby groups who claimed rock-n-roll stations weren't devoting enough airtime to community service. The inclusion of hourly news was also used as a selling point to advertisers who wanted to know if these stations could back up their claims that they had large blocks of gainfully-employed young adults listening to them.

So in the 1950s, unlike the mainstream daily papers and the TV networks, there were many different formats of radio news to choose from. This was the result of radio stations tailoring the news to suit their musical formats. Radio news was being designed to match the demographics of a station's audience.

Peter Fornatale, who has written a history of American radio, outlined the different news styles that were used on radio during the 1950s: "Many Top 40 stations try for an uptempo newscast, full of punch and colorful phrases. Beautiful Music formats look for low-key announcers; progressive or album-oriented rockers encourage the 'laid-back' approach; and some religious stations punctuate their news with hallelujahs."

Changing the "tone" of a newscast to match a format puts the emphasis on entertainment rather than on information. But for Fornatale, a worse problem is the "shaping of the 'content' of news to a format. Some stations analyze the demographics of their audience to help tell them what they think listeners want to hear...if listeners depend on these stations as a source of news, they are being short-changed."

Some rock-n-roll stations had been responsible for promoting unruly concerts. They thought that by enriching their format, with substantial news content, some of the criticism would go away. When the *payola* scandal peaked in 1959-60 (illegal practice of accepting bribes from record companies in return for giving airtime to certain tunes), rock-n-roll stations again pointed to their newscasts as proof they were indeed good corporate citizens.

As the sound quality of telephone lines improved in the 1950s, stations introduced the *call-in show* (also dubbed *open-mike radio*, *radio phone-in*, or *hot-line* shows). They were aimed at getting the audience to listen during periods that were not in *drive time*. Most call-in shows were aired during the late morning, mid-afternoon and early evening. The strategy was to appeal to those, such as housewives, who stayed at home during the day. These shows at first became very popular. They allowed ordinary people a chance to state their opinions on usually controversial

first to use radar for weather, and it had a four-wheel-drive Jeep as a news cruiser. It had tried using a Ski-Doo as a news vehicle, but since it usually doesn't snow enough in Hamilton the snowmobile rusted away in the parking lot. Later CHML became the first private station to appoint a parliamentary correspondent in Ottawa. Brian Nolan, now a Carleton University journalism professor, was one of the first ones to send reports back from the Hill to Hamilton.

The most famous newscasters on CHML were Lloyd Dafoe, Bob Hooper, Perc Allen and Tom Cherrington.

In addition to the handful of reporters who gathered local news with their portable but heavy reel-to-reel tape recorders, stations also had the wire services to provide them with international and national news. Large stations subscribed to both broadcast wires- CP and BUP. Some of them also used newspaper wires. Smaller stations often could only afford one broadcast wire.

In the late-1940s and early-1950s, Canadian Press' entry eventually took over the broadcast news wire market from its rival, BUP. CP's Press News quickly became favoured by radio because it delivered more Canadian news than the American-owned BUP. Press News did such a good job that groups of private stations and the CAB dropped their post-war plans of setting up their own news wire.

Bert Cannings had taken over from Sam Ross as news director of CKWX Vancouver in 1947 when Ross was promoted

information. Knowing that there was always someone listening, day or night, stations developed in the late-1940s the idea of encouraging listeners to phone their newsrooms with *news tips*.

Many stations offered daily or monthly cash prizes for the best *news tips* phoned-in by listeners. It was a good promotional gimmick because it gave such stations the appearance of being sincerely interested in local events. And it helped build listener loyalty because it kept tipsters tuned-in to find out if their tips were used.

Stations felt it was a legitimate way of obtaining information since they were not paying newsmakers for news. In essence, stations were unofficially deputizing their audiences as freelance reporters. Stations had no ethical qualms about receiving such calls as long as the tips were verified by their own news staff.

Many listeners felt assured that their favourite radio station, by following up on those tips, was passing on local information to the public. And in many cases, the news tip system was beneficial to stations because it gave them local scoops which other stations, that didn't offer prizes for information, found harder to find.

The Audio Cartridge or the "Cart"

In 1953 work began on a new form of magnetic tape recording that would make it much easier for stations to air taped material on newscasts. Four years later the

Fidelipac cartridge came on the market. The *cartridge*, which is nearly always referred to as a *cart* in the radio business, is an often under-rated piece of tape technology.

The cart is virtually unknown to the general public because it has no practical application outside of radio. It operates under the same principle as the *8-Track* cartridge system, which in the 1960s competed with the cassette in the car-sound system market. A cart consists of "a continuous loop of audio tape which automatically returns to the starting point of the recording. Carts commonly are manufactured in a variety of lengths ranging from a duration of twenty seconds up to ten minutes."¹⁶⁶

Frank Gifford, a former Detroit and Windsor radio reporter, wrote an illustrated guidebook on the use of tape for news. He says the cart "made taped inserts in newscasts not only possible, but practical."¹⁶⁶

The cart eliminated the need to dub clips or voices onto reels. With carts, newscasters no longer had to hand the operator, or D.J., reels containing actualities and reports. After editing the clips out of the reel-to-reel recording, reporters transferred them onto separate carts. Carts always re-cue to the beginning. This eliminates the problem of finding the start of each clip as is the case with ordinary audio tape.

The re-cue feature of the cart system is achieved by using double-track recording. The voice is recorded on one

track and electronic information is put on the other track. Cart machines have a double set of magnetic heads. Every time cart machines are placed in the *record* mode, an electronic message is imprinted on one of the tracks. When that inaudible electronic beep passes over the cart machine's playback head, it triggers a signal telling the machine to stop the tape. Thus if a cart is allowed to play past the recorded material, it will eventually stop by itself at the point where the recording begins.

The convenience of the cart meant more clips could be produced for the newscasts. It took less time to work with cart than with reel-to-reels. The cart reduced on-air mix-ups, because each story or clip was placed on a separate cart. No longer did taped material have to be placed on one reel, in succession, with leader tape in between the clips.

As the use of carts became well-established, most stations placed cart playback machines in their newsbooths. This gave newsreaders more control because only they were responsible as to when a tape should be played. It also gave news announcers more flexibility during a newscast. If they wanted to drop a story from the lineup, while the newscast was in progress, all they had to do was to skip over that cart and play the next one instead. Juggling stories during newscasts was difficult with reels because the clips were wound in their intended order.

It didn't take reporters long to learn how to take

short cuts in using carts. Often a reporter would simply record on-the-fly. This was done by playing the unedited master recording on a reel-to-reel machine and dubbing the desired clip directly onto the cart. If that quote was clean and didn't require editing with a razor blade, it usually could be transferred to cart on the first attempt. All that was needed was to identify the *in-cues* and *out-cues* of the desired clip and then to start and stop the cart machine at the appropriate times during the dub.

Carts were also used to provide a time delay for the call-in shows. Carts with seven seconds of audio tape were made and cart decks were wired to the studio's on-air control board. Those carts recorded what the talk-show host and the callers said. But it took seven seconds for the words to pass over the playback head of the cart machine and be put on the air. The person operating the talk-show listened to the conversations in *real time* and if any objectionable language was used, the operator had seven seconds to beep-out the undesired words or to turn down the on air volume. In talk-show applications, the auto-stop feature of the cart system was switched off to permit continuous playing. Engineers modified the heads of the talk-shows' cart machines to enable them to record, play and erase sounds in that order. The cart saved many talk-shows from having obscene words go out over the air.

In the newsroom, a system was quickly developed to

identify what was recorded on a cart because all carts looked alike. Reporters learned it was useful to type a few lines, describing the cart's content, on adhesive labels and stick them on the front sides of carts. The pertinent information had to be concise because cart labels were no bigger than 3-1/2 inches long and 3/4 of an inch high. A typical cart label looked like this:

GEO.SCOTT-V-39sex-J'BURG-JAN.22-6pm
reports miners in S.Africa have gone
on strike for better \$ and violence
feared it police called-in. S.O.

This label indicates this piece of tape is a 39-second voice report from reporter George Scott in Johannesburg. It was filed January 22 and it came over the audio news service at around 6 p.m. In this voicer, correspondent Scott reports that miners in South Africa have gone on strike to back demands for higher wages and that violence on the picket line is possible if the police are called-in to the scene. The S.O. tells us the reporter ended his piece with a *sign off*, which would have been something like: "This is George Scott, NBC News, Johannesburg".

For clips, the cart labels had this form:

DIEF.-Act.16sex-OTT.-r.s.OCT.9-10am
PM refuses to say when next elexn
will be called, but sez it wont be
before the Budget. E.Q...a lot later"

This label says this piece of tape contains a 16-second quote of John Diefenbaker recorded in Ottawa around ten a.m. on October 9. The "r.s." on the top line refers to the

reporter who did the interview- Rae Smith. The bottom three lines paraphrases what the Prime Minister says on the tape: He still isn't speculating on when he is going to call the election; except to say that he's certain it won't come until his government brings down its budget. On the last line, the *E.Q.* (which stands for *end cue* because the letter "Q" rhymes with *cue*) tells us that the last words of Diefenbaker's sound bite are: "a lot later".

By glancing at the labels on the carts, which were filed on cart racks, newsreaders were able to match the carts with the accompanying hard copy which the reporters would leave in trays on the main news desk.

But, in the event a newsreader, during a newscast, realized he/she had forgotten to bring the news copy that corresponded with a particular cart insert, he/she could simply read the cart label and come up with a suitable *ad lib* introduction for that piece of tape.

Labels also told the newsreader which cart he/she had placed in which cart machine. This was important because some stations had three or four cart machines in the newsbooths and without labels it was very easy to forget which cart was which. Labels prevented newscasters from pushing the wrong start button by mistake.

On the music side, eventually all the records were dubbed onto carts because carts could record up to ten minutes of material. Playing music on carts was easier than

cueing-up a 45 or finding the proper cut on an LP. Carts don't get scratched like vinyl or acetate records. With carts there's no stylus to keep clean nor are there any grooves for the needle to get stuck in. Many an early D.J. had the embarrassing experience of a record getting stuck while he/she had left the studio for a washroom break.

Radio Newsrooms of the 1950s

The reliance on news programming to compete with the arrival of TV required that nearly every station in Canada had to make a commitment to news. This meant stations had to staff themselves with permanent, full-time news people. The scheduling of hourly newscasts put a demand on stations. And the news had to be gathered and delivered on a regular basis from a variety of sources. News didn't come from nowhere, and unlike music which was ready-to-use, radio news didn't have a very long shelf life.

Radio newsrooms in the 1950s, even in the largest markets, never rivaled the size of the reporting staffs employed by the daily newspapers in Canada. Although a terrific amount of news was needed by a radio station to furnish it with enough fresh material to fill its hourly newscasts, on average there were never more than a handful of newspeople on duty per shift at any station, especially at the private outlets.

CHML ran what was a typical Canadian radio newsroom in the 1950s. Don Johnston began his radio career with this

Hamilton station and he later became its news director.

Johnston says CHML staffed its newsroom by using employees from two departments. Reporters came from the news department while newscasters belonged to the announcing side. "The news staff were news gatherers. We went out and got the stuff; we brought it back and did the stories. We might do our story on the air as a voicer or leave separate actuality for the newscaster. Newscasters worked for the programming department, but worked physically in the newsroom."

In the mid-1950s, CHML had three reporters and a news director on staff. The reporters worked three shifts. The first reporter on duty would work the 5 a.m. to one p.m. shift. Johnston said that person would write the morning newscasts for the newscaster, make the police checks and "took off whatever phone tape he could. After the morning rush of newscasts on the half-hour, he went over to cover whatever his beat was, or whatever the assignment was- the police, city hall, court or something special going on."

Next on duty was the nine-to-fiver who would be out reporting for most of the day. That reporter filed stories either by phone or used broadcast lines that had been set up from police headquarters or city hall.

The final reporting shift of the day was the 4 p.m. to midnight run. This person helped in the writing of the major supper hour newscasts and then went out to cover

something in the evening. If no meetings, such as city council were scheduled, that reporter worked from the phones in the newsroom and tried to gather local news. The shift ended after the eleven p.m. newscast was prepared, but on busy nights that reporter often stayed until one in the morning. It was that person's job to leave the morning shift with ample material to help them begin their day.

All news personnel had to be general assignment reporters. Johnston said no one person covered just one news beat as newspapers reporters did. "You had to know all of the important people on city council, on the county council and the police. You got to know just about every cop on the beat because you had to. You got to know community leaders; you had to be a real generalist. Your beat might be City Hall primarily, but you'd might do stints on police, you'd do weekend general assignment; you'd do everything."

He said because broadcasting had still not begun to train people for radio jobs, stations were forced to hire many persons who had newspaper experience. In the early-1950s, when radio realized the need to compete in news, stations had "to find people who knew how to find it and write it. They had to hire people from print. And more or less they had to adapt to radio to write much less material in order to write for the ear, which took time to learn."

Newscast lengths in the 1950s were much longer than

the average newscast currently aired on private radio. Johnston recalled that on CHML the major newscasts were fifteen and ten minutes in duration and the minor hourly newscasts were always five minutes. "That's really 3-1/2 minutes of news because there would always be a commercial; often at the opening and always between news and weather. But it was a fairly complete package."

He credits a lot of the impetus for competition and innovative ideas in radio news in the 1950s came out of the smaller cities, such as Hamilton, where often there were two local stations. Those stations fought for the same audience and constantly tried to scoop each other. "The rivalry was fantastic and that would probably also apply to cities such as Vancouver, Winnipeg and English-language Montreal where it was CJAD versus CFCF. And that's where all the really adventurous news reporting on radio started.

"I'm not saying the Toronto market was lazy or lax, but it was big then and it was diffuse- less focused. A lot of people who were coming into the Toronto radio market were from the middle-sized places where real competition existed. Outside of CFRB, which didn't even have a news director until somewhere around 1960, that's where the action was- in the Hamiltons, and Winnipegs and Montreals."

For instance, while Johnston worked at CHML, it became the first Canadian station to use a helicopter for news coverage rather than just traffic reports. It was also the

first to use radar for weather, and it had a four-wheel-drive Jeep as a news cruiser. It had tried using a Ski-Doo as a news vehicle, but since it usually doesn't snow enough in Hamilton the snowmobile rusted away in the parking lot. Later CHML became the first private station to appoint a parliamentary correspondent in Ottawa. Brian Nolan, now a Carleton University journalism professor, was one of the first ones to send reports back from the Hill to Hamilton.

The most famous newscasters on CHML were Lloyd Dafoe, Bob Hooper, Perc Allen and Tom Cherrington.

In addition to the handful of reporters who gathered local news with their portable but heavy reel-to-reel tape recorders, stations also had the wire services to provide them with international and national news. Large stations subscribed to both broadcast wires-- CP and BUP. Some of them also used newspaper wires. Smaller stations often could only afford one broadcast wire.

In the late-1940s and early-1950s, Canadian Press' entry eventually took over the broadcast news wire market from its rival, BUP. CP's Press News quickly became favoured by radio because it delivered more Canadian news than the American-owned BUP. Press News did such a good job that groups of private stations and the CAB dropped their post-war plans of setting up their own news wire.

Bert Cannings had taken over from Sam Ross as news director of CKWX Vancouver in 1947 when Ross was promoted

by the station's owner, the Taylor, Pearson and Carson company of Calgary (TPC chain). That group also ran ten other radio stations from Vancouver to Hamilton. Cannings said TPC "kidnapped Sam Ross (from CKWX) with the idea of creating their own news network." But Press News proved to be such a good service that Ross never did convince private Canadian broadcasters to join TPC in developing a new wire service to compete with Canadian Press.

Instead Ross became what Cannings described as the "godfather" of the newrooms of the TPC chain. And ironically, it was Ross who later sold the idea of Press News to the TPC stations. In 1957 Ross left western Canada to set up a radio news bureau in Ottawa for the TPC group, which by then was known as All-Canada. Thus as a result of Ross' work, the eleven stations in the TPC or All-Canada chain were able to trade stories among themselves, and use Press News for all the international, national, and provincial news they couldn't cover on their own.

Sam Ross later quit TPC and joined Press News. He also wrote articles on radio for Canadian Broadcaster magazine.

Press News' main advantage over BUP was that it was tapped right into the supply of news coming from the 100 or so daily newspapers that belonged to the CP print news co-operative. Canadian broadcasters realized they could not match the supply of news that came to CP via its own reporters and that of the affiliated newspapers that

contributed to the CP file. That is why broadcasters had to wait until the late 1980s before launching their own their own radio news wire (SBN's wire service).

After one decade of operating under the name Press News, the service became Broadcast News (BN) in 1953. That change had been requested by the broadcasters. In the early 1950s, broadcasters, who had given-up on the idea of setting up their own news wire, wanted to get the next best situation- a broadcast side of CP that wouldn't be totally run by print interests.

Broadcast News (BN)- the main staple of Radio News

"On April 10, 1953, ten men met at Toronto's Royal York Hotel with the goal of establishing a news service for broadcasters, by broadcasters. Among them, Col. Keith S. Rogers of CFCY Charlottetown, Paul Lepage of CKCV Quebec, Kenneth D. Soble of CHML Hamilton, H. Gordon Love of CFCN Calgary and Charlie B. Edwards, BN's first general manager."¹⁶⁷

Private radio demanded the switch from Press News to Broadcast News because it had no say in the running of the the broadcast news service under CP. With Press News, stations were only subscribers, and they were under no obligation to provide Press News with stories. When BN emerged, the structure of that agency was changed to allow broadcasters a voice in its management.

Broadcast News' business manager, Phil Adler, said the

said that after other Canadian stations followed CHML's lead in dumping BUP, that service became just a print wire, United Press Canada (UPC), and its broadcast operations in this country ceased.

By the time Dick Smyth had arrived at CKLW in Windsor in 1956, newsrooms and the radio wire services had still not mastered the art of writing news for broadcast. "You know that phrase 'Writing for the ear'?- Well, if you said that 30 years ago, a lot of people simply would not understand with what you meant."

Smyth said of the ones who did write for the ear in the 1950s: "I think some people did it instinctively; they had a natural talent for writing good, clean radio copy."

He remembers that wire copy posed a big problem back then because, "(it) was read directly off the wire and that wire copy was written by print guys who were working for Press News and eventually Broadcast News." Smyth said BUP and International News Service (another news wire CKLW used in the 1950s) had the same problem. "It was print-oriented people writing print-oriented copy which a lot of radio announcers, not news people, read verbatim on the air."

For anyone who has ever worked in a radio newsroom, the sound of the wire machine banging-out stories on rolls of newsprint was a constant companion. The rhythmic punching of the teletype keys provided a newsy atmosphere. In a way, the clanging of the wire printer was the official

major difference between Press News and BN was the corporate structure. Unlike Press News, BN had its own board of directors- separate from CP's main board. The BN board of directors "was made up of publishers and broadcasters and it gave direct input from the broadcasters which it didn't have before. Broadcasters had direct input to make budgets and set policy," said Adler. One of the first policy changes implemented was to allow member stations to contribute news items to BN.¹⁶⁸

But Adler said when Broadcast News took over the wire service on January 1, 1954, "there was no apparant change in the wire" from a news point of view.

Dick Smyth was still in Cornwall at CKSF the day Press News became Broadcast News. "We looked at the printer and everybody was disappointed because the stuff coming off the wire looked exactly the same as the previous day. They later made some progress and established wire committees. The wire committees were basically working news people who'd look at the wire in a number of ways and critique it. BN has been responsible in trying to get people who can write for the ear."¹⁶⁹

The news content on BN, shortly after the switchover from Press News, resembled what is currently on the wire, but with some exceptions- the wordage of the summaries was longer and the number of overall stories was fewer. That is because when BN began in 1954 it had only 90 original

subscribers compared to over 600 today. BN also had only a handful of the 75 people it now has at its various bureaus across the country.

The average daily run of news on BN during the early-1950s was under 50,000 words in English and about 30,000 in French. Today with over six times as many members stations contributing news to BN, the daily news run frequently exceeds 100,000 words in English only. By comparison, CP's print wire had a daily output of 250,000 words in the early 1950s.

For the fast handling of news by station editors, BN has always adhered to a pre-set schedule in the transmission of the various segments of its service. For example, hourly summaries of the latest international and national news was always put on the wire 15 minutes to the hour. Not only could newscasters count on having the latest summary just prior to the next hourly newscast, but they could compare their lineup of news stories with BN's. Often the top story on BN's hourly summary became that hour's lead story on a station's newscast.

The summaries consisted of usually the top ten stories of the hour. They were sent on the wire in two parts with the top five stories sent as a package in the first part and the last five in the second. Those stories were condensed versions of the more-detailed original stories that were sent previously on the wire as separate items.

Most stories in the summaries averaged three to five sentences in length. If there weren't any new developments by the time the next hourly summary was being prepared, BN editors would re-write the stories of the previous summary. Stories that were considered no longer newsworthy and timely would be dropped from the summaries as the hours went by. In smaller stations, these BN re-writes were welcomed because they didn't have enough staff to re-do all of the wire material on an hourly basis.

In addition to the hourly summaries of the top ten national and international stories, BN inserted regional summaries. The frequency and number of stories on these regional summaries depended on the volume of news gathered in each region on a given day. Stations would get regional summaries news from the region or province in which they were situated. For instance, an Ontario station would get the Ontario summary that had been prepared at BN's Toronto bureau. Originally, BN had bureaus in Toronto, Montreal, Quebec City, Halifax, Edmonton and Vancouver. Stations got their regional summaries from the closest BN office.

In between the summaries, BN would send longer, more-detailed stories whenever enough information had been gathered to warrant a fresh story. These new stories would be sent over the wire as separate items and they would be transmitted whenever there was time and space available on the circuit. Many stations would keep these original

stories on their news desks and use them as the basis for their own inhouse re-writes because they contained more background than in the briefer summary stories.

In the case of an on-going or breaking news story, the copy would be updated by BN by sending another separate newer version. If the updated story was considered important enough to make the top ten, it would be condensed immediately and placed in the next hourly summary. Updated stories would carry the designation "SUBS" in the slug. This would alert stations to drop the old story and use the *SUBStitute* instead. And if the story had more than one news angle, then BN hyphenated the title of the story or *slug-line* to let those clearing the wire know that this was a *sidebar* story to the main point of the same issue or event.

Other items provided by BN also had pre-set times of transmission. The sports scoreboard, including the latest scores of games still in progress, was regularly sent down the wire after the quarter-to-the-hour summary. This benefited stations who aired brief sportscasts after the hourly news. Final scores and descriptions of completed games would be sent at the earliest opening on the circuit. BN also provided sports summaries several times a day.

Weather forecasts also had their regular allotted time on the wire and stations relied on BN to send amended forecasts at the same times every day. But, weather bulletins were sent as soon as possible.

Progressive reports on the stock and livestock markets were also sent at regular, pre-set intervals. Unlike daily newspapers, radio stations needed to have access to stock information while the markets were open and the transactions were being made. The noon-hour became a popular time for a mid-day report on stock prices, trading trends and farm market activities.

In cases where a news story was seen to have more news value to one particular area than to the rest of the country, BN added that information to the slugs. For example, if a Montreal man had been murdered in Edmonton, then the BN member station in Edmonton notified BN. The wire would add the abbreviation "ATT'N MONTREAL" or "ESPY MONTREAL" to the slug-line of the murder story. The Montreal stations would see that on the wire and knowing that "ATT'N" meant "attention" or that "ESPY" stood for "especially for", those editors would take their cue and begin to work on that story from their end. The use of such codes saved many phonecalls that would have been needed to tip-off member stations individually.

For the benefit of the early morning newscasts, BN also re-fed the major stories of the previous evening in its early morning summaries. These re-feeds permitted stations to use fresh copy instead of scouring the newsroom for the previous night's run of wire copy which in all likelihood would have been used or thrown out. A re-cap of

last night's sporting events was also transmitted to assist sportscasters in starting their day.

The major complaint by broadcasters about BN's wire service in the 1950s was its style of news writing. It wasn't until the 1960s that BN began to hire a sizeable portion of its staff from broadcasting. BN's Phil Adler said that in the days of Press News and the first ten years of BN, CP had to staff the broadcast side of its operation with print journalists because qualified and experienced broadcast writers were hard to find. "Keep in mind stations then were not as particular as they are now" about style. "Broadcast journalism, for lack of a better explanation, was in its infancy. Whenever did that start? Could you in 1953 go to Carleton (University) or Fanshawe (College) and take a course in broadcast journalism?" No.

Adler said that in the early days of BN and with Press News, staffers working at the various CP bureaus were assigned to do shifts on the broadcast side. Asked if those print reporters from CP could write in proper broadcast style, Adler replied, "Sure, as far as style was concerned in that particular time." In other words, the style used in the 1940s and 1950s was considered adequate then. However, that same style would be deemed too formal, too detailed and long-winded for use on radio today. The conversational approach to writing news for the ear had not been implemented around the time Press News became BN.

The fact that BN was wholly-owned by Canadian Press no doubt delayed BN's transition into delivering news in broadcast style. Although broadcasters had a greater level of participation in BN than they had with Press News, a print-oriented attitude lingered. After all, BN was a subsidiary of a newspaper co-operative. The composition of BN's Board of Directors ensured that the print influence and tradition remained strong within the service. Of the ten members on that board, five directors are still appointed by CP and the other five come from broadcasting. Thus broadcasters do not have majority say. There's a big difference between having input and running the show.

During Don Johnston's early years at CHML, that Hamilton station subscribed to Press News/BN and to the U.S.-based wire service, BUP. He recalls that in the mid-1950s, although BN wasn't writing in modern broadcast style, it was a reliable source of news. "It was pretty accurate. It was created in the old CP Bible days of Gil Purcell and Charlie Edwards, who started the radio side. They were old wire service men who had a great reverence for the facts and accuracy was very important to them. And the people they hired had that drilled into them. So, it's not that mistakes were not made, but at that time it was a cardinal sin to get a name wrong; to drop something from a BN story that should have been there or to put anything in there that was factually incorrect."

As far as the news content, Johnston remembers the early years of BN as being mostly a service of hard news. "There were national, world and regional breaking stories, the big stories. It was a raw information wire. It was pretty-well a bare bones news service." Feature stories and lifestyle material were added to BN in the 1970s.

And according to Johnston, the writing style first utilized on BN was more "modified print" than it was broadcast style. But, this modified print language was still better for broadcasters than the CP print wire. "They had the idea early on that it was supposed to be written to be read right on the air at most stations. In those days Broadcast News summaries were read on the air word-for-word. So their writers on the BN desk very quickly, through what process I'm not sure of, learned to write the way which people were supposed to talk on the air."

When CHML decided to go with only one news wire in the mid 1950s, it picked BN over BUP. Johnston said CHML dropped BUP because that agency's requirements were too much for the CHML newsroom to handle. With Press News, subscribing stations weren't obligated to send-in stories. But BUP forced its clients to act as BUP bureaus for the city in which the station was located. Therefore, CHML, acting as BUP's bureau for the Hamilton area, had to feed BUP's head office with stories from that region. This resulted in a lot of extra work for BUP members. Johnston

said that after other Canadian stations followed CHML's lead in dumping BUP, that service became just a print wire, United Press Canada (UPC), and its broadcast operations in this country ceased.

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sound of the news department. And whenever the wires were silenced for too long, panic would build in the newsroom. Without the wire functioning properly, reporters dreaded the thought of losing their window to the world.

The first teletype machines used by Press News to provide radio with wire service was the Creed printer. The British-made Creeds transmitted data at 50 words-per-minute or 50 *baud* as it is called in publishing jargon. Creeds were replaced by machines manufactured by the Teletype Corporation of the United States. Teletype's models 12 and 15 were heavy machines that couldn't be picked up by one person. They were about the size of a modern-day dishwasher and the actual printer was mounted on the top of a metal cabinet. The printer was covered by a metal and glass lid to absorb some of the loud noise coming from the rapid motion of the mechanical typewriter. A slit on the cover permitted the paper to pass out of the machine.¹⁷⁰

Unlike similar machines used by the newspapers, Press News/BN printers were modified to print in large typefaces and in upper case. Having the news printed in large-sized caps (3/16ths of an inch tall) made it easier for newscasters to read the copy outloud.

The sound made by Creed and Teletype printers is the old clanking noise most of us associate with the thought of "hot news right off the wire". Today whenever an advertiser wants to incorporate the concept of a *news flash* into a

radio or TV ad, the people who produce the commercial will use the sounds of these old teletypes that have been recorded on sound effects' albums. Today's more silent, electronic printers do not make these sounds.

In the 1950s, teletypes were equipped with mechanical bells to warn those in the newsroom of important news flashes. The more times the bells rang, the more urgent the news bulletin was. If the bell dinged five times in rapid succession, it indicated that the most important kind of story was set to come down the wire. For the reporters, it was an honor to be on duty while a multi-dinger story was fed. Some newscasters saved those original bulletins and mounted those stories in a scrapbook for posterity. Normal stories were double-spaced, but bulletins were typed quadruple-spaced.

For its international news, Press News and BN had agreements with Associated Press (AP) of the United States, Reuters of Britain, and with Agence France-Presse of France. In return, those foreign news agencies relied on CP for news from Canada. When Press News became BN, the French side of the operation became known as Nouvelles Tele-Radio (NTR). However the CP broadcast service used by the CBC stayed with the name Press News because only private broadcasters sat on BN NTR's board.

BN's first move into providing stations with voice material came in 1956 when it established a service known

as Tapex. Initially, BN only exchanged tape-recorded news material between stations by mail or courier. Stations then did not exchange a significant amount of voice material over the phone because telephone technology was not yet producing sound quality suitable for broadcast. In the late 1950s, Tapex began using the phone to send voice reports, but this was very limited compared to today.

It wasn't until the early-1960s that BN followed the example of American news agencies and developed a bona fide audio service. In 1954, United Press International (UPI) began its audio service by offering U.S. stations voice material on a regional basis. By 1958, UPI's voice service had become national with stations from the Atlantic to the Pacific receiving actualities and voicers over high-quality phone lines from the various UPI bureaus. In that year, UPI also began providing subscribers with 22 daily newscasts prepared hourly and read by agency staffers.¹⁷¹

BN's American ally, AP, did not begin audio service until 1974. AP's slow start in voice forced BN to look elsewhere for a supply of international audio material. Private stations made their own arrangements to get voice material via the phone until Tapex became BN Voice in 1961.

Before BN Voice, stations, that needed a voice report from another city, would dial-up a friendly station in that city and ask for a voicer over the phone. In return for such a favour, the receiving station promised to co-operate

if ever the sending station would ever require similar assistance. So by the time BN had launched its full-fledged, over-the-phone audio service, newsrooms at private stations had become accustomed to filing voice reports for other cities. Many reporters were thrilled at the chance of being heard over the air in distant markets.

The 1950s also saw stations implement the *news jingle* to help them market their newscasts. This gimmick consisted of the playing of a short musical tune at the start of the newscast. Usually the news jingles were just several notes of a trumpet or several beats of a drum roll. These jingles were put on tape and replayed every hour to signal the beginning of the newscast. For example, CFRB's Jim Hunter was always introduced with the sounds of hunting horns.

The jingles served the dual purpose of separating the musical programs from the news and alerting listeners it was now time to concentrate harder on what was being broadcast. But often such jingles were little more than gaudy, show-biz acoustical props. The sounds of horns, sirens, whistles, drums and other more zany instruments, some would say, cheapened the news. They were intended to make the news sound more authoritative, but often they left listeners with the impression stations were being pompous and of using hype to promote the news.

Other stations used jingles to convey the "Action Central" feeling. Many stations began their news with a few

seconds of recorded fast-moving teletype noise. This gave the impression a station's newsroom had a pulse on all of the day's events. Listeners imagined such stations were nerve centres of activity with teams of reporters constantly on duty hunting down stories. In many respects such gimmicks misled the public.

In his Encyclopedia of Radio and TV Broadcasting, Robert St. John suspects that it was Walter Winchell, an American newscaster, who started the tradition of introducing the news with a touch of showmanship. "With his clattering teletype key in the background and his staccato delivery as he half-snarled into the microphone: 'Good evening Mr. and Mrs. North and South America and all the ships at sea. Let's go to press!'" This was in the 1930s.

Today many stations have retained the practice of playing jingles to introduce their newscasts. These jingles are now called "audio logos" because they help listeners to identify the beginning of well-known newscasts such as the CBC's "World at Six".

Another gimmick used by stations to foster the feeling of global news coverage was the so-called "Dateline" format. This approach consisted of the newscast opening with the clanking of teletypes and then the simulated sound of telegraphic transmission. Then an announcer would come on the air after the telegraph beeps and say something like: Dateline- Korea...U.S. Marines encounter heavy

fighting in the north." Then a few more electronic dots-and-dashes would be heard and again the announcer:

"Dateline- Berlin...Russians plan to build wall around the Soviet sector." After a few more beeps and datelines, the newscaster would provide the details to those headlines.

Toward a Separate Regulatory Body

By the late-1940s and the 1950s, radio news had become a fixture in Canadian culture. And the on-going debate over the role of broadcasting also had reached its peak.

When the 1960s arrived, Canada had gone through two more Royal Commissions on broadcasting and had experienced the birth of both public and private TV.

Immediately following the war, Ottawa was called-in to address two major broadcasting issues that were still outstanding: (a) how TV should be implemented in Canada, and (b) how to come to terms with the private sector's demands to end the CBC's role as broadcasting regulator.

Radio had taken on a new dimension. Apart from being an entertainer, it had also become a major source of news. Private broadcasters used their newly-developed news function as an important bargaining chip in the discussions with Ottawa on the regulation of broadcasting. As a major provider of news, private broadcasters were able to claim, with much legitimacy, that they were championing the cause of freedom of the news media by demanding that the CBC cease to be the controlling authority.

As T.J. Allard put it, broadcasting had become more than just amusement. "It was information and news and opinion- it was publication (in the legal sense). An independent regulatory body...was perceived to be a necessary means of safeguarding freedom of expression in the newest form of publication."¹⁷²

By 1947, the broadcasters won over the newspaper interests in their campaign to rid radio of CBC control over programming content. In that year the Canadian Daily Newspaper Association (CDNPA) had submitted a brief to the parliamentary Broadcasting Committee in which it stated: "Broadcasting should be free from unwarranted government control in the same sense that freedom of speech and of the press should be."¹⁷³

Broadcasters had long conceded the need for federal control in the areas of licences, frequency allocation and transmission power. But they wanted the same freedom the press enjoyed in the area of content regulation. Stations thought it was sufficient to have the judiciary intervene in matters of alleged illegal publication. The CAB didn't want the CBC to meddle in matters of media law such as libel, obscenity or contempt-of-court. And they also didn't want their competitor, the CBC, to continue to issue directives concerning advertising, Canadian content requirements and other aspects of broadcast programming.

The Massey Commission

The first post-war official opportunity to press the government for a separate regulatory body occurred when the Liberal government of Louis St. Laurent appointed the Massey Commission in April, 1949.

Its chairman was Vincent Massey, who had served as a diplomat under Mackenzie King. He was appointed the first Canadian-born Governor-General shortly after the end of the Commission's work.

The Massey Commission was officially entitled: "The Royal Commission on National Development on the Arts, Letters and Sciences". During its inquiry it held 224 meetings and heard from 1,200 witnesses.¹⁷⁴ Its mandate included doing a thorough and impartial review of Canadian broadcasting, especially television.

Two things prevented the private broadcasters from winning their case for a separate regulatory body at this time. First, Ottawa had been under tremendous pressure to develop a policy on TV. The Americans had had a head start in TV and potential viewers in Canada had become impatient in their wait for this service. Discussions on the start-up of Canadian TV dominated the Massey Commission hearings. This pushed the issue of a separate regulatory agency out of the limelight.

Second, supporters of the Canadian Radio League still had influence in Ottawa, and the commissioners tended to

side more with the friends of the CBC than with the spokespeople of the private sector.

During the hearings, the CAB submitted one clear demand- it wanted 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."¹⁷⁵

By 1950 it had become apparant that the CBC could never replace private radio completely. Of the 150 stations operating in Canada that year, 135 were private and 15 belonged to the CBC. About one half of the private stations were affiliated with one of the three CBC networks.¹⁷⁶ But, such numbers did not impress the Commission.

The Massey Commission's report, released in June 1951, rejected the CAB proposal. It turned down private radio's call for a new regulatory body on the grounds, broadcasting "is a public service, not an industry" and that a separate broadcasting authority "would divide, destroy or duplicate the present system of national control."¹⁷⁷

However, the CAB won some concessions from the Massey Commission. It recommended that the CBC Board of Governor's hearings be made public, and that broadcasters be granted the right to appeal CBC decisions to a federal court. The Commission also suggested the term of radio licences be extended to five years from one year.¹⁷⁸

Overall, the Massey Commission has gone down in

history primarily as the body which recommended that TV in Canada be launched by a public authority. It suggested to Ottawa that the CBC be charged with the responsibility of immediately establishing TV stations in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Winnipeg, Halifax and later in Ottawa.

The Commission also recommended that no private TV licences be granted until the CBC had made a national service of TV programs available. Private stations were allowed only in areas where the CBC couldn't afford to set up transmission facilities. Private TV stations were also required to serve as CBC affiliates in markets where there wasn't a CBC owned-and-operated station.

Thus with the go-ahead from Ottawa, CBC broadcast engineers, technicians and program producers rushed to put Canadian TV on the air. In an amazingly short time, the CBC miraculously began TV broadcasting in Montreal on September 6, 1952. And two days after CBFT Montreal signed on, CBLT Toronto went on the air. At the time of CBC TV's debut in Canada's two largest cities, there were only 146,000 TV sets in the country.

According to CBC Annual Reports, from 1949 to 1953, the CBC took out a total of \$9 million of Ottawa-backed loans to help it develop its TV service and to build production centres and transmitters in Montreal and Toronto. By March 1953, the CBC had spent nearly \$4 million just to put CBFT and CBLT on the air.

With another \$7.75 million in fresh loans, CBC-TV opened up CBUT Vancouver and CBOT Ottawa in 1953; then CBWT Winnipeg and CBHT Halifax the following year. It completed its first step into TV in just two short years.

Meantime in 1953, Canada's first private TV station, CKSO (now CICI-TV) Sudbury, Ontario, opened-- but on the condition it carry CBC programming.

In June 1953, the microwave transmission link between Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal was completed, enabling the CBC to begin its TV network service to those three cities. By the end of 1954, sixteen private TV stations were on the air in addition to the six CBC-TV outlets. The number of TV sets in Canada had risen to 1.2 million.¹⁷⁹

To help finance the rapid expansion of public TV in Canada, Ottawa imposed a federal tax on the sale of TV and radio receivers. The tax equalled 15 per cent of the purchase cost of that equipment. It proved to be a good source of revenue as close to 2,750,000 TV sets were sold in Canada from 1952 to March, 1957.

The introduction of TV also meant Ottawa was finally in a position to abolish the yearly licence fee for those owning radios. In February 1953, the annual fee of \$2.50 was dropped for several reasons: first, the government had no reliable and inexpensive method of keeping tabs on who owned radios and who did not pay the fee. And with the coming of transistor radios, it would have been even harder

to track down who possessed such small and portable receivers. Second, there was no valid reason for a licence fee on radios when there wasn't one for TV sets.¹⁰⁰

The excitement caused by TV's late but rapid growth in Canada produced a tremendous talent drain from radio stations. Reporters, announcers, operators, technicians and a whole host of other employees rushed to the TV stations. Some performers took their radio shows with them and re-set the programs to a TV format. Left without many of its top personalities and skilled workers, radio was forced to hire new recruits and plug the big holes in programming with recorded music.

In smaller markets, private companies that ran both a radio and a TV station in the same city often used the same staff to report and read the news on both outlets. At the CBC, many reporters/announcers did double-duty: reporting and reading the news for both radio and TV.

Although most of the public's attention was focused on TV during the early-1950s, an incident occurred on private radio, during the Massey Commission, which prevented the issue of a separate regulatory body from going away.

On November 26, 1950, commentator Frances Oakes Baldwin was commissioned to record her political views on a private radio show called the "Radio Bureau". That program had been created in 1945 by the Taylor, Pearson and Carson radio chain in association with Ken Soble. It allowed

Members of Parliament to report back on radio to their home ridings, and it offered opinions from political pundits.

In one of her commentaries, Baldwin said on the air: "There is absenteeism in the House of Commons, but most of the M.P.s should get gold stars for attendance compared to the Senators. Twelve Senators in attendance [out of 96] is a crowd."

Had such a remark been made in a newspaper column, it most likely would have been treated as a commentator's right to make a *fair comment*. But, since the opinion was voiced over a chain of private radio stations, some Senators not only took exception to it but openly launched a campaign against her remarks.

As T.J. Allard recalled, a senate committee mounted a sharp attack on Baldwin in early 1951. Some Senators thought they could blackmail the CBC as a way of seeking revenge against the radio stations Baldwin worked for. "They (Senate) had control at a certain level of the CBC's income. If private stations 'attacked' the Senate, it could reduce CBC's income unless that organization disciplined the offending private operators."

The Senate's attempt to influence the CBC in its regulatory functions prompted many academics and media critics to lash out at the government's role in broadcasting.¹⁰¹

Among them was reporter and Carleton University

journalism instructor Wilfrid Eggleston who stated in Saturday Night Magazine that the attack on Baldwin threatened freedom of speech:

"The Senate has been discussed and attacked, as well as defended, in the press of Canada for 80 years. Yet, no one has suggested that private newspapers be controlled by a Canadian Press Corporation under a Board of Governors appointed by order-in-council.

"The Senate incident throws light on the difference between a free press and a 'public corporation'-radio...when you have certain Senators calling for sweeping measures as an answer to criticism, you see the ever-present hazard.

"What is likely to be the reaction of a station owner, getting his licence from the CBC, a public corporation, to such senatorial attack? Is he not likely to be more careful, more timid in the future?

"There are laws and conventions which protect Canadians against licence in the press, and these should suffice for material which is broadcast over the radio as well." 1a2

It should be mentioned that Eggleston had been a federal government news censor during the Second World War.

Meantime, events in the United States also stirred up the argument that broadcasters be given the same rights and freedoms as the newspapers. In 1952, a presidential order authorized the creation of a staff of security officers to determine which government information was to be secret and kept from the media.

Broadcasting critic John Crosby wrote in the New York Herald Tribune on June 10:

"I can't recall a time when the freedom to broadcast has been so seriously imperilled...The Speaker of the House of Representatives has

banned televising House Committee hearings and a bill has been introduced which bars microphones, cameras and still photographers from public hearings."¹⁸³

The presidential order and the media security bill also drew comments from reporters such as veteran CBS correspondent Edward R. Murrow:

"In combination, they represent both a threat of censorship and a denial of the right of television and radio to employ the tools of their trade-- the microphone and the camera, to disseminate information...No politician or witness has yet claimed that his own voice misquoted him.

"There was a time when the widespread use of print was regarded as a danger to the established order of the day, but it couldn't be suppressed. The same will be true of these new-fangled gadgets-- radio and television; it's only a matter of time."¹⁸⁴

In Canada that time came for radio courtesy of one Massey Commission recommendation-- it stipulated it wanted another broadcasting inquiry to be held three years after the introduction of TV in Canada.

On December 2, 1955, the third Royal Commission on broadcasting was set up, with Robert M. Fowler as chairman, to probe into three areas: (a) review the performance of Ottawa's TV policy, (b) the financial requirements of CBC Radio and TV, and (c) the system of licensing and controlling private broadcasters.

During the life of the Fowler Commission, Canada's broadcasting system had truly become a mixture of public and private ownership. On the radio side, 189 stations were

on the air in December, 1956. Of those, 167 were privately-owned and the rest by the CBC. Of the total, 147 were in English and 42 broadcast in French.

The CBC operated three radio networks, two in English. The TransCanada Network consisted of 17 CBC stations; 26 regular private affiliates and 19 private stations that joined the network on a part-time basis. The Dominion Network had only one CBC station--Toronto, but 31 full-time private affiliates and 19 part-time affiliates.

The French CBC, Radio-Canada, had four Corporation stations, one full-time private affiliate-- CHNC New Carlisle, Quebec--- and 19 part-time affiliates. 52 English stations and 17 French stations were not affiliated with any CBC network. The CBC also had 54 relay stations that were re-broadcasting network programming to remote areas.

In that same year, the number of TV stations had risen to 38-- nine of them owned and operated by the CBC. All of the private TV outlets, French or English, were affiliates of the CBC/Radio-Canada TV networks.

The Fowler Commission and the BBG

On March 15, 1957, after 276 briefs were presented in 47 days of hearings, the Fowler Commission issued its report. Robert Fowler, a lawyer, was then the full-time president of the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association. He had served as secretary to the Rowell-Sirois Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations (1937-1940). 125

T.J. Allard felt uneasy during the hearings because "the CAB was aware of the fact (N.W.) Rowell was an active Radio League supporter." Private broadcasters also felt uncertain about the other commissioners. James Stewart was the president of the Bank of Commerce and Edmond Turcotte was a former editor of Le Canada newspaper. To the CAB, the Fowler trio looked a lot like the Aird Commission.

But to the broadcasters' surprise, the Commission suggested that a public agency be established to relieve the CBC of its role as the federal broadcasting authority. It recommended the new agency be called the Board of Broadcast Governors (BBG).

The BBG, as envisioned by the Commission, "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 (CBC), 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."¹⁰⁶

Fowler had hoped the proposed BBG would segregate more clearly the functions of private station regulation from the day-to-day operations of the CBC.

To achieve this, the Commission wanted the CBC to stop being merely an extension of the Department of Transport. It recommended some minor changes to the CBC's statutory

powers and organization to enable it to enjoy more autonomy as a Crown Corporation. As such, it became an operating agency solely in charge of public broadcasting. Its Board of Governors was stripped away and made into the BBG-- a separate public body, concerned with regulation only.

The Fowler Commission did not recommend the creation of two separate regulatory bodies: one to control the CBC, another to regulate the private stations. It has been said that only a two-board policy would have given Canada a truly "mixed broadcasting system".

In 1958 the Conservative majority government of John Diefenbaker introduced a broadcasting bill which included the concept of a single, independent regulatory body, while at the same time retaining the CBC's mandate to manage and operate public broadcasting.

On August 26, the bill received third and final passage. On November 10, the new Broadcasting Act got Royal Assent, and the Board of Broadcast Governors began.

For private broadcasters, the separate regulatory body was clearly their biggest political achievement. T.J. Allard, who had helped prepare and present the CAB's brief at the Fowler Commission hearings, summed up the importance of the private sector's victory, "It meant after 22 years, the CBC was no longer judge, jury and executioner of broadcasting control and regulation of itself or of private stations...Private broadcasting had finally achieved

respectability."¹⁸⁷

For the sympathizers of public broadcasting and the CBC, the Fowler recommendations did little to give private broadcasters complete independence from government influence. In the words of Austin Weir, who had spent most of his working life in public radio, the Fowler Report "recommended nothing inherently different in function from what which had been in existence for 20 years." Unlike the newspapers which didn't have a regulatory board to contend with, private broadcasters were to be ruled by the BBG in much the same fashion as the CBC did before.

Weir's chief argument was that since the BBG and the CBC were both creatures of the federal government, the CBC would receive more favourable treatment from the BBG than the private sector would get. In other words, a federal agency tends to work closely with other public agencies that share the same policy area.

In reality, perhaps nothing short of abolishing the CBC or the BBG would have removed all suspicions that the CBC and BBG were kissing cousins.

But in 1958, a separate regulatory body for private broadcasters was better than no BB. at all. Allard's side had fought long and hard for its first win over the public broadcasting lobby, which at this time was renamed the Canadian Radio and Television League:

"(T)he CAB had achieved a triumph without parallel in Canadian history. In its beginnings, broadcasting had been widely regarded in establishment quarters as a passing fad. It was later visualized by diverse powerful interests as a nuisance which at best ought to be destroyed, at the least brought under rigid state control. With modest financing and little political experience, the industry survived those perils.

"When later broadcasters suggested that their medium was part of the press and entitled to regulation by an impartial tribunal, they were savagely attacked as Fascists or Communists and anti-Canadian.

"By 1958, only 37 short years after their birth, private broadcasters had reversed public policy...repatriated majority listening to Canadian signals and clearly established their right to be regarded as a respectable, and useful segment of Canadian society."¹⁸⁸

For Allard, the major impetus for Ottawa's change of policy in the regulation of broadcasting was that no one could deny, in legal terms, that news and opinion, as carried on private radio, was a form of publication. "The ultimate recognition of broadcasting's position as part of 'the press' played the most significant role in the victory for the 'separate regulatory body' concept."¹⁸⁹

The 1958 Broadcasting Act also spelled-out how the BBG and the new CBC's executive were to be structured. The BBG would have three full-time governors and a dozen part-time members who would serve for seven and three years respectively. While the CBC's board would consist of a president, vice-president and nine other directors-- all appointed by cabinet.

The Act also stipulated that all broadcasting stations

were to be owned by Canadians or by companies that had 75 per cent Canadian ownership. "This was the first time that the public policy objective of utilizing broadcasting as a means of promoting the Canadian identity had been clearly stated in any formal way in a statute."¹⁹⁰

As Canada's new broadcasting system was taking form, Austin Weir predicted what possible implications the new regulatory body might cause: "...at best the change set up little more than a paper partition" between the BBG and the CBC. The new body is only "an exercise in semantics."¹⁹¹

By this point in our radio news history, there were a total of 172 AM stations on the air and another 28 on FM, both private and public. Only one FM station was not operated by its parent AM station. And for TV, a total of 38 private and CBC channels were diverting listeners away from radio. The "Golden Age" had gone from radio to TV.

CHAPTER FOUR

1959 to the present

Journalism on Contemporary Radio:

"Even the very best broadcast histories seem to lose interest in radio when television arrives on the scene."- RADIO in the Television Age.¹⁹²

The chronicling of TV's rapid rise and spectacular growth has tempted many writers of broadcast history to abandon the story of modern radio. And what a story they have overlooked! With the emergence of TV, the radio industry did not simply die or become stagnant. In fact, after a brief struggle, radio experienced the opposite- a rebirth which still shows few signs of old age.

Although most people were predicting a slow death for radio in the mid-1950s, it does not appear, some 35 years later, that TV is getting any closer to pushing radio into the media graveyard.

Today, "radio has emerged from the ashes of its golden age to assume a new identity as a tough hybrid capable of not only competing with television but in many cases surpassing it."¹⁹³

News was a major component in the evolution of radio into a new and remarkably solid medium which has clearly survived the fierce competition from TV.

The speed of radio played an important part in its

rebirth. "In a perverse way, the arrival of television forced radio broadcasters to take news coverage seriously. Radio was still the fastest way to transmit information. Stations, now that they had portable equipment, began to use the 'immediacy' of radio to compete with TV. Radio stations and networks built up news departments staffed with many writers, reporters and newscasters. It is probably accurate to say that modern radio journalism was born about 1960," wrote Doreen and Phil Boynton- authors of one of the first Canadian broadcasting textbooks.¹⁹⁴

The emergence of TV in the 1950s as the dominant mass entertainment medium had forced radio to broadcast a product that was local and specialized. The 1960s saw radio master its unique ability as a companion medium. Radio did this by fine-tuning its programming formats to meet almost any need of the listener.

If, for the sake of simplicity, the last 30 years of radio news is broken down into decades, it can be said the 1960s were a time when reporters discarded the practice of slinging heavy Ubers around their shoulders. The miniature audio cassette recorder replaced the reel-to-reel.

The 1970s saw the news agencies and stations develop modern voice services. By using high-quality circuits and satellite transmission, it became possible for stations to receive voice material on all major stories on a regular basis as the events were unfolding.

The 1980s witnessed the computerization of radio newsrooms. The use of computers has enabled reporters to get news and information on the air faster. At some stations the use of paper has been replaced by computer-run video display systems.

But more importantly, the last 30 years has seen the emergence of the modern broadcast journalist. No longer do most of the radio news personnel come from print backgrounds or from the street. Radio reporters, editors, and announcers are trained specifically for the broadcast industry. Not only do these journalists know broadcast technology- they are well-versed in reporting, writing, media law, and journalistic theory and ethics.

Post-secondary public education in broadcast journalism began in Canada in 1948 at Toronto's Ryerson Polytechnical Institute. Vancouver's British Columbia Institute of Technology started its broadcast arts program in 1964. Vancouver City College at Langara followed with a broadcast journalism course in 1965. In Ontario, community colleges, such as Mohawk in Hamilton and Fanshawe in London, began broadcast journalism diploma programs in the late-1960s. By 1970, broadcasting courses were also being offered at Edmonton's North Alberta Institute of Technology, and in the French-language colleges of Quebec, such as The College de Jonquiere. Schools were boasting enrollments as high as 300 broadcast students.¹⁹⁸

In fact, "by the mid-1970s, the university was the prime training ground for the working media." Degree programs in journalism began at Ottawa's Carleton College (later University) shortly after the war. The University of Western Ontario began its masters' program in the 1950s in London.¹⁹⁶ These universities later added courses in radio reporting to supplement their print instruction. The installation of campus radio stations gave students the an opportunity to do actual broadcasting. At Carleton, CKCU-FM opened in 1975 with an amazing 12,000 watts of power. Four years later, the University of Western Ontario went on the air with CHRW-FM, a 50-watter.¹⁹⁷

Parliament Hill opens to Broadcasters

The last important battle between newspapermen and broadcasters over news occurred on Parliament Hill. On March 26, 1959, broadcast journalists won a significant victory- the Parliamentary Press Gallery president announced that broadcasters would be allowed to apply for membership in the press gallery.¹⁹⁸ Prior to this change in policy, radio and TV reporters had been denied official access to the most important news beat in Canada. The print industry guarded the closed membership of the Ottawa Press Gallery very jealously.

By 1959 an era had come to an end. Radio and TV had become legitimate purveyors of news. Reporters from the electronic side could no longer be denied admission to the

press galleries of the House and Senate.

For media historian Paul Rutherford, the print-only Ottawa Press Gallery was "the last vestige of the press' news monopoly." He credits the breaking of that monopoly not only to the news media role broadcasters were playing, but also to changes in the corporate structure of the entire Canadian communications industry.

By the end of the 1950s, the Canadian tradition of single station ownership in the private sector disappeared. Multi-station ownership was becoming the rule. Prior to the mid-1950s, broadcasters such as Roy Thomson and the TPC group, who owned chains of stations, were exceptions. After the war even the newspapers, who had given up on radio, were becoming owners of stations again.

So around 1959, "What had weakened the press war on radio was the increasing involvement of publishers in station ownership," said Rutherford. With newspapers more involved in radio than ever before, it made little business sense for the publishers to oppose radio journalism. And for newspapers that owned radio stations, it also was not profitable to deny broadcasting a source of news.

After the war, radio in Canada had demonstrated that it was a money-making investment. So much so that in 1945, "the pragmatic Roy Thomson urged his fellow publishers in the Canadian Daily Newspaper Association to buy into radio and, when the time came, television." Radio's financial

success lured many publishers back into broadcasting- this time not to destroy it, but to make profits.

By 1960, the make-up of Canada's communications industry had changed drastically. Increasing cross-media ownership, coupled with a growing concentration of media ownership, meant that radio, TV and print no longer acted as separate establishments. For Rutherford this unification of media forces marked, most "noteably after the advent of television, the emergence of the multimedia as a single institution."¹⁹⁹ What was good for radio became profitable for those who owned stations, including the newspapers.

Before TV had cut deeply into the revenues of the other media, such as newspapers, magazines and cinemas; radio had emerged as an attractive investment. With TV not really being a factor in the early-1950s, "private radio watched with glee and greed as advertising revenues mounted steadily, up to \$31.7 million in 1954 for all radio stations." In that same year, the newspapers took in \$116 million in advertising.²⁰⁰

There is no doubt the publishers wanted to end the press war with radio, and buy into it instead because radio paid big profits. Many took Roy Thomson's advice.

By the mid-1950s, fewer and fewer players were involved in publishing. In 1953, Canada had the highest paper-per-owner ratio (57 publishers owning 89 newspapers) since 1752, when newspapers began in this country. In fact,

the three biggest publishers of that time, Thomson, Southam and F.P., controlled 25 per cent of the circulation of all Canadian dailies. By 1968, those same three firms had control of 44.7 per cent of all circulation. They also enjoyed a monopoly in seven of Canada's eleven largest cities. And 77 per cent of the total circulation was controlled by companies who owned more than one paper.

This led Senator Keith Davey, chairman of the Special Committee on Mass Media to state in that committee's report in 1970 that, "What matters is the fact that control of the media is passing into fewer and fewer hands, and...if the trend towards ownership concentration is allowed to continue unabated, sooner or later it must reach the point where it collides with the public interest."²⁰¹

Therefore, any move into broadcasting by the newspaper chains at that time would have centralized media ownership even more. As Paul Rutherford explained, cross-ownership radically changed the face of our mass media industry. "A prominent feature of the recent history of the communications industry, again especially after 1960, had been a surge of media concentration which has led to the formation of the multimedia empires."

In other words, radio had become not only big business, but big business was radio. Among the biggest with investments in radio were the Siftons and Southams.

Before the start of TV, the Sifton family of Winnipeg

had acquired a sizeable chain of newspapers and radio stations. In 1953 the Sifton empire was split up due to a clash between brothers Clifford and Victor. Clifford renamed his media holdings, and by 1975 the Armadale company operated two daily newspapers- the Regina Leader-Post and the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix; radio stations- CKOC Hamilton, CKCK Regina and CKWG-FM Winnipeg; and a number of other mixed businesses.

Victor Sifton, who had retained the Winnipeg Free Press, joined forces with R. Howard Webster of the Globe & Mail and the McConnell family of the Montreal Star to create F.P. Publications.

The huge Southam conglomerate also extended its presence in broadcasting by buying a sizeable interest in Selkirk Holdings. By 1975, Southam had already become the largest newspaper company in Canada. Its 17 dailies, which printed nearly one-million copies a day, made gross annual revenues of almost \$300 million.

With its interest in Selkirk Communications Limited, Southam was earning additional profits from broadcasting. By 1982, Southam claimed partial ownership of radio stations- CFAC Calgary, CJCA Edmonton, CJOC and CILA-FM Lethbridge, CJPR Blairmore, Alberta, CJIB Vernon, B.C., CKWX Vancouver, CJVI Victoria. It later bought CFNY-FM Brampton, Ontario.

Also by that year, Southam, through Selkirk, had taken

control of TV stations in Vancouver, Victoria, the Okanagan Valley in B.C., Calgary, Lethbridge and Hamilton. Selkirk also had sizeable shares in cable TV companies, advertising firms, Quality Records Limited, the Selkirk News Service agency, and other assorted media holdings.

In the mid-1960s, Maclean-Hunter, the magazine giant, bought CKEY Toronto from Northern Broadcasting. Later it added radio stations CFCN Calgary, CKOY Ottawa (now called CIWW or W-1310), CHYM Kitchener, CFCO Chatham, Ont., and CHNS Halifax, along with CFCN-TV Calgary. Other Maclean-Hunter holdings created a vast empire in cablevision, the book trade and advertising. To provide its radio stations with voice service, it purchased Newsradio.

The enormous profit potential of broadcasting also attracted investors from outside the media industry.

In New Brunswick, the K.C. Irving Oil Company took over the holdings of H.R. Robinson, who had operated both dailies in Saint John as well as that city's private radio station. Later, Irving absorbed the three other English dailies in that province and monopolized TV there as well.

In central Canada, not long after the giant Argus Corporation was formed in 1945, it acquired Standard Broadcasting which owned CFRB Toronto. This public company, headed by E.P. Taylor and then by Conrad Black, later moved into Montreal to buy CJAD from J. Arthur Dupont. Under Argus, Standard set up an AM-FM station in

St. Catharines, and established Standard Broadcast News (SBN) to compete with BN Voice. In 1975, it got into TV by buying Bushnell Communications which owned CJOH-TV Ottawa. Standard was later sold to Allan Slaight who sold CJOH to Baton Broadcasting.

In Toronto, John Bassett, Sr., began Baton in 1961 by getting that city's second station licence for CFTO-TV. He had purchased the Toronto Telegram from C. George McCullagh shortly after McCullagh had bought it in 1948. Bassett ran the Telegram until it folded in 1971. But, his broadcasting venture grew bigger with the adding of radio stations CKLW Windsor, CFGO Ottawa, and CFQC radio and TV in Saskatoon.

Paul Desmarais' Power Corporation of Montreal, another gigantic investment group, also acquired important media properties. By 1975, Power owned that city's largest daily, La Presse, and several other Quebec newspapers. It also ran an assortment of broadcasting facilities in Quebec and Ontario. Power's assets were in the billions of dollars. Apart from its media interests, it controlled: Laurentide Finance, Imperial Life, Canada Steamship Lines, Voyageur Bus Lines, Domglass, Investors Syndicate, and many more.

As newspapers and non-media investors voraciously consumed broadcasting properties, many independent broadcasters also became multiple-station owners.

Alan Waters made CHUM Limited a truly coast-to-coast operation by adding stations CFUN Vancouver, CFRW-AM and FM

Winnipeg, CFRA-CFMO Ottawa, CJCH-AM and FM Halifax, CKPT-AM and FM Peterborough, Ont., and three smaller outlets in Alberta. And in addition to CHUM AM and FM, Waters had CITY-TV in Toronto and Barrie's CKVR-TV. In the Maritimes, CHUM owned the four-station, ATV Network which was affiliated with CTV. CHUM also owned Music by Muzak and the Ottawa Roughriders of the CFL.

Lloyd Moffat got into radio by restarting CKY Winnipeg in 1949 after the CBC had left it dormant for one year. The CBC had taken it over from Manitoba Telephones in 1948. CKY along with CKO, CKX Brandon, and CFR Calgary are the only Canadian private radio stations using only three call letters. Moffat Communications later expanded with CKLG Vancouver, CKXL Calgary, CHED Edmonton, CHAB Moose Jaw, and CJJD Hamilton (now CHAM). It also owned CKY-TV Winnipeg and shares in various cable TV firms.

The Telemedia group, headed by P.G. Beaubien, began by buying CKAC Montreal from La Presse. By 1982, it had grown into an empire of 15 stations. It's Quebec division owned French-language AM-FM stations in Montreal, Sherbrooke and Hull, along with AM stations in Quebec City and Trois Rivières. Telemedia-Ontario included flagship station CJCL Toronto (Foster Hewitt's old station), along with AM stations in North Bay, Stratford, Orillia and Midland, and an AM-FM operation in Timmins.

Western Broadcasting, partly owned by Southstar (a

lack of wire service news. The wire agencies' refusal to give radio access to all its news material, opened the way for radio news agencies, such as Transradio on March 21. And since the American networks were broadcasting nationwide, many reporters and readers became well-known throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Lowell Thomas became famous in 1927 when he told NBC listeners of Charles Lindbergh's trans-Atlantic flight. Graham McNamee became known as "Mr. Radio" and "radio's first reporter". Gabriel Heatter made a name for himself, on radio, by covering the long trial of Bruno Hauptmann, who had been charged with the March 1, 1932 kidnapping of Lindbergh's 20-month-old son. Afterwards, Heatter's cheerful opening of newscasts became an American trademark: "There's good news tonight!". Herbert Morrison became an instant radio celebrity with his recording of the Hindenburg disaster on May 7, 1937, which claimed 36 lives. His report was heard over 114 NBC stations, coast-to-coast.

Radio's coverage of the Second World War also made many American reporters and newscasters famous. CBS had many star reporters stationed in Europe, starting with Edward R. Murrow, who covered the Austrian *anschluss* in 1938. He was later joined by Charles Collingwood, Walter Cronkite, William L. Shirer and Bob Trout. On August 14, 1945, Trout became part of radio history by opening his newscast with: "This, ladies and gentlemen, is the end of

Sudbury, and Timmins (twin sticks means operating CBC and CTV affiliates in the same market). Later Mid-Canada added TV in Pembroke and radio in Sault Ste. Marie.²⁰²

CJMS Montreal (Canada Je Me Souviens), which started in 1953, was sold to Civitas Corp. which later bought CJRP Quebec City, CJRS Sherbrooke, CJRT Trois Rivieres, and CJRC Hull. This Quebec network is now known as Radiomutuel.

By 1959, enough cross-media concentration had occurred in Canada's communications industry to result in the newspapers putting an end to the news war between print and broadcasting. Multimedia companies could no longer get much economic benefit from pitting broadcast journalists against newspaper reporters. So by the time broadcasters had applied for membership in the Ottawa Press Gallery, most of the opposition had dissipated.

The first ones admitted to the gallery were the CBC's Tom Earle and Sam Ross of the Sellark chain. But, why had it taken so long for them to get in, especially since CP had begun offering news to radio stations mid-way through the war?

Warner Troyer gave several reasons why it took until 1959 to remove the ban on broadcasters: "Perhaps because it had been partly paralyzed by the trauma of 'Uncle Sage' (1935 Conservative Party election ads on the CRBC which ridiculed Liberal leader Mackenzie King), the CBC retained a foot-dragging attitude towards news coverage for

decades." And in the case of gathering news in Ottawa, "it was safer...to use CP and add voice commentaries from newspapermen, who, as freelance contributors, absolved the CBC of the corporate guilt for any politically embarrassing things they might say."

He also suggested that these print reporters received a hefty talent fee for appearing on the CBC and they didn't want to see that lucrative, extra income from the CBC disappear if full-time broadcasters took their place.²⁰³

Tom Earle, the CBC's first correspondent in Ottawa, covered the Hill from the sidelines before being admitted to the Press Gallery. In the four years before admission in 1959, Earle and other broadcasters were allowed into the House of Commons, but "on sufferance." This meant that Earle and his radio colleagues had to observe the proceedings of the House from the diplomatic seating area, which is located at the opposite end of the press gallery rows. Broadcasters were clearly at a disadvantage because of a House rule that permitted notetaking only in the press gallery, which is located behind and above the Speaker.

Without being able to write down what was being said, the CBC still had to rely on Canadian Press for stories emanating from Question Period and the debates. Earle could only gather reaction statements from MPs as they walked the corridors of the Centre and East Blocks.

He was the CBC's sole reporter on the Hill prior to

1959. That meant he had to work for both radio and TV. Since broadcasters were not officially accredited to report from inside the Parliament Buildings, Earle says his crew would "go in one day with the camera and the other day with the tape recorder." In that manner, the CBC's bulky TV equipment wouldn't draw attention every day and complaints were kept to a minimum.

Earle's favourite reel-to-reel tape recorder was Uher's Report 4000. It was portable and produced excellent sound. He had tried gathering actualities with a Stellavox tape recorder, but he found that although it was smaller than the Uher, it didn't perform as well. He also used the expensive Nagra, but it required a soundman to wind up the spring-powered motor.

Taking wind-up or battery-powered tape recorders into the Parliament Buildings for radio posed very few problems compared to 1950's TV equipment. The Hill's electrical system wasn't designed to handle the heavy load needed to run TV cameras and lights. Earle remembers that during interviews, with Liberal Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent and external affairs minister Lester Pearson in 1956, the TV gear frequently got in the way.

During the long days and nights of the Pipeline Debate, Earle says even St. Laurent complained that TV news equipment, set up in the East Block, was too intrusive. (In 1956, the Liberals introduced a bill to set up Trans-

Canada Pipelines- a private syndicate of Canadian and U.S. companies that was formed to construct a natural gas pipeline from Alberta to central Canada. The CCF wanted it to be publicly-owned, while the Conservatives thought the Americans had too big a share in the company. The debate over that bill, from May 8 to June 6, is "one of the most famous confrontations in our parliamentary history", and it ended when the Liberals used closure to cut off debate and pass the bill. This affair discredited the government and contributed to their defeat in the 1957 election.²⁰⁴)

Later that year, Pearson tripped over some TV cables that had been strung on the floor of the corridors during the Suez Crisis. That tense situation in the Middle East started when Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal and Israel responded by invading Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, October 29, 1956. Egypt rejected a cease-fire demand issued by Britain and France, which led those countries to bomb the Sinai two days later. On November 1, British and French forces landed and took the Suez Canal. A week later, Egypt and Israel accepted a Canadian proposal to stop fighting and let UN peacekeepers replace the British and French soldiers.²⁰⁵

Earle says that in the early days of TV coverage on the Hill, it was a common sight to see the Parliament Buildings plunged into darkness because the TV equipment had overloaded the circuits and blown the fuses.

In 1959, Earle assumed most of the radio work when TV

reporter Norman DePoe joined him at the Ottawa bureau to do most of the TV assignments. The CBC's Parliament Hill bureau continued to be a joint radio-TV operation until 1967. By then Earle became radio bureau chief and the CBC had up to four reporters assigned to the Hill.

After becoming a member of the Press Gallery, Earle was allowed to work out of the "Hot Room"; a room in the Centre Block which was set aside for about 40 reporters. From the Hill he took his scripts and tapes, in person, to the CBC studios in the Chateau Laurier Hotel, just east of the Parliament Buildings on Wellington Street. Then by using the facilities and editing staff of CBO, CBC's Ottawa station, Earle recorded his reports on tape and CBO fed them down the microwave line to the network in Toronto.

Earle says he didn't use messengers to take his tapes down the street to CBO because he wanted to make sure that no foul-ups occurred.

At the Chateau Laurier, Earle recorded his voice reports for the hourly CBC news. At that time, he was permitted to let the voicers run to a maximum of 90 seconds. This gave him the opportunity to use two or three clips per report. But, if there wasn't enough time to record and edit his voicer, he often did his piece live on the air at the top of the hour. If the clips he had recorded from interviews or *scrums* had been edited in time, CBO operators would play them as he did the live report.

Earle says he preferred doing the live voicers because of the rush of adrenaline which occurred when he had to read his scripts under the pressure of not making any mistakes.

During the early-1950s, Earle also prepared and voiced a four-minute radio show called "On Parliament Hill", which was a re-cap of the day's events on the Hill. It was aired on the CBC Radio network in the early evenings whenever the House was in session.

Earle says it wasn't until the mid-1960s that the CBC outfitted the Press Gallery newsroom with a microphone-telephone to enable radio reporters to send their voicers to CBO. This direct line had broadcast-quality sound, but it didn't permit reporters to transmit their clips over the phone to the Chateau Laurier.

Reporter Sam Ross, who got his membership card at the same time as Earle, worked the Hill for Selkirk Radio News, which used to belong the TPC/All-Canada group. Earle says Ross hardly ever used a tape recorder and that he sent his stories by phone to the various Selkirk stations.

Earle says it took until 1959 to get broadcasters into the Press Gallery because radio alone didn't carry enough weight to force the membership issue. By the late-1950s, Canadian radio news had become ancilliary to TV. And Earle says radio reporters were permitted on the Hill on the coattails of the more influential TV crews. Compared to the United States, Canada, with the exception of a few CBC

reporters (i.e. Matthew Halton) and newsreaders (Lorne Greene), didn't have nearly as many radio news stars. The lack of private radio networks in Canada prevented private radio personalities from being national celebrities. Only Toronto-area listeners had heard of CFRB's Jim Hunter.

Having several private radio networks made the difference in the United States. When TV arrived in the U.S., dozens of radio reporters had already been household names across the continent. The American radio networks had developed their own sources of news long before CP had begun providing Canadian stations with news.

In December, 1933, American radio networks realized they had better set up their own news services and support broadcast news agencies. That's because in that month, the radio networks had met with American newspaper and wire service representatives in Los Angeles. NBC and CBS had asked them for a supply of news. But, UP, AP and INS agreed to supply only two 5-minute newscasts to the networks per day. This contract with the wire services, known as the Biltmore (Hotel) Agreement also forced the radio stations to say at the end of each newscast: "And for details, please check the newspapers".²⁰⁶

Without an adequate supply of news from papers and the wires, American radio networks set up their own news departments in the early 1930s. CBS and NBC jointly formed Press-Radio Bureau on March 1, 1934 to compensate for the

lack of wire service news. The wire agencies' refusal to give radio access to all its news material, opened the way for radio news agencies, such as Transradio on March 21. And since the American networks were broadcasting nationwide, many reporters and readers became well-known throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Lowell Thomas became famous in 1927 when he told NBC listeners of Charles Lindbergh's trans-Atlantic flight. Graham McNamee became known as "Mr. Radio" and "radio's first reporter". Gabriel Heatter made a name for himself, on radio, by covering the long trial of Bruno Hauptmann, who had been charged with the March 1, 1932 kidnapping of Lindbergh's 20-month-old son. Afterwards, Heatter's cheerful opening of newscasts became an American trademark: "There's good news tonight!". Herbert Morrison became an instant radio celebrity with his recording of the Hindenburg disaster on May 7, 1937, which claimed 36 lives. His report was heard over 114 NBC stations, coast-to-coast.

Radio's coverage of the Second World War also made many American reporters and newscasters famous. CBS had many star reporters stationed in Europe, starting with Edward R. Murrow, who covered the Austrian *anschluss* in 1938. He was later joined by Charles Collingwood, Walter Cronkite, William L. Shirer and Bob Trout. On August 14, 1945, Trout became part of radio history by opening his newscast with: "This, ladies and gentlemen, is the end of

the Second World War." On the other networks, Howard K. Smith covered the war for ABC (ABC was formed in 1943 with the purchase of NBC's Blue Network), while Merril Mueller handled D-Day coverage for NBC.

On the Mutual Network, inaugurated in 1934, newscaster Westbrook Van Voorhis became a star for saying: "Time marches on!" Meantime on WEAF New York, Floyd Gibbons, about whom was said "No war is official until War Correspondent Floyd Gibbons arrives", was heard nightly by millions due to the syndication of his "Literary Digest Hour" program.

Other American reporters/readers such as Cecil Brown-CBS's war correspondent in the Pacific, Boake Carter, Elmer Davis, Paul Harvey, George Hicks, Quincy Howe, Drew Pearson and Ulmer Turner, became as popular as other well-known figures who had used radio prior to TV. President Franklin D. Roosevelt effectively used his weekly "Fireside Chats" on CBS starting in 1933. Arthur Godfrey became famous for describing FDR's funeral on radio in 1945.²⁰⁷ Only a few Canadians appearing on the CBC were national favourites because of radio.

By the time broadcasters were allowed into the Press Gallery in Ottawa, American radio reporters had already been well-established in the covering of federal and state legislatures and of all levels of courts. The lack of national private networks and the foot-dragging attitude of

the CBC had prevented Canadian radio from achieving the same status as in the U.S. It took TV to help Canadian radio enter what previously had been restricted areas.

Earle says the combination of radio microphones and and TV cameras, positioned in the corridors of the Parliament Buildings, had a pronounced effect on the relationship between politicians and reporters. Before the tape recorders and TV cameras came on the scene in Ottawa, MPs had a more informal relationship with the press.

But after the ability to record voice arrived, politicians changed the way they talked to the news media. No longer could cabinet ministers say things to reporters on an off-the-record basis and simply deny the next day that they had said it. Tape recordings offered indisputable and objective proof of what had been said. With the tape recorder, anything said on the Hill became on-the-record.

The tape recorder forced politicians to be more thoughtful and accurate when responding to questions from members of the Press Gallery. And Earle credits the tape recorder and the TV camera with the development of the so-called *scrums* on Parliament Hill. Before the electronic news gathering equipment had arrived, there had been little need for print reporters to surround politicians as they exited from the House, and bombard them with aggressive questioning. 208

The press was still resentful of the broadcasters and

their electronic gadgets, however.

Archie Langill, a clerk who eventually became chief clerk of the Press Gallery during his 50 years of service on the Hill, recalls "that newspaper reporters of the time carried mechanical 'clickers' to sabotage radio interviews." Clickers were hand-sized noisemakers, made of metal strips, usually found inside boxes of Crackerjacks popcorn. "Now they carry mini-recorders so they won't miss anything in corridor scrums."²⁰⁹

Earle doesn't remember anyone trying to ruin his recordings by deliberately making strange noises, but he says on one occasion someone put a "lit cigarette butt into my machine" in an attempt to burn the tape. He says that incident was probably just an act of resentment perpetrated by "an old dinosaur" print reporter who hadn't yet adjusted to the gathering of news by tape. However, Earle says many of his tapes were rendered useless by politicians and reporters using foul language during the scrums.

The tape recorder and the TV news clip also had an impact on the way politicians were seen by the public. For example, a cabinet minister, who had been quoted in a newspaper story, might be perceived as being intelligent and honest by those who had read the article. But, the same minister, making the same comments into a microphone, might create a different impression. Some people are better talkers than others, regardless of what they say.

The tape recorder gave an advantage to those who talked in a clear and authoritative manner. Others who had poor voices or speech disorders came across on radio or TV as being less decisive, truthful and informed. Some politicians had to make a conscious effort to improve their performances on radio and TV. With broadcasters on the Hill, it became necessary for officials to concentrate not only on what they said, but how they said it. "Playing-up to the cameras" and to the tape recorders soon became an important part of any MP's public relations strategy.

And before tape recorders were put in service, newspaper readers could not detect if a politician was bilingual. Print reporters would make the translations for the MPs who only spoke one language. But with tape, deficiencies in any language became apparent.

Earle says most politicians caught on quickly on how to conduct radio and TV interviews. For some, it required hard work to understand the demands of electronic reporting. But for others, such as courtroom lawyers, the transition occurred naturally. For example, Earle remembers that Liberal cabinet minister Paul Martin had little trouble adjusting and that "he was good on tape".

And according to Earle, the biggest difference between newspaper and broadcast reporting was the posing of questions. Reporters, who used tape recorders, found they got better results if they asked shorter and more specific

questions. Earle avoided asking complicated questions. This interviewing technique prompted politicians to reply in short, snappy answers which were ideal for radio. He also also learned to not to pose questions that were likely to yield just a "yes" or a "no" on his tape.

Earle and Ross were joined on the Hill by other radio reporters in the early-1960s. BN waited until its voice service, BN Voice, had been set up in 1961 to build a recording studio at its Ottawa bureau. Shortly after BN got into the audio business, it equipped reporters Chuck Morrow and Richard Avery with tape recorders to get voice from the Hill. And a number of local Ottawa stations assigned reporters, such as Mike Duffy and Max Keeping, to cover Parliament. They would relay their stories and tape material back to the parent stations in Toronto.

Reel-to-reel tape recorders were kept in service by the CBC's Ottawa bureau until the end of the 1968 federal election campaign. Earle says he first saw radio reporters using cassette machines while he was on the road covering the Pierre Trudeau campaign. He says those private sector reporters were covering the election with SONY cassette recorders. These were the fore-runners of the ubiquitous cassette machines of the 1970s, which became ideal for non-professional use because of their small size and low cost. With batteries, they weighed about four pounds, and were about ten-inches long and five-inches wide. The *piano key*

controls at the narrow, front end of the machine, made them also easy to operate.

BN goes Voice

By 1960, Broadcast News had clearly emerged as Canada's leading radio news wire. BN was serving 182 of the 192 private radio stations and it had signed-up 40 of the 44 private TV stations.²¹⁰ However the subscribing stations wanted more voice from BN. Tapex consisted of only six or seven stations exchanging voice material on a call-in basis over normal phone lines. Tapex also arranged for stations to mail tapes to each other, but this was such a slow way of distributing radio news that it upset BN customers who demanded faster service.

In 1961, "old Charlie Edwards (BN's general manager) got together with Bill Hutton (CFRB's news director) and they came up with the idea that there should be voice from the scene of the story- *actuality*. Because in Charlie's words, that kind of material was the equivalent to a dramatic photo in a newspaper," said Stu Morrison.

Bill Hutton had tried setting-up a voice service for private stations in Canada in the late-1950s when BUP started disappearing. BUP's parent company, the U.S.-based United Press, had bought out another American radio news service, International News Service (INS). INS had several Canadian customers including CKLW Windsor. By taking over INS and letting BUP die out, UP reorganized itself as

United Press International or UPI. BUP in Canada simply became the *rep house* or sales agent, for UPI Audio news.

Hutton felt there was room for another voice service in North America despite the start-up of UPI Audio in 1958. Hutton's idea was to sign up some Canadian stations to provide audio service on Canadian news and link that service with an American network to provide a supply of international news.

He approached some former employees of the defunct INS and together they went to New York City to get Strauss Broadcasting involved. The deal fell through because Canadian stations were not willing to pick up the high cost of leasing high-quality lines needed to transmit voice.

Hutton's experience in setting up radio news networks began in 1947 while he was a reporter at CFNB Fredericton. In those days, CFNB, CKCW Moncton and CFBC Saint John were all using BUP. By using the existing BUP circuit, those New Brunswick stations were able to exchange news among themselves. The service was called Radio Press Ltd.

At the time, BUP used tickertapes to transmit data. The tickertape machines read the electronic signal coming down the telephone line and converted that information into holes which it punched on rolls of paper tape. Reporters then passed the roll of perforated paper tape through a decoding machine that translated the holes into words.

To exchange provincial news, CFNB would stop the BUP

feed coming down the wire. With the wire momentarily free of BUP data, the stations would use a *re-perf* machine (a device which punched holes on tickertape as one typed the story on a typewriter) to feed the line with their own local stories.

By using *re-perfs*, reporters converted their typewritten stories into an electrical code which the tickertape machines turned into paper tape at the other stations. Since the three stations were hooked-up in a straight line, the local information flowed both ways. If BUP material was being sent at the same time as the New Brunswick stations were using the circuit, then CFNB, which was located at the head end of the BUP feed, recorded that information on a back-up tickertape machine and refeed the stored information later.

Hutton later found it more difficult to do the same thing with voice material. Canadian stations could not afford the high cost of sending voice material over his proposed independent audio service, so Hutton chose instead to work with CP in setting up BN Voice.

With Charlie Edwards, Hutton persuaded BN and Strauss Broadcasting to team up and begin a joint voice service for Canadian and American customers. Through Strauss, the service was able to use Radio Press International for American and international audio stories.²¹¹

BN Voice started in 1961. But during the first year of

operation, the service was run out of CFRB Toronto. According to Stu Morrison, "basically what happened was that CFRB had the technical expertise to make it work and BN had the infra-structure of radio stations and the information coming-in from various wire services. They tied it together with RPI which was really a radio wire. (RPI) wasn't an offshoot from publishers."

BN Voice began sending audio material over the circuit Canadian Press used to transmit wire photos to newspapers. Hutton said the line, which was leased from CN-CP Telegraphs, was of sufficient quality to send voice. CP didn't mind sharing it with BN because the volume of wire photos being exchanged never matched the line's capacity.

As CFRB became the technical hub for the receiving and transmission of voice material over the CP circuit, BN assumed the managerial duties. Unlike the contracts it had with private stations using the wire service, BN made it mandatory for stations signing-up on BN Voice to contribute a set quota of voice material.

By 1962, BN was forced to take over the technical functions as well because CFRB wasn't able to handle the increase in audio material traffic. BN also discovered that the CP picture circuit was inadequate because it didn't go to enough places BN wanted to serve. With the circuit only going to cities that needed wire photos, such as CP bureaus or major newspapers, BN was limited in providing all its

stations with audio service.

To provide service to stations that didn't have access to the CP picture circuit, BN arranged with CN-CP for the use of other high-quality lines. Eventually, Canada's microwave network was used to distribute voice to the stations. But in the early years of BN Voice, the weakest part of its voice distribution system was the sending of material from the stations to the BN bureaus. Since most stations used normal telephone lines to feed BN with voice, the sound quality arriving at BN was often poor.

Having a voice service meant BN had to do more than just re-write the CP print file in order to please the broadcasters. BN was forced to augment its voice service by outfitting its bureaus with recording studios. Its operations in Toronto and Ottawa were the first to be equipped with voice capability. The move into audio also necessitated the hiring of broadcast reporters to do BN's voices and to gather and edit *clips*.

Phil Adler says that in order for BN to become a credible voice service, it had to recruit experienced broadcasters to staff its bureaus. In the early-1960s, radio reporters, such as Eric Murray and Barry Hanlon, were added. Eventually BN hired general managers, such as Don Colby and Bob Trimbee, who had backgrounds in broadcasting, to succeed Charlie Edwards.

BN continued with the RPI feed of international voice

material until 1965 when that American-based service folded. To replace the void left by RPI's demise, BN affiliated itself with the news services of Westinghouse Broadcasting, which operated a chain of news-oriented stations in the U.S. In the early-1970s, BN dropped Westinghouse and aligned itself with the news service of the American Broadcasting Company.

In 1967, ABC expanded its news services by offering four separate radio news voice services. Each network shaped its news style to match specific radio formats. The Contemporary Network was used by ABC Radio affiliates who had a Top 40 Rock format. The Entertainment Network suited Middle-of-the-Road or Country stations. The FM Network delivered news for heavy rockers, while the Information Network, which most closely replicated the traditional network news approach, was a source of news for stations which had adult formats.²¹²

The ABC multi-news network concept became so popular that by 1980 it had 1,600 affiliates. By shaping news to formats, some say ABC was the key innovator of radio network news in the TV age. ABC was able to run all four networks on the same leased telephone lines by giving each network its own time slot on the system on hourly cycles.

By having access to all four ABC services, BN picked the type of material which best suited the needs of its customers. In return, ABC asked Canadian stations, with BN

Voice affiliation, to file up to four different versions of each story, each differing in tone and style, for use on the appropriate ABC network.

In addition, BN picked up the services of AP Radio in 1974 and Independent Radio News of Great Britain, which was started by Bill Hutton for Selkirk's U.K. operation after he had left CFRB and BN.

After guiding BN Voice through its infancy, CFRB remained a subscriber to BN Voice until its parent company, Standard Broadcasting, launched its own audio service in 1964. What prompted Standard to start its own voice service was the switch of its American affiliation from CBS to NBC.

For over 30 years CFRB had benefited greatly from its link with the CBS Radio network. Many of CFRB's top-rated shows, musicals and variety programs, came from CBS. But by 1960, due to TV, every U.S. network had discontinued airing radio soap operas and plays. CFRB had stayed with CBS after 1960 solely for its news service.

Bill Hutton remembers that during the Cuban Missile Crisis of October-November 1962, staffers at CFRB had interrupted one of Gordon Sinclair's newscasts by putting a CBS news bulletin on the air. Apart from sending regular audio news feeds, CBS also provided special news reports during important fast-breaking stories. Stations monitored the CBS line for *Net Alerts* which warned them a major news bulletin was only minutes away.

Hutton says Sinclair was so furious to be cut off by that live CBS transmission from New York and Washington, that he started throwing chairs in the newsbooth and screamed: "Oh, those bastards!" Hutton says Sinclair wasn't cursing at the Russians, Cubans or Americans, but those at CFRB who had pre-empted his news.

CFRB lost its CBS affiliation when the advertising firm Stephens & Towndrow, which represented CBS in Canada, was taken over by CHUM. CHUM naturally linked up to CBS, leaving CFRB with no American radio news network to provide it with international voice service.

To make up for the loss of CBS, CFRB subscribed to the NBC Radio network. But, after getting CBS free for three decades, CFRB found itself paying NBC \$3,000 a month for the right to use NBC news.

Don Johnston was still news director at CHML Hamilton when Standard started SBN. He says Standard transferred Lyman Potts from its Montreal operation to Toronto to help get SBN on its feet. Potts, who had managed CKOC Hamilton, was lured away by Standard to help revamp CJAD Montreal, recently bought from J.A. Dupont. In 1962, Potts also put CJAD's sister station, CJFM, on the air.

Johnston says Potts put together Standard's voice service by formally linking all of that company's news resources. "Essentially what they did was to take an expensive Ottawa bureau- that two stations (CFRB & CJAD)

were jointly operating- and NBC- which they were subscribed to- and decide that while they were taking in all of this good stuff, they might as well sell it to other stations and defray some of the costs." It quickly became such a good alternative to BN Voice that Johnston brought SBN into his newsroom at CHML.

In 1965, Potts and Bill Hutton started transmitting SBN voice material out of Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa by using CN-CP data circuits which were equipped with *Broadband* capability. Broadband technology produces near broadcast quality sound transmissions over regular phone lines by filtering out unwanted frequencies on the circuit. At the transmitting end, Broadband compresses the signal and funnels it through the narrow band-width of the phone line. At the other end, the Broadband receiver broadens the concentrated signal back into its original form.

To run SBN's service out of Ottawa, Tom Gould was hired as its first Parliament Hill bureau chief. Gradually, Standard began selling SBN to other stations across the country. For stations in major markets, SBN provided them with an alternative audio service to BN Voice.

Alternative Voice Services

With BN and Standard Broadcasting leading the way in voice service in Canada, other companies, such as CHUM Limited and Newsradio, also decided to offer voice service. In the mid-1960s it was still fairly easy to compete with

the established voice services due to the low volume of taped material being handled by BN Voice and SBN.

"BN was doing three transmissions a day back then; I mean it's a far cry from two an hour" which BN, SBN and Newsradio provides every hour now, said John McFadyen. "I can remember the days when there was three or four (BN) cuts- period, in the third (and final) piece of the day. And one of those was a TSE close (a wrap-up of trading at the Toronto Stock Exchange). And that's around the time Standard started SBN.

"It was kind of an event to hear the voice transmission. Everybody gathered in the newsroom to hear what they were going to tell us today. And then you used the stuff sparingly; to spin it throughout the evening so you'd have enough left until the next transmission the following morning," said McFadyen.

Around 1968, two more Toronto-based voice services started operations to give BN and SBN competition. CHUM Limited launched its audio service under the name Canadian Contemporary News which was changed to CHUM Group News in 1977. Fred Ennis, who was a reporter for CHUM Toronto from 1970 to 1975, says Canadian Contemporary News was designed initially to provide rock radio stations with their own style of audio news. "but to fill-in all the gaps across the country and to pay the bills, they found themselves selling the service to non-rock stations like CFPL London

and VPCM in St. John's.

"That set-up no end in conflicts between news directors who wanted short, punchy stuff and the guys in the A.O.R. (Adult Oriented Rock) or M.O.R. (Middle of the Road) formats who wanted a more relaxed style. CHUM was putting a lot of money into it and reaping few benefits. They were providing a service for their clients with stuff CHUM didn't want to use on the air." CHUM's news was fast paced to suit its youthful following, so it didn't want to use the straight, serious material being sent-in by the adult-oriented subscribers. "So they went to CHUM Group News and that is a much better solution," said Ennis.²¹³

Meantime on November 1, 1968, Tayler Parnaby, along with Paul Taylor and Phil Godin, began the Newsradio service out of Ottawa. Parnaby and company ran the service for Maclean-Hunter in co-operation with its advertising subsidiary Stephens & Towndrow (which it had acquired from CHUM), Radiomutuel of Quebec, and CBS. An AT & T and Bell circuit carried the CBS Radio news feed from New York to Ottawa. From the Ottawa bureau, Parnaby and staff gathered stories from Parliament Hill to supplement CBS news. Its first clients were Maclean-Hunter's CKEY Toronto and independent station CKGM Montreal. It began sending voice by telephone and later used Broadband.²¹⁴

The rapid proliferation of voice services in Canada was made possible by the relatively small amount of work it

was required to gather voice material at a central point and to replay the tapes over the network. Running a voice service didn't entail handling massive amounts of text that wire services were obliged to process. Voice services were simply required to record the incoming calls and send the reports down the network on the next transmission. News copy did not have to be transcribed or edited.

However, when services, such as BN Voice, began sending 48 transmissions per day, with up to ten items on each transmission, it became nearly impossible for the stations to keep track of all the material they were receiving. To sort out all the items, the voice services began telexing a printed schedule to all the stations they served. These schedules were telexed seconds before the start of each transmission and they contained a brief description of the items being fed. For BN Voice it was just a matter of sending the voice schedules over the existing BN wire circuits in between news dispatches.

In 1976, Newsradio switched from using Trans-Canada Telephones' Broadband circuits to Bell Canada's microwave channels. Those channels became available to private broadcasters because CBC-TV didn't need all its leased microwave channels due to the installation of orbiting communication satellites by Telesat. However, those surplus CBC microwave channels were too costly for private radio. The yearly lease per channel was about \$90,000. Prior to

satellites, some microwave channels served as back-up TV audio circuits for the better-funded CBC. Those were the circuits private radio wanted for news.

To get the cost down, Parnaby says he entered into an agreement with Alan Waters of CHUM. They decided to lease a microwave channel and split it into sub-channels or sub-carriers. Thus by having three or four private companies sharing the same channel, the cost per broadcaster came down to about \$20,000.

Parnaby says the CRTC had wondered about the legality of splitting microwave circuits. He says he told the CRTC that if it was pressuring private broadcasters to provide more news, then it shouldn't prohibit channel sharing "because the high microwave rates are denying us from doing it (giving more news)." He says the Commission gave the private news agencies a break by not insisting that formal amendments be made to the telecommunications regulations.

By 1976, Telesat had three Anik-A satellites in orbit. Their use by the CBC freed up some microwave circuits for other purposes, including private radio. 215

Then Parnaby, after purchasing surplus *modem-equipped* computer hardware from the American military, invented a way of transmitting print data over broadcast circuits. By modifying a printer to make it compatible with his computer, he was able to type information on a screen and have that data go through the circuits. For Newsradio it

gave them the ability to use microwave circuits as a telex at times when the voice material wasn't being transmitted. Newsradio was able to send printed schedules just prior to the voice segments. Before Parnaby's innovation, operators were reading the schedules over the circuit just prior to the transmissions of voicers and actualities.

In the newsrooms, those printed schedules became known as *skeds*. Each transmission had its corresponding sked. A typical one contained the following information:

- (a) one sentence describing what the item was about. For newscasters this served as a suggested introduction for each piece of tape.
- (b) the name of the reporter and the station responsible for the item.
- (c) the type of audio material being sent-- straight voicers, wrap-around voicers, actualities, or bits of wild sound for production purposes.
- (d) the length of the cut.
- (e) the outcue or last words of an item, including sign-offs on voicers.
- (f) the place where the story originated.
- (g) any other special information that a newsroom needed to know. For example, if a story had to be delayed due to a time embargo.

Thus, a typical sked looked like this:

Feed 10A- 2 Cuts

(NRO-7) FRED ENNIS, OTTAWA, VA, 36-SEX:
PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU HINTS AT ANOTHER ROUND OF
PRICE AND WAGE CONTROLS TO BATTLE INFLATION. S.O.

(NRO-8) FRED ENNIS, OTTAWA, Trudeau, 16-SEX. ACT.
PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU DENIES HIS GOVERNMENT IS
FUELING INFLATION BY OVER-SPENDING. SAYS CUTS
HAVE BEEN MADE..."BUDGET DEFICIT".

The first line of this sked tells stations that this is the
sked for the first transmission after 10 a.m. The
transmission following this one, at 10:40 a.m., was coded
"10B" "2 Cuts" indicated the number of items on this feed.

The next line indicated this is the 7th item fed by
Newsradio's Ottawa bureau so far that day- its coded by
"NRO-7". This line also named the reporter -Fred Ennis.
The "VA" signified that this report was in the form of a
voicer-actuality or wrap-around voicer. (Using just "V"
would have stood for a straight voicer containing no
actuality.) And "36-SEX" is short for 36-seconds long.

The next two lines explained what the story was about.
"S.O." reminded newscasters that the reporter signed-off.

"(NRO-8)" on the next line indicated the second item
on this feed was an actuality being sent by the same
reporter at the Newsradio Ottawa bureau. The voice in the
actuality, "ACT", was Trudeau's and it ran 16-seconds.
Under this line not only what the newsmaker said but the
context in which the person made that remark was described.
The last words of that sound bite are indicated by "...
BUDGET DEFICIT."

Thus newscasters saw what was coming in on the next voice transmission.

To enable newsrooms to free a staff member from constantly operating a reel-to-reel machine to record those transmissions, many stations installed voice-activated tape machines to take the feeds automatically. The sound of the data carrying the information for the skeds, just prior to the transmission of the voice cuts, triggered the automated tape machines to begin recording. When the voice material ended, the recorders would stop by themselves because there was no more noise on the line. Thus a reporter could go on an assignment or have lunch and the tape machine, assigned to the voice service feed, would record when it sensed noise on the circuit. When the reporter returned, the skeds on the printer gave an indication of how much material had been sent during his/her absence.

For example, if a reporter, working for a small or medium-sized station, was assigned to cover city council after reading the 7 p.m. news, that person would put a fresh reel of tape on the voice-activated tape recorder to take the voice feeds. If the station aired a hockey game that same evening, the next newscast wouldn't be until 11 p.m. The reporter could cover the meeting and return to the newsroom in time to prepare and read that newscast.

While the reporter was at City Hall, the voice service would have sent six transmissions from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. By

looking at the skeds on the printer, the reporter would know not only the contents of each transmission, but when the items were fed. If he/she wanted a story that was fed on the 7:40 transmission, then the reporter would know that the item would have been recorded near the beginning of the tape. Thus, a story that had been sent at 9:40 would be found near the point where the tape had stopped. Without skeds, the reporter would have had to rewind the tape and listen to the entire series of transmissions.

By 1982, Newsradio was serving 32 AM and 18 FM stations compared to SBN's 47 AM and ten FM customers. And apart from the dozen or so stations that were on the CHUM news system, BN Voice had become the choice of the remaining 100 or so stations that were large enough to afford a voice service for their newsrooms.²¹⁶

Local Stations cover Local News

Around 1960, local stations were proving they could be of great public service by giving priority to the coverage of major local news events. Two examples of such news coverage is the downtown Kitchener fire of December 1959, and the crippling snowstorm of February 3, 1960, which hit Halifax. They illustrate the length to which radio stations went to keep residents informed during disasters. For private stations, the low cost of equipping reporters with tape recorders, permitted them to compete with the CBC.

In Kitchener, a fire in a supermarket on one of the

main streets spread to neighbouring office buildings causing \$1.5 million damage. How radio stations covered that fire became the cover story on Canadian Broadcaster magazine the following month:

"CKKW's manager, Alan Hodge went on the air at 7.55 p.m. with a live report from the street in front of the burning buildings. He stood in the midst of the fire and spray for three hours as firemen fought to bring the blaze under control. He conducted 62 interviews, including 14 with Fire Chief, Ken Putnam as he directed operations. He also talked to police, the Mayor, city engineers, the fire department padre, Salvation Army helpers and tenants of the wrecked buildings.

In the meantime, the CKKW newsroom, three blocks away, was kept busy sending out a total of 22 telephone tapes to other radio stations. The most distant calling for a tape was CKRM, Regina."

The article goes on to describe how Kitchener's other radio station handled the fire:

"CKCR's newsman Frank Smith got his first news report away shortly before 5.00 p.m. (He was joined shortly afterwards by four other CKCR staffers). Paul Freeman, another station newsman, filed the fire story with Broadcast News in Toronto, which went over the wire at 6.00 bringing calls from stations as far away as Edmonton in the West and Montreal in the East.

They (CKCR) managed to get a direct line to the station from a law office across the street but were forced to leave when fire threatened the building. They relocated themselves in a top-floor hotel room, a half-block away and continued their coverage until after midnight.

The station sent telephone reports to CKEY, CJBC and CFRB, Toronto; CFPL, London; CFRA, Ottawa; CFCF and CJAD, Montreal and CHED, Edmonton." (sic) 217

It wasn't until 9:40 that evening that CKCO-TV Kitchener began its live coverage of the fire by interrupting "The Perry Como Show". Radio had beaten the TV station by

several hours because of the time it took CKCO to set-up its microwave transmitter at the fire scene.

Two months later, residents of southwest Nova Scotia woke up on the morning of Wednesday, February 3, 1960 to what was then the heaviest snowfall ever- 30.1 inches (76.5 cm). By the time CHNS announcer Frank Cameron began informing listeners in Halifax of the situation at 6 a.m., the storm, aided with winds of up to 100 k.p.h., had cut visibility to a matter of metres and drifts began to approach two metres. The situation in the city was serious and dangerous. Canadian Broadcaster also described that incident and how radio did its job:

"In thousands of homes radio suddenly became the focal point and in fact, the only connection with the outside world...At 6.00 am (CHNS) began to inform listeners of the situation: road travel, impossible; milk deliveries, nil; aircraft grounded; buses, either not operating or off schedule; electric power, off in some areas and, at several points, live high tension wires whipping city streets.

By 8.00 am the situation was serious. City Police used radio to tell the public to leave cars at home and where possible stay home themselves... Meetings were cancelled by the score as 150,000 people in Metropolitan Halifax realized it would be days before life would return to normal. In the first day CHNS broadcast over 150 cancellations, storm information, tape and live reports from other centres and information to the public from City Police, RCMP, Firemen, City Works and Highway Department officials.(sic)

CHNS, although understaffed due to the storm, stayed on the air 36 hours during and after the blizzard to pass-on news to the paralyzed areas of Nova Scotia. CHNS rented a room

at a nearby hotel and rotated its staff.

Meantime, Halifax's other private radio station, CJCH, also broadcast around the clock despite being hampered by a power failure which knocked it down to 100-watts during the first few hours of the storm. Together they played a key role in keeping essential services operating during.

"The Wednesday afternoon edition of the Mail-Star was printed as usual but could not be distributed. ...Citizens, confined to the four walls of their homes, relied on radio and their telephone. By 8.00 am Wednesday, all switchboards were clogged with calls. At the request of the Maritimes Telephone and Telegraph Company, all stations broadcast appeals to citizens to confine their calls to absolute necessities.

The radio appeal was heeded. The telephone load dropped 50 per cent within half an hour."

As in the case of the fire in Kitchener, Halifax stations also sent telephone reports to other stations. Among the stations fed by CHNS were: CFCF Montreal, CKY Winnipeg, CKCK Regina, CKCW Moncton, CHSL Saint John, CHED Edmonton and Monitor News in Washington, D.C. 218

The Kitchener and Halifax incidents are typical of the efforts made by local radio stations to assist their cities during emergencies. By the 1960s, radio stations, by exploiting their ability to do live and continuous reporting, became the prime source of information during critical moments. Radio's ability to respond quickly to disasters gave it a clear advantage over TV. Radio held the edge until TV acquired the technology to permit *live-eye* broadcasts via microwave or satellite-linked mobile trucks.

Still, whenever an emergency cuts off electricity, TV becomes useless. Radio, on the other hand, can still transmit because most stations have diesel or gas-run backup generators, and power needs are modest. Listeners, with battery-operated transistor radios or car radios, can still pick up the broadcasts. The ability of radio to continue relaying information despite power outages has been demonstrated time and time again in hundreds of communities; but none more dramatic than during the Great Blackout of northeastern North America of November, 1965.

It's still popular to joke about it and say: "Where were you when the lights went out?", when referring to the massive electric power failure of November 9-10. It lasted 12 hours and plunged tens of millions of North Americans into darkness. Most people who lived through that blackout spent a part of that night listening to radio.

With the teletype machines of CP, AP and UPI silenced by the loss of power, "ironically, the other media had to rely on radio to find out what was happening and where to deploy their staffs."

In a big way, the 1965 blackout restored to radio some of the prestige it had lost in 1938 as a result of "War of the Worlds" broadcast. For many that program had shown that radio had the power to create panic. "Nearly 30 years later, radio proved beyond any shadow of a doubt that it could soothe the troubled breast of a public faced with an

emergency the scope of which it could barely perceive," wrote the authors of RADIO In The TV Age. And it's highly likely that radio's performance during the Blackout was partly responsible for its high ratings in a subsequent public opinion poll. In 1968 a survey done in the U.S. for the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) reported that 85 per cent of those interviewed said they used radio to keep abreast.²¹⁹ The same was probably true in Canada.

CBC Radio goes FM and consolidates AM

In April 1960, CBM-FM Montreal, CBC-FM Toronto and CBO-FM Ottawa were linked-up by CN-CP lines to form Canada's first FM network.

Apart from high fidelity recorded music and some concerts borrowed from AM, the CBC-FM audience also heard news, talk and commentary. During its initial 18-month test period, the FM network, with its bilingual programming, was on the air during the evening hours on weekdays and from noon to midnight on weekends.²²⁰ This tri-city CBC-FM network was temporarily suspended in early 1962.

In October, the CBC discontinued one of its English AM networks- the Dominion Network. Some of the 22 private stations affiliated with the Dominion Network were shifted to the TransCanada Network. The new unified English AM network thus consisted of 54 private stations and 17 CBC stations.²²¹ The only CBC station that had been on the Dominion Network, CJBC, later became the Corporation's

French-language station in Toronto. CJBC remained at 860 kilohertz on the AM dial when it joined Radio-Canada. CFRB had relinquished 860 KHz to the CBC for the start-up of CJBC in 1947. CFRB was moved to 1010 KHz.

The Dominion Network folded because of TV's increasing role in providing light entertainment. By 1961, the BBG had approved TV licences for the establishment of private stations in all of the six cities which had been monopolized by CBC-TV. With *second stations* going on the air in Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Halifax and Ottawa, the demand by advertisers for network radio airtime had dropped dramatically. Private stations, by using *format radio* had localized their orientation and thus were in no need of a second CBC AM network to broadcast syndicated radio programs to a national audience.

In 1964, after assessing the performance of its experimental three-station FM network, the CBC resumed its FM network. But this time the network's bilingual programming was dropped and CBC-FM became exclusively English. Vancouver was added to the network by providing CBU-FM with tapes by mail until FM broadcast lines were extended to the west coast. Meantime, French CBC-FM service continued, but with only one station, Montreal.

The following year, the CBC began its first regular stereo broadcasts by equipping its FM station in Winnipeg with a stereo transmitter.²²² Stereo sound was possible on

FM because its broad signal allows for the transmission of two separate, but closely-spaced channels on the same frequency. Private stations lagged behind because of the cost of buying FM equipment.

Several factors pushed the CBC into accelerating its development of a FM network and stereo broadcasting. These same factors were forcing private stations to look at FM.

(a) In 1957, the first stereo albums were released by the record companies. The ripple effect of having stereo recordings played back on high fidelity phonographs in homes across the country, created a public demand for stereo broadcasting.

(b) In 1961, the FCC authorized American FM stations to broadcast in stereo. As a result, the BBG and CBC were under pressure not let Canadian FM lag behind the U.S., as it did with TV.

(c) The first FM car radios were introduced in 1963.

(d) In 1965, the FCC ordered AM-FM licence holders in the U.S. to discontinue the practice of simulcasting AM signals on FM stations. To comply, all holders of joint AM-FM licences, located in markets with a population over 100,000, had until 1967 to reduce AM-FM simulcasting by 50 per cent and replace that programming with original programs on FM.

As a result of these technical and political developments, Canada had little choice but to adopt many of

the American FM standards.

Cassettes replace Reel-to-Reels

Radio news moved a giant step forward in 1964 when Norelco-Philips introduced the miniature cassette tape and the portable cassette recorder.²²³ The cassette system had many advantages over reel-to-reel machines: The audio tape was housed in a plastic container that was slightly less than four inches long. The tape itself was also half the width of the quarter-inch variety. Combined, those dimensions meant that a cassette machine was much smaller than an Uher even if two 3-inch reels were used.

Secondly, the tape in the cassette was spliced together so it never ran off either reel. This feature eliminated the need to thread the tape through capstan rollers which positioned it over the magnetic heads. This made it easy to use in cold weather.

Also, less tape was needed for a cassette machine to make a recording because it operated at a slower speed than reel machines. Thus by using both sides of a cassette tape, up to two hours of information was recorded. For most news assignments, there was little need to carry extra cassette tapes. Most private stations found these machines cheaper to operate than reel-to-reels, so small, independent stations could compete with the CBC and news agencies.

One disadvantage is that cassette tape cannot be easily edited. Editing sounds recorded on cassette requires

electronic dubbing onto reel-to-reel tape. Reel tape can be easily edited by slicing it with a razor and splicing it with editing tape. But in time, many radio reporters became proficient at dubbing cassette sound directly onto cart without using reels.

Standard Broadcasting's Stu Morrison recalls when the first cassettes came out in the mid-1960s, they weren't suitable for broadcast use. "People stayed away from them in droves initially. They didn't trust them; let's face it, they weren't very good. No new products usually are. The SONY was probably the first one put into wide use. It was a small one with a piano keyboard."

Steve Madely began his radio news career at age 16 in 1963. He's now news director at CFRA Ottawa. Still in high school, he covered city council for CHWO Oakville, Ontario. He remembers that when he started, the radio industry was already using a great deal of taped voice material.

The first tape machine Madely used in Oakville wasn't even battery-powered. "I still have a picture of my covering the opening of GO Transit. Premier John Robarts was driving the GO train from Toronto to Oakville and I was in the engineer's cabin and he had his hands ceremoniously on the throttle and the tape machine that I had had to be re-wound by hand. It was a little reel-to-reel tape...and about the time that I was using that, I noticed that reporters from the quote 'big stations' end quote, were

using Uher reel-to-reel machines. They were the most popular machine at that time."

And while he worked at that community station in Oakville, Madely says there was a fair amount of call-out (hunting freelance stories by phone) by major stations to other stations when they were looking for voice material. "I can recall receiving calls from CKOC Hamilton, CFRB Toronto and CHUM Toronto, when there was an event taking place in Oakville. A major fire or an election; something along those lines."

But in the 1960s, the sound quality over phone lines varied with distance. "One of the major distinctions, between then and now, is in those days you could tell that a voicer coming-in from Oakville was closer than a voicer coming-in from Tel Aviv. Today we have our voicers coming-in from Tel Aviv on satellite; voicers coming-in from Oakville still come in on telephone. So Tel Aviv actually sounds better than Oakville," said Madely.

After Oakville, he worked at CHIQ Hamilton, but it was not until he moved to CKLC Kingston in 1966 that he saw a cassette machine being used at a radio station. He says they were still fairly expensive, but "terrific" for news applications. "The SONY TC-110 was the workhorse machine that everybody used and which I still have and guard very jealously. I still have some TC-110s and some TC-110-As. These are old machines, but the quality of them was superb.

They stood up to abuse and I challenge anyone to find a machine that works as well today."

Cassette recorders facilitated radio reporting because they eliminated carrying a bulky reel-to-reel that was only good for a 15 minute recording. Cassettes "certainly made it possible to more easily use wild sound and to conduct an interview. So there was increased use of audio clips as opposed to the straight voicer. *Wrap-arounds* (voicers with clips) really came into being largely through the use of the cassette machine," said Madely.

The cassette also increased a reporter's range in getting sound on tape in the field. Madely says reel-to-reels were adequate for recording events such as speeches which took place at fixed locations, "but, if you went to cover a fire or an accident scene, there was no way to get eyewitness accounts on tape."²²⁴ The cassette, which could run a week on the same set of flashlight batteries, gave reporters the opportunity to make recordings almost anywhere and for longer periods of time.

News directors of that time, such as Don Johnston of CHML and later CFRB in 1972, say the portability of the cassette machine wasn't its only asset. "The main thing about it was it brought the price down. For the price of a Nagra, which was the ultimate in reel recording, you could equip a whole staff with cassette recorders which you literally threw away when they wore out, and buy new ones

innovations such as *swing* or *bop*.

The increased variety of sounds recorded and sold to the public, gave radio stations the opportunity to create new radio formats. Stations which wanted to cater to the older adult audience adopted the *adult contemporary* format by playing traditional *pop* music. Stations which wanted a younger audience went to a *Top 40* format by concentrating on rock-n-roll hits. The *middle-of-the-road* (MOR) format was used by stations which wanted to target on people who liked hearing anything from *big band* to stylized vocals. Other stations used country, jazz, *easy listening* and other forms of music to foster specific followings.

Radio was able to continue as a massive medium by highly fragmenting its audience. The various musical formats forced radio to become a local rather than a national medium. There are no national networks of, say, country and western music stations.

But there was more to these formats than just playing music. Most North American stations added news, sports and talk to their program policies. Although music was the dominant element in the overall mix, radio inserted the information component to prevent it from being a glorified jukebox service. By providing news faster than any other medium, radio had the edge. The exploitation of its ability to deliver news with speed and immediacy, yielded the radio industry another important weapon in its battle with TV.

his staff gathered with cassettes, his newsroom was forced to re-think its policy on using tape. The time had come for the setting and enforcing of the first formal rules on the use of tape for news. Tape had to be edited and used on air with discretion. General theories about audio material had to be formulated, and a workable and understandable set of guidelines, often unwritten, established.

"I think we did some pioneering stuff in the use of tape- keeping it short. The most simple concept in tape is so simple and yet we had the most difficulty getting this across to people. A piece of tape should state one simple thought," says Smyth.

"It shouldn't have a guy rhyming-off four or five things. If you have a situation where there are four things- you (reporter) mention four of them and let the guy on tape mention the fifth. It's a gut feeling you get; I mean you can't really write any rules. Sometimes a piece of tape is 40 seconds long, but it's so good it sounds as if it is ten. And sometimes, a piece of tape is ten seconds long, but it sounds so bloody dull it sounds like 40 seconds long."

Smyth believes that in the late-1960s, stations were using too much tape. And although he says "a bit of tape is like a picture in a newspaper", using a lot of tape in a newscast can be confusing to the listener, especially if the tapes are "meaningless clips". To alleviate that

problem. Smyth encouraged his staff to follow some basic criteria: "Tape has to be well-edited and it's got to add to the newscast."

Smyth, who believes that tape can be a very powerful tool for reporters if used correctly, discovered that certain types of sounds proved to be distracting when used in a newscast. One is music. "As an example, let's say Bing Crosby died and here's a little clip from one of his records (inserted into the story about his death)- I find that very confusing. Music in a newscast is confusing to the listener because he'll say: 'What's that, what's that?' You always start from the assumption that people are very lazy. They don't want to be bothered thinking too much. You have to lay it out simply for them."

By 1969 CKLW had become a Top 40 station with fast-paced newscasts. Smyth left Windsor that year to become news director at CHUM Toronto. Then one day CHUM decided to cut back a little on the use of tape and slow down the pace of the news delivery. According to Smyth, these two adjustments made the CHUM newscasts more intelligible. "Suddenly we were getting letters and phonecalls from people who were actually listening to what we were saying. It wasn't this babble of noise in the background. People were actually listening."

Toward the Modern Newsroom

Of all the mass media that were displaced economically

by the introduction of TV in the first half of the 1950s, radio was the first to strike back. It survived the competition of TV in the 1950s by switching from mass-appeal programs to programs targeted at specific audiences. Radio did this by opting to go the specialized music route.

Recorded music was an inexpensive source of programming material. A private station, even in the big markets, didn't have a large enough cash flow to produce a daily schedule of dramas, plays, comedies, sitcoms, game shows and musicals. Radio stations could have broadcast dramas, comedies, or game shows designed for specific segments of the total audience; and in this way radio could have competed with TV. But, the high cost of producing such labour intensive shows was prohibitive.

Had radio not reverted to the use of recorded music, it could have tried other ways to compete with TV. For instance, individual radio stations could have aired nothing but specialized plays, dramas, game shows or interviews to different slices of the audience. One station could have gone after the high-income, well-educated portion of the adult population by airing dramas based on the classics, while another station in the same market could have appealed to only the hip teenage crowd by offering plays about beatniks or rock-n-roll musicals. And yet another station could have specialized in lunch pail comedies for the blue collar class, and so on.

In our society, there are are enough sub-classes according to age, income, education, employment, geography, leisure activities, etc., to have provided radio stations with many special groups to cater to. But most stations did not have the capital to finance such projects. While TV networks had the money to pay for the talent necessary to broadcast dozens of weekly serials and daily soap operas, non network radio operators only had enough to pay the salaries of a handful of announcers, writers and reporters. Playing recorded music was radio's cheapest option to cater to specialized audiences.

When radio decided to do battle with TV in the early-1950s, the major record companies were only providing three basic kinds of musical ammunition: (1) white popular, (2) classical, and (3) show tunes or theatrical music.

Later that decade, as minority musical tastes were identified as being economically viable by the record companies, more varied musical forms became available for airplay. Most of the musical revolution happened in the white popular musical category. Rural, Black *rhythm-and-blues* or *R & B* became urbanized and whitewashed by the record companies. The result was rock-n-roll music for the young, white audience. Lower class *hillbilly* music was polished into middle-class *country-and-western* music. Amateur *people music* became professionalized into *folk* music. And *jazz* became nationwide with the help of

innovations such as *swing* or *bop*.

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But there was more to these formats than just playing music. Most North American stations added news, sports and talk to their program policies. Although music was the dominant element in the overall mix, radio inserted the information component to prevent it from being a glorified jukebox service. By providing news faster than any other medium, radio had the edge. The exploitation of its ability to deliver news with speed and immediacy, yielded the radio industry another important weapon in its battle with TV.

Much of radio's strength and health today can be traced to the formats introduced during the early years of TV. An individual could tune to a station which played his/her favourite type of music. The car radio and transistor allowed that same person to continue his/her listening habit almost anywhere. With newscasts backing up the music, listeners didn't need to consult other sources to get the news headlines. Formats which incorporated a heavy dose of a particular type of music along with regular hourly newscasts, became the key to success for most stations.

If TV had locked-up the evening hours with its general entertainment shows and network newscasts, radio proceeded to find new audiences that TV didn't reach. Radio did this by specializing in kinds of music that TV didn't dare touch, and by concentrating its news content on local events which the TV networks failed to cover.

Also central to radio's rebirth was the creation of its own prime time. TV was unable to reach easily, people waking up, having breakfast, getting dressed and travelling back and forth to work or school. Because radio didn't demand the listener's visual attention it became the ideal medium for people on-the-go.

Paul Rutherford credited the new formats with saving radio from the initial threats of TV. "The popularity of the disc jockey on private stations pointed the way to recovery. This radio personality, a type born after 1945,

gave a special tone through his patter and music to distinct segments of the day: the breakfast hours, the morning and lunch-time work period, the afternoon rest, the teenager's evening and so on.

"The 'sixties witnessed the growth of so-called 'Top 40' stations. CHUM Toronto perhaps the most notorious, which blared out regularly the ephemeral tunes on the hit parade for an audience of teenagers and young adults."

Radio also added innovative gimmicks to its format to lure viewers away from the daily TV soaps and game shows. "More striking was the sudden rise of the 'open' or 'hot' line show, usually involving an aggressive announcer ready to exchange over the air opinions and insults with listeners who might telephone in." Rutherford said.²²⁵

Among the notable talk show hosts in the 1960s were Larry Solway with his liberal-leaning "Speak Your Mind" program on CHUM Toronto and Pat Burns on CKGM Montreal, who earned that station "a censure from the Canadian Radio-Television Commission in 1968 because of his offensive, supposedly anti-French approach to issues."²²⁶

Meantime, public radio took on the role of alternative radio. Rutherford says the CBC's radio format during the 1960s, which remains virtually intact, "by contrast, turned to minority programming for housewives, music buffs, intellectuals, news addicts, New Canadians, culture-vultures, native peoples, and so on."

Unlike the newspapers, news is not the *raison d'être* for radio stations- except for the specialized and relatively recent all-news stations.

The primary content of a newspaper is news. News items share the pages with advertising. TV is as much an entertainment vehicle as anything, with only a few hours a day devoted to newscasts. On radio, although news is important, it is not the main element in programming. News is really an interruption of the music. It's the kind of musical format employed by an individual station that is responsible for the type of listener that station attracts. Thus the style of the news product must harmonize with the character of the disc-jockey and the music he/she plays. The reporter, newscaster or writer, working for a radio station must adapt to that station's overall image.

The reporters who staffed the radio newsrooms of the 1960s and 1970s faced many difficulties. Not only did they had to learn how to write for the ear and how to use tape, but to learn how to cope with various music formats. Radio formats had a big impact on newscasts. Formats dictated what style, tone, pace, emphasis and story selection that was to be used. They also decided how long, at what times of the day, and at what intervals the newscasts would run.

A radio reporter transferring to CHUM from CFRB faced more of an adjustment than a print reporter switching from the Toronto Star to the Telegram.

The development of the truly modern radio newsroom is much more than the mastering of audio, telephone and voice service tape. Its development was finally realized when news staffs applied themselves to work in sync with the various music formats. For without the formats, which saved radio from TV's popular appeal, there would have been few newscasts for radio reporters to work on.

In the mid-1960s, private radio's commitment to the format system allowed it the opportunity to take advantage of new musical trends. In *pop* music, rock-n-roll was replaced by *rock*. Those years saw a "resurgence of adolescent rebellion". But, unlike the teenage movement of the 1950s, the youthful disobedience of the 1960s "ripened into highly articulate political activism."²²⁷

If rock-n-roll dance music symbolized teenage identity in the 1950s, then rock became the sound of the 1960's rebellion. AM Top 40 stations were able to switch easily to this new musical wave by playing the top rock hits. By being part of this new fad, radio was rewarded with even higher ratings and advertising revenues. TV, which confined itself to family programming, did little to exploit the 1960's counterculture and the rock music explosion.

The arrival of rock bands from Britain (i.e. the Beatles and Rolling Stones), from *Motown* (Stevie Wonder), and from California (Beach Boys), gave format radio fresh, powerful material to continue its on-going battle with TV.

Rock music soon dominated the recording business. According to the authors of Mass Media, "Rock music is the only musical form that is indigenous to the electronic media. In fact, rock is the only music where the recording is the original, and the live performance is the imitation."²²⁸ This situation permitted stations and record companies to work together to promote the sale of rock hits. Radio gave bands free exposure, while record labels provided rock stations with extremely popular material.

Rock music of the 1960s was born during "the longest sustained economic boom on record (that) spanned almost the entire decade in the capitalist world." It was also a decade of reform and radicalization spurred by "a series of political and social reform movements", which had taken root "in the U.S., later spreading to other countries." It was a time of believing in causes. A new concern for the poor emerged as well as a revival of feminism. Opposition to American involvement in Vietnam, especially among university students, turned violent.

In the 1960s, "informality and exaggeration prevailed in fashion (beards, miniskirts). A 'counterculture' developed, rejecting traditional bourgeois life goals and personal habits, and use of marijuana and hallucinogens spread (Woodstock Festival, August 1969)."²²⁹

Rock music became the voice of social change and its sound has "always been a direct assault on adult

sensibility. It purposely alienates adults, which is one reason young people respond to it- it is their culture." Rock music is, in effect, rock politics, rock economics and rock sociology.²³⁰ And with rock being synonymous with radio, it was envitable that the content of many radio newscasts, in the 1960s and 1970s, sprang from the counterculture. It was natural for rock stations to play-up stories about the youth movement.

Stories concerning discrimination against long-haired males, details on drug overdoses of rock stars, reports of violence during the protest marches, and other counterculture-related events, kept radio reporters very busy in the so-called *hippie* or *flower power* years.

Compared to the non-political *disco* music era of the late 1970s, the youth movement of the 1960s was a bonanza for radio newsrooms.

But, many radio reporters had a hard time co-existing with the rock formats. Most Top 40 stations tended to cut back on news, especially on the length of newscasts. Rock stations wanted to play more music.

Dick Smyth was news director at CKLW Windsor when it was converted into a *rock*er. "People like myself had a great number of problems when rock-n-roll radio came in. News was considered a tune-out; news was considered clutter. There was this tremendous drive to bury the news; like the '20-20 News' concept at CKLW (meaning newscasts

were aired at 20 minutes before and after the top of the hour). The strategy behind that was your station was playing music while the other stations were broadcasting news on the hour. It was really an anti-news move."

The program directors, who brought in the various rock radio formats, opposed the news departments' traditional, straightfoward approach to news. As a result, many program directors slashed news staffs and newscasts.

"I really believe that the reason this happened is that a lot of newspeople from that time were terribly structured in their thinking. Whereas radio was changing, the newspeople were not willing to change. And that's one reason people such as program directors came and said: 'We don't want this news. We don't want this stiff, serious business on the air'," said Smyth.

He says if news directors of that time would have been "smarter", they would have realized that the program directors had no real intention "to totally throw news right out of the window." There would have been fewer problems had the news staffs learned to co-operate and modernize their news product. News directors should have adopted the attitude that "you are not going to resist change and you are going to realize that news is not something sacred onto itself, and that it (news) is really part of the total programming flow."

Smyth says his CKLW "20-20 News" staff introduced many

innovations designed to keep newscasts in step with the rock format. Most of them centered on imitating the conversational style of the disc jockeys. For example, he substituted the standard voice report with something called a *voicality*. It freed reporters from using formal tones. Reading from prepared scripts often sounded too rehearsed.

Voicalities are produced by having someone in the newsroom contact, by phone or two-way radio, a reporter who is on the scene of a story. Without using a written text, the reporter simply answers the questions in a normal conversational manner. The newsroom records the question-and-answer session (also called *Q-and-As*) and then edits clips from that conversation for use on the newscasts.

For the reporter, doing a voicality "was almost as if you were being interviewed or debriefed," said Smyth. The chitchat effect of allowing a reporter to *ad lib* the story permitted the news to sound "more like the jock; more in keeping with the sound of the (rock) radio station."

The use of voicalities had other benefits. Instead of airing voicers, in which reporters are given 40 to 60 seconds to summarize entire stories, voicalities gave newscasters the option of using shorter material. By having reporters answer specific questions and then editing the interviews, the newsroom could air short clips rather than long voicers. Smyth found that when reporters were asked to describe just one facet of a story, most kept their

4

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS-1963-A
STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1910A
(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

observations under 25 seconds. Voicalities were ideal for the shortened newscasts of the 1960s and 1970s.

For Smyth, voicalities made it easier for reporters to cover stories. "It's so much easier to let somebody interview you and let you talk about it in your own words than to let somebody write 60 seconds of copy." This is a major consideration for anyone working under the pressure of a deadline.

When Smyth moved to Toronto in 1969, he took the voicality concept with him to CHUM News. The device became a common feature on CHUM's network newscasts which Smyth read out of Toronto. In the 1970s, CHUM began using the string of stations it owned across Canada as a source of news material. The CHUM-owned stations were asked to contribute items to the network newscast.

He found out that not all the reporters working for the CHUM affiliates had the necessary skills and composure to produce network quality voicers. "Some of the guys really weren't up to snuff. But, if you interviewed the guy, if you put him on on a one-on-one basis, an inadequate performer became quite adequate because he was just talking. And you have control over editing as well."

Eventually the practice of using voicalities was accepted by the major radio news agencies. ABC Radio News called them *ROSRs* which stood for Reporter-on-the-Scene-Report. Other companies dubbed them *sound bites*. CBC, CBS

and NBC later developed the practice of carving-out radio voicalities from video reports their TV correspondents had filed from overseas locations. Using sound bites from TV stories gave the radio networks audio material in cases where only TV reporters had been assigned.

Format radio also produced problems for news staffs of adult-oriented stations, such as CFRB Toronto, which didn't convert to rock music. The evolution of modern radio newsrooms at news-oriented stations was constrained by the format used by such stations.

Radio newsrooms are staffed according to the demands of a particular station's format and journalistic policy. Hourly newscasts mean newsroom personnel have to work in shifts. In stations that air hourly news around the clock, night and day, a part of the news crew is always on duty.

Conversely, if a radio station had only one newscast per day, let's say at 6 p.m., then the radio staff would have all morning and afternoon to gather enough news for that broadcast. Reporters working on fast-breaking stories would wait until the last minute before deadline before writing their stories. There may be the need for only one or two shifts.

In reality, radio news goes to air every hour and in some cases- every half-hour. Working for radio news is similar to being a short-order cook at a fast-food restaurant- customers want various snacks at all hours.

While working in newspapers is akin to the preparation of the daily family dinner- one has all day to arrange a four-course feast.

In the 1950s the major radio newscasts were much longer than they are today. It was not uncommon to have ten, 15 or 20-minute newscasts with minor newscasts in the five-to-ten minute range. The formats of the 1960s, including those of the news-oriented stations, did not permit that much news to be on the schedule every hour. The lengths of newscasts were cut by about half.

Newscast lengths directly affect the working habits of radio newspeople. Longer newscasts allow two things to happen: newsreaders can choose to insert more stories into a newscast, or they can pad the show with longer stories. Frequently, they do a combination of both- use a few long voicers with many short script items.

Generally when more stories are used, newscasters or writers have to do more work. For a ten-minute newscast, it takes more time to re-write twenty 30-second script-only stories than it does to use four or five one-minute long voicers along with five minutes of short script stories. Newscasters are tempted to use long voicers because they have only 50 minutes to prepare the next newscast.

In the 1950s, many newscasters used to select 60-second taped voicers to bail them out when they hadn't prepared enough material by deadline. At the end of that

decade, reliance on long voicers became routine. But in the 1960s, when newscasts were trimmed-down, many private sector reporters continued to feed stations one-minute pieces. Many years passed before news directors and news agency editors limited voicers to 35-to-40 seconds.

Stu Morrison, who helped develop a voice service for Standard Broadcasting, says indolence in newsrooms was a major reason that so many 60-second voicers were still being used in the shortened newscasts of the 1960s. "Laziness was the key. If you fed a guy a 60-second report, that meant one minute of the newscast he didn't have to worry about. That's very cynical, but it's true."

He says newscasters would ask for tape even if the story was old. Among the excuses given to justify the use of out-dated tape were: "It dresses up a newscast", "It makes it sound better", or "It makes us sound as if we're really on top of things".

However, Morrison says the real reason such out-dated tape was used was a lax attitude on the part of some newscasters. "Basically he wanted it because he couldn't be bothered writing the story himself. He had all the information, either from the audio or from one of the wire services, but, he didn't sit down and re-write it. There was a lot of that going on. There wasn't the same type of tight controls as there is now."

As far as writing for the ear, he says that was still

a problem in the radio newsrooms of the 1960s. "They didn't write as people talk- I mean common discussion; intelligent conversation." He says those who prepared the news cared more about what the stories said than on how they were phrased. "They tried to be the voice of record. In other words, they didn't use very much editorial judgement on saying: 'This story is important, but boy!- is it ever dull the way it is coming-in at us; we have to do something about that'."

Morrison says, that while newscasters in the 1960s were good at selecting the most newsworthy stories, most of them weren't as good at writing understandable and exciting copy. And often the contents of a good story were wasted as a result of reading poorly-written wire copy directly on the air. When attempts at re-writing were made, "it probably would be as pontificating and esoteric as the stuff that originally came over the wire."

He says newscasters of the 1960s didn't fare much better when they wrote for tape. The introductions they prepared for voicers and clips were "long and involved. They were wordy as hell- just like the voice reports."

Morrison's long-time colleague at Standard, John McFadyen, says the core of most 1960's radio newsrooms consisted of people with backgrounds in print. "The problem was the ex-newspaper guy who wrote four-page local stories. He couldn't do a two-vehicle accident in less than two

pages and he literally churned out four double-spaced pages every time. And that is why we were doing ten and 15-minute local newscasts."

At the outside of the core were what McFadyen called "the wave of the future." This wave consisted of people with no education, experience or typing skills: coming out of disc-jockey jobs into radio newsrooms. The two groups, ex-print reporters and the new radio people, had trouble co-existing in the same newsroom. The clash between the two was a major reason that radio's modernization was held up.

Ex-newspapermen and uneducated D.J.s-turned-reporters, were hardly the right candidates to satisfy the demands of format radio.

Radio reporters also worked with fear until the 1970s. Station owners and managers always had the last word over the contents of newscasts. Management's power of veto was a real threat to reporters. Newsrooms had little autonomy.

This fear often made many reporters less aggressive than they should have been. Radio reporters "were quite prepared to hustle City Hall to find out what was going on down there, but they usually never rattled too many chains. They were afraid that the mayor would phone-up the station manager about his reporter trying to be a bit of a jerk and probing too much into one subject or another. So there was always that terror. And there still is in some smaller markets," said Stu Morrison.

Another terror radio reporters faced was the prospect of getting a station's advertiser involved in a critical story. "They had to be very careful with sponsors because if the sponsor phoned up the sales manager, who was usually the manager in a small station, and says: 'Look- your guy just gave me a rotten shot in 'the eight o'clock news this morning'. The story would probably die," said Morrison.

Not all radio reporters folded under management pressure. Bert Cannings' philosophy was to report the news despite objections from his supervisors. On several occasions he placed his job on the line in the defence of his news policy.

One of the first incidents occurred in 1945 when Cannings was reporting for CKWX Vancouver. His news director at that time was Sam Ross.

"The Spencer chain of stores in Vancouver sponsored the newscasts at noon. And I was covering the police courts and found that under the Wartime Practices Act, one of their butchers was caught weighing his hand with the meat. They were fined \$5,000. Now, I had phoned-in that story about eleven o'clock. I would have been extremely disappointed had Ross killed that story. But, no, he used it. It wasn't the lead story, but he used it," said Cannings.

Five years after becoming news director at CFCF Montreal in 1955, another incident occurred which again tested his news philosophy. Right after the Israelis hanged Adolf Eichmann for war crimes, a man named Herb Manning went on CKGM Montreal and called the Israelis murderers.

As Cannings recalled:

"Within two hours there was quite a parade of several hundred members of the Jewish community who had marched on CKGM, led by a very prominent man, Nathan Steinberg, who ran a grocery chain. They broke windows and threw rocks and he threatened to pull off CKGM some \$40,000 worth of advertising.

My (CFCF) manager was there. I had two mobiles at the scene and he wondered if it was wise if we should broadcast this story. I pointed out that we had been on the air for more than an hour and the thing was coming to a climax. He thought we should pull our coverage and I walked away from him. He could have stopped us in the control room, but he didn't. So that was one I won, sort of hands-down."

In 1961, CFCF-TV made its debut and Cannings became news director of radio and TV. And until he retired in 1974, CFCF operated a joint radio-TV newsroom. "They fed each other in the field and through the assignment desk. It was economically viable and effective. We were able to keep our street reporters to seven." With only radio in 1957, CFCF had an eight-person news staff- three reporters and the rest on the news desk. Jointly operated radio-TV newsrooms allowed many private broadcasters to compete with the larger newsrooms of the CBC networks.

By the time CFCF got its TV licence, Cannings had been in broadcasting for 25 years. During that quarter-century, radio had shed many of its primitive forms as it evolved into an information medium. In 1936, Cannings was turning out radio copy for CJCJ Calgary, a station owned by the Albertan. But in 1961, he had become the head of CFCF's

radio-TV newsroom which had no ties with the papers. The arrival of private sector TV news helped radio news cut its links with the journalistic practices of the print medium.

As Professor Peter Bruck noted, the newspapers' early influence on broadcasting meant that radio "news was not to be talked, but to be written, thus establishing a hegemonic practice which would last till the days when television was taken as a new model. TV changed the discursive practice of radio."²³¹

Because TV is a form of broadcasting, it became a better and more natural model for radio news than print journalism. And although TV requires the spoken words to match the pictures, radio learned a lot from TV news since TV scripts are also written for the ear. However, TV is a purer form of broadcasting because it didn't start out as a talking newspaper as radio did.

In its first decade of broadcasting, TV news borrowed many techniques from radio. This imitation of radio by TV led Paul Rutherford to state: "No wonder early television was often called radio with pictures...televised newscasts were a combination of radio bulletins, newspaper headlines and the movie newsreels."²³² But as TV matured and became established, the roles switched and radio drew from the experiences TV news had gone through.

By the early-1970s, most manufacturers of broadcast equipment had shifted their focus from radio to TV because

there was more demand. By 1975, in terms of advertising revenues, Canadian TV had become a bigger industry than radio. In that year, TV took-in \$245-million compared to \$203-million for radio.²³³ What is significant about those figures is that there were four times as many radio stations as there were TV channels.

The average budgets of radio news departments were much smaller than those of TV newsrooms. And despite the fact TV equipment was more costly, TV stations had more money, which enabled them to introduce more technical innovations than radio.

If the use of tape recordings and telephones gave radio news the ability to break away from the traditions of newspaper reporting, then TV forced radio to re-define its role in broadcast journalism. Before TV news, radio was content with using actuality sound and immediacy in reporting to compete with print. But, with TV's ability to broadcast several live newscasts on a daily basis and with more detail than radio provided, radio had no choice but to revamp its news product. To keep pace with TV, radio had to specialize in areas that TV was vulnerable.

Network TV news was national in scope. Therefore radio exploited TV's lack of local news. Few people watched TV in the morning, so radio packed its morning run with newscasts on the half-hour. TV, which made substantial advertising revenues from airing soaps in the afternoons and sitcoms in

the evenings, was hesitant to interrupt normal programming for live news bulletins. Radio, on the other hand, with its rolling musical formats, could simply stop the turntable and go directly to the newsroom or a reporter in the field for a live news flash. Because TV shows were packaged in half-hour or one-hour episodes, they were difficult to preempt. A live news bulletin inserted into a TV show ruined that show's continuity. On radio, the playing of recorded music could be easily sacrificed for special news reports.

Later in the mid-1970s, when videotape cameras replaced 16-millimetre film cameras, TV news gained the ability to air video tape, shot at the scene of a story, almost as quickly as radio aired audio tape. With the invention of portable videotape equipment (known as *electronic news gathering* or *E.N.G.*), radio's speed edge narrowed. The only difference that remained was the time it took TV crews to bring tapes back to the studio compared to the time it took radio reporters to find phones or two-way radios. Usually the difference was negligible.

Later the introduction of mobile satellite and microwave facilities provided TV news with the capacity to do live broadcasts anywhere. The feed from on-location cameras was sent directly back to the station by satellite dishes or microwave transmitters mounted on trucks. Setting up the antennas caused the only delay. Thus the the time it took radio reporters to find phones and the time it took TV

crews to align antennas became almost identical.

Improvements in TV technology in the late-1970s and early-1980s caused radio to lose its unique ability to air live news reports from the scene. But TV still costs more. Frequent use of live, on-location TV reporting was held in check by economic considerations. Except for scheduled newscasts, it made little economic sense to air an abundance of live reports. Only stories of extreme importance were allowed to interrupt normal programming.

TV used its ability to *go live* to help give immediacy to its newscasts. Live reports from the scene of on-going stories, during newscasts, were fresher than pre-recorded videotapes. Live reports were also ideal for TV's coverage of elections and special sporting events such as the Olympics. So effective were those live reports on TV that private radio decided to drop its live, in-depth coverage of elections, political conventions, budgets, manned space missions, summit meetings, etc.

Live reports on radio thus became confined to spot news or sports. Radio became the ideal medium to provide live coverage of unscheduled events which TV deemed as having too little news value to warrant live treatment.

For Dick Smyth, the microwave and satellite-equipped TV news crews forced radio to abandon its extensive coverage of special events.

"At one time television was a very bulky medium. It

didn't have the capacity to go out on the scene and broadcast live like radio always did so well with nothing more than a telephone. Television now has that capacity and has had it for a number of years. So they are really doing our number. Take (Toronto's) CITY-TV with the 'live eyes'- they do what we do except better. Most radio stations don't get into really in-depth election coverage because it's television's game." said Smyth.

As the *live eyes* transformed TV, radio news was forced to find itself a new role. Some say private radio has now become a headline news service. Without the ability to transmit moving pictures, radio realized it was pointless to duplicate TV's live coverage of special events. By not competing head-to-head with TV, radio became free to concentrate on the reporting of hard, fast news.

"I really think radio news is a friend," said Smyth in describing radio's contemporary news role. "Radio is basic information; it's a quick update. It's a reassurance the world didn't blow-up overnight. It's a quick fix for people in cars; it's certainly service information- traffic, weather. It's news to help you live and I think that is very important."

To gather news faster than *live eye* TV, radio reporters, assigned to desk duty, discovered new ways of using the telephone. One new method involved placing radio *scanners* in newsrooms. They are radio receivers which are

tuned to pick up VHF frequencies. Various emergency services use VHF radio to permit dispatchers to talk to vehicles in the field. Police forces, fire departments, ambulance services, weather offices and airport traffic controllers all use VHF for their internal communications.

Although scanners can browse through the entire spectrum of VHF frequencies, those used in newsrooms are programmed to pick up only the frequencies used by public agencies. One model, the Bearcat, monitors up to 20 VHF channels in just one second. When it senses someone is using one of those frequencies, it stops scanning and locks onto that transmission. Reporters who eavesdrop on such conversations, often are tipped-off to newsworthy events.

The scanner may discover that someone has started to talk, let's say, on Channel-4. It locks onto that frequency and the reporter hears something like this:

"Car 15, do you read?"

"Car 15. We're at Main and Bay Streets."

"Car 15. Proceed to 250 Main West. Possible fire in progress. There's been a report of an explosion. Ambulance is on its way. Do you copy?"

"Car 15. We're headed to 250 Main West. Over."

So the reporter, knowing that Channel-4 on the scanner has been pre-set to monitor police radio transmissions, now knows the force has dispatched a cruiser to deal with an emergency at a given location. And although the information

is sketchy and hasn't been verified by police. it could be the makings of a good story.

To find out more, the desk reporter may try reaching the station's roving reporter who is patrolling the city in a radio-equipped car. After directing that reporter to the fire, he/she will call police headquarters. But, usually during the early stages of possible emergencies, officials have very few details to release to the news media.

The desk reporter will then consult a cross-reference guidebook known as a *city directory*. Usually they are composed of three sections. One section lists the address and phone number if the name is known. The second section yields the name and address if the phone number is known. And the third section reveals a specific address if either the name or phone number is known.

In this case the reporter refers to the address listings and finds out that 250 Main Street West is the Canadian Shoe Company. He/she calls that business, but the phone line is dead. The reporter then sees that a Mr. John Wilson lives at 253 Main West, which is across the street from the fire. He/she calls Mr. Wilson:

"Hello, Mr. Wilson? This is Pat Gray from CJAM News. What is happening across the street?"

"Oh, there's just been a huge blast at the shoe place. There's a lot of smoke coming from the building," says Mr. Wilson.

"Do you mind if I roll a tape for our news?" says the reporter, activating a tape recorder to record the phone conversation.

"No, no problem," says the Main Street West resident who has just agreed to become an eyewitness.

"Well, what's going on? Anybody hurt?" fires the reporter while listening to the scanner in the event there is more talk from police, fire or ambulance crews.

So by using the city directory to track down who lives by the address given by police radio, that reporter was able to gather enough details for a story very quickly.

City directories, even the ones prepared for smaller cities, can cost a newsroom a few hundred dollars just for one copy. But, they are indispensable for the staff of a radio newsroom in a hurry to talk to eyewitnesses. Most people are willing to co-operate. In some cases, persons who were asked to be eyewitnesses have co-operated to the extent of holding up their telephones to permit the radio station to record the live, wild sounds of an event, such as a gun battle.

Radio reporters found out quickly that they had to be careful with eyewitness accounts. Eyewitnesses may not be experts. For example, a person may see dark smoke bellowing from a building and describe it as an out-of-control inferno. Meantime, a firefighter may conclude that despite the heavy smoke, the fire is relatively minor. Reporters

also learned that when people get excited, they tend to exaggerate what they see.

For those reasons, there are guidelines on using eyewitness accounts. One main rule is to let the listener know that eyewitness' accounts are not official versions of what has happened. The comments made by eyewitnesses have to be qualified, as demonstrated in this sample story:

"Fire crews are still at the scene of an explosion on Main Street West, this hour. And although the police department won't confirm any injuries, an eyewitness says he just saw ambulance attendants removing people from the Canadian Shoe Company building...
[Insert clip of eyewitness here]"

Another rule is to get more than one eyewitness account.

Smaller, battery-operated, portable scanners came on the market in the late-1970s. These allowed radio reporters to find out where crimes, accidents and disasters were occurring, while they were driving news cruisers or simply walking down the street. Reporters who used mobile scanners often arrived at the scene before the authorities.

In the mid-1960s, Bert Cannings purchased walkie-talkies for CFCF News. These hand-held, two-way radios gave his field reporters the ability to talk to the newsroom without having to find a telephone or go back to the radio-equipped news car. "Walkie-talkies were invaluable in the riots, marching, bombings, kidnappings and killings in the 1960s and 1970" in Quebec, said Cannings.

Also in the 1960s, CFRB Toronto became the first

station in Canada to equip its reporters with hand-held relay radios. This device is similar to a walkie-talkie except it uses the news cruiser's powerful two-way radio as a relay in the feeding of broadcast-quality reports from the hand-held relay to the newsroom. A reporter would cover a story with the hand-held relay. It would beam a signal back to the radio in the news cruiser, which in turn would pass on the signal back to the station.

Don Johnston says the hand-held relay (which was called a *handy-talky* at CFRB) gave the station an advantage over the competition. For example, "last-minute contract settlements in hotel rooms. We could go on the air live with the hand-held relay through the base station (the news car) while everybody else was running for phones."

And when mobile telephones became available in cars, radio newsrooms were quick to exploit that technology. For radio news, it's a great asset to get in touch with newsmakers while they are in transit. Just as most newsrooms have access to the unlisted phone numbers of politicians and other prominent people, radio newsrooms are especially keen on obtaining the private phone numbers of well-known figures who use telephone-equipped vehicles. Usually these unlisted numbers are given to reporters on the condition they remain confidential.

In the 1960s and 1970s an interesting dilemma presented itself. On the one hand, the only thing going for

report, the Fowler commissioners recommended the abolition of the BBG and a return to the 1957 situation in which the CBC Board of Governors would not only administer public broadcasting, but the affairs of the private sector.²³⁵

The Liberal government saw things differently. In 1968 Secretary of State Judy LaMarsh's new Broadcasting Act created a new broadcasting authority. In establishing the Canadian Radio-Television Commission (CRTC) to replace the BBG, the Act gave the new authority wider regulatory powers. The CRTC was empowered to issue broadcasting licences and prescribe their terms, and it could implement its own policies free from government interference.

According to T.J. Allard, the BBG was replaced by the CRTC, "partly because its members were politically inexperienced, partly because CBC's top officers of that day were unable and unwilling to accept the concept of a separate regulatory body and created every possible difficulty for the BBG; more largely because the BBG interpreted the Grey Cup football game to be a program of great national importance."²³⁶

The football game referred to by Allard is the 1962 Grey Cup. That year the CTV network had outbid the CBC for the rights to telecast the Canadian Football League's championship match. But CTV hadn't completed its coast-to-coast network by then and having the game on CTV meant many football fans would have been unable to watch it. The BBG

sharp turn back to immediacy when TV technology began to rival, if not surpass, radio's speed in delivering news.

"It's only really recently when the TV guys came along with their live eyes and their cameras in the skies and all that stuff, that we sat down and said: 'Wow! We have to go three times as fast to beat these TV guys and realize we've been missing a trick.'" said McFadyen. Radio news came back with not only telephone voicers, but more expensive two-way radios which sounded at par with studio equipment.

The second generation of cassette recorders came on the market in the mid-1970s. These machines produced a more professional sound than the earlier models. These improved machines, such as the \$500 SONY TC-142 and TC-5000, had built-in V.U. meters which enabled reporters to adjust the recording volume during interviews.

Radio reporters also perfected superior methods of sending tape material over phone lines. One technique involved the use of a piece of double-stranded wire attached with clips and a microphone jack. Known as a set of *alligator clips*, it connected the tape recorder to the telephone. At one end of the wires there was a *mini-jack* which plugged into the output jack of the recorder. At the other end, two high-tension, spring-loaded metal clips were fastened to the wires.

The reporter transmitted over the phone lines by unscrewing the mouthpiece cover of the phone, taking out

the circular, carbon telephone microphone and fastening the alligator clips to the two contact plates in the bottom of the telephone handle. With the cassette machine hooked up directly to the phone line in this way, the reporter simply played the cassette and the sound on the tape was sent down the line to the studio.

The reporter could also talk, live over the phone, to the station by using the cassette and the alligator clips. He/she would plug the microphone into the tape deck, press the *record* and *pause* buttons at the same time, and his/her voice would pass through the tape machine, into the alligator clips and down the phone line. While the reporter was talking to the station using this method, he/she was also able to hear what the person at the studio was saying by simply putting the telephone receiver to his/her ear.

As telephone companies began phasing-out black dialer phones and replaced them with fancier push-button phones, the use of alligator clips waned because the newer phones didn't have removable mouthpieces. But, luckily as businesses and residents began installing more telephone jacks in their offices and homes, those phone jacks became of great use to reporters.

Reporters were able to convert a standard jack into a double jack by plugging in a *splitter*. To send taped material over the phone, the reporter plugged the phone cord into one half of the double jack and hooked up the

cassette machine into the other half. The wire which connected the tape deck to the phone jack consisted of a masculine end of a phone jack at one end and a mini-jack at the other end. But, where phone jacks aren't installed, as in pay phones, reporters today find it hard to feed tape.

Radio News- Reportage of the Mind

The radio plays of the 1930s and 1940s, with their suspense-filled dialogues and expert use of sound effects, prompted many listeners and entertainment critics to refer to radio as a "theatre of the mind". In the late-1940s, radio stations used to play recorded Big Band dance music and these shows were called "make-believe ballrooms". The same effect was produced whenever sporting events were broadcast. While listening to play-by-play descriptions of hockey, baseball or football games, fans imagined in their minds head what was transpiring in the stadiums.

During the Second World War, disc recordings of bombs permitted CBC correspondents to use actual sound in addition to voice. The sounds of battle helped listeners back in Canada to imagine the destruction. Radio had become "war of the mind."

Earlier John McFadyen remarked that the move to studio-quality sound had stripped radio journalism's use of exciting sounds from the scene of the story. However, many news directors, such as Fred Ennis, campaigned hard to restore the practice of incorporating background sounds in

voice reports. For without those actual sounds, radio reporters weren't giving listeners enough audio information to stir their imaginations. Without wild, on-location sounds, radio news had become a sort of mime act.

Ennis, CFGO Ottawa news director in the late 1970s, encouraged his reporters to add the background sounds of events to their voice reports. The use of background audio was a concept he had borrowed from TV news. "If you know television, you know that you have your "A" reel and your "B" reel. Your "B" reel is your cut-aways and all the the other things you want to use to illustrate the story." Instead of doing a voice-over using video pictures and wild sound, he wanted his radio reporters to blend their voices with the background sounds.

Some stories, because of the sounds they generate, lend themselves to better treatment by radio than by the other media. For example, if people are trapped in an underground mine shaft, the sounds of the rescue crew digging frantically to free survivors can be captured by dropping a microphone into the shaft. Without lighting, mines are too dark to permit TV cameras to take pictures. But for Ennis, even commonplace events, such as meetings, can provide radio reporters with useful background sound.

"I used to tell my people to roll a tape at a meeting that's just breaking-up. Roll a tape on the chairs being pushed away from the table. Bring that back and cut your

piece and say: 'After the city council meeting...'. Always establish in the first sentence of your piece the explanation for the background sound." Ennis frowned on reporters who used the phrase: "What you're hearing is..." to describe the background sound at the start of a voicer. He favoured the reporter "saying something that positions you, there, in the listeners' mind." For example, if the sounds of chairs is used to start a piece, then the reporter should say something like: "After four hours of debate, aldermen still haven't set the city's tax rate..."

Ennis says there is practically no story where radio can't find suitable sound to back up the reporter's voice. "Take the story of bus fares going up. You can illustrate it with "B" reel sound in the background by getting out and getting sound of a bus driving up and leaving the bus stop." For him, the blending of actual sounds in voicers "takes you out of the studio. We hear so many voicers that sound like they were recorded next door in the studio." Mixing-in background sounds adds a touch of realism and prevents voicers from sounding sterile.

He says he's disappointed whenever he hears voicers that omit these extra sounds. With today's inexpensive and easy-to-use recorders, there's no valid reason not to use background sound. "This was only possible to a wide degree because of the introduction of the cassette, but very few people to this day are doing that. And I dare say, anything

you do, you can illustrate it with background sound."

There are exceptions. Stories that are loaded with visual content are better suited to coverage by print and TV. Ennis says he's forever reminded of the classic radio joke about putting fireworks on the air: "You have this bang! And the announcer says, 'Oh, that's a nice one!'."

The BBG becomes the CRTC

In the ten years of its existence, the Board of Broadcast Governors oversaw significant changes in TV broadcasting in Canada. The period from 1958 to 1968 was marked by the opening of several areas of the country to service by second TV stations. These second stations, all privately-owned, were set up in cities where the CBC had enjoyed a monopoly. The increasing number of private stations permitted the CTV Network to become operational in October, 1961. In the fall of 1966, colour telecasting began in Canada.²³⁴

The growth of TV in the late-1950s and early-1960s consumed much of the BBG's time. Preoccupied with TV regulation and the granting of new TV licences, Canada's first separate regulatory body for broadcasting paid less attention to radio.

In 1965, the Fowler Commission was called back to undertake a follow-up investigation of broadcasting. The Second Fowler Commission saw problems with the co-existence of the BBG and the CBC's Board of Directors. In its second

report, the Fowler commissioners recommended the abolition of the BBG and a return to the 1957 situation in which the CBC Board of Governors would not only administer public broadcasting, but the affairs of the private sector.²³⁵

The Liberal government saw things differently. In 1968 Secretary of State Judy LaMarsh's new Broadcasting Act created a new broadcasting authority. In establishing the Canadian Radio-Television Commission (CRTC) to replace the BBG, the Act gave the new authority wider regulatory powers. The CRTC was empowered to issue broadcasting licences and prescribe their terms, and it could implement its own policies free from government interference.

According to T.J. Allard, the BBG was replaced by the CRTC, "partly because its members were politically inexperienced, partly because CBC's top officers of that day were unable and unwilling to accept the concept of a separate regulatory body and created every possible difficulty for the BBG; more largely because the BBG interpreted the Grey Cup football game to be a program of great national importance."²³⁶

The football game referred to by Allard is the 1962 Grey Cup. That year the CTV network had outbid the CBC for the rights to telecast the Canadian Football League's championship match. But CTV hadn't completed its coast-to-coast network by then and having the game on CTV meant many football fans would have been unable to watch it. The BBG

received many complaints from viewers who couldn't get CTV.

The CBC, CTV and the Grey Cup TV sponsors were not able to come to terms on an arrangement that would have seen the CBC pick-up the CTV broadcast in areas not serviced by CTV. The main stumbling block was CTV's refusal to pay CBC for its share of the advertising revenues, and CBC's unwillingness to broadcast the game in areas CTV didn't reach without demanding commercial compensation. In a last-ditch ruling just prior to the game, the BBG ordered both networks to carry the game on all of their stations. And that is why the CBC and CTV jointly telecast the Grey Cup from 1962 to the late-1980s.

The way the BBG handled the 1962 Grey Cup affair reopened the rift between the CBC and the private sector, and further alienated all broadcasters from the BBG.

There is evidence to suggest, that by-and-large, the BBG, during its short existence, was pleased with the way private radio newsrooms had tried to adhere to the BBG radio regulations and the 1958 Broadcasting Act.

In 1960, BBG chairman, Dr. Andrew Stewart told Canadian Press the BBG had investigated complaints from several letter-writers about allegations that a certain, unidentified station had aired "a preponderance of offensive or objectionable material." The subsequent BBG inquiry led to the discovery "of several newscasts dwelling on a combination of stories about crime, violence and sex."

The radio station in question attributed the concentration of crime and sex-related stories "to an unfortunate string of such news events." And with that station promising to "balance its newscasts better in the future", the BBG decided not to suspend its licence.

After that investigation, Dr. Stewart had stressed "that fewer than ten per cent of stations have shown any inclination-- and then rather by the type of their operation than by design-- to break the regulations." But the BBG chairman added, "While we haven't taken any action so far (revoking licences), this does not mean that we would not do so."²³⁷ Such warnings acted as a deterrent to stations who wanted to break or bend the rules.

By 1971, the CRTC had gained enough experience and staff to revise all of the AM-FM regulations. Although most of the regulations were entirely new, some of the CRTC radio *regs* were amendments to the 1964 BBG regulations.

The second major revision of the AM-FM *regs* occurred in 1975, just one year before the scope of the CRTC was expanded to include the regulation of all federally-controlled telecommunication carriers, such as Bell and B.C. Telephones. In 1976, its name was changed to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission.²³⁸ Eight years earlier, the Liberal government created the Department of Communications to assume the Department of Transport's role in assisting the CRTC with

the technical aspects of broadcasting/telecommunications.

Of the 28 pages of AM regulations and the 32 pages for FM that the CRTC put into force in 1976, only a few pages had a direct bearing on radio news.

Most of the CRTC regulations that concerned radio news came under the heading "Broadcasting Generally" in Section 5 of both the AM and FM *regs.*—

- "5. (1) No station or network operator shall broadcast
- (a) anything contrary to law;
 - (b) any abusive comment on any race or religion;
 - (c) any obscene, indecent or profane language;
 - (d) any false or misleading news;
 - (e) any program on the subject of birth control unless that program is presented in a manner appropriate to the medium of broadcasting;
 - (f) any program on the subject of venereal diseases unless that program is presented in a manner appropriate to the medium of broadcasting;
 - (g) any advertising content in the body of a news broadcast and for the purpose of this section, a summary is deemed to be part of the body of a newscast:...
 - (k) any telephone interview or conversation or any part thereof, with any person unless
 - (i) the person's oral or written consent to the interview or conversation being broadcast was obtained prior to such broadcast, or
 - (ii) the person telephoned the station for the purpose of participating in a broadcast."

Subsections (a), (b), (c), and (d) of Section 5 (1) were so vaguely worded that their complete interpretations were dependent on other federal laws. Mostly these four subsections duplicated and/or expanded restrictions contained in federal laws which all journalists were subjected to.

For example, the first subsection prohibited stations from broadcasting "anything contrary to law". This didn't

mean stations couldn't air stories about crimes such as murder because murder is against the law. "Instead, the regulation reinforces other laws that make it unlawful to publish or broadcasting something." In other words, if the content of the news stories violated federal laws, such as those contained in the Criminal Code, the Official Secrets Act, the Combines Investigation Act, the Elections Act, the Copyright Act, etc., then the stations also were breaching this section of the AM or FM CRTC regulations. Most of the laws covered by subsection 5.(1)(a) also pertained to the work of print journalists.²³⁹

Subsections (b) and (c) posed more specific problems for broadcasters. Abusive remarks and obscenity were covered by their respective sections in the Criminal Code as hate propaganda and obscenity laws. There seemed no reason for the CRTC to list abusive and obscenity material in separate regulations. Subsection (a) had already thrown a blanket over all activity contrary to law.

For print reporters, they could be charged with illegally offending a race, religion or other social group, under the hate propaganda section of the Criminal Code which said: "It is a criminal offence to broadcast or publish statements that wilfully promote hatred against any identifiable group."²⁴⁰ Broadcasters not only had to adhere to that section of of the Criminal Code, but to CRTC regulation 5.(1)(b). It didn't stipulate that only wilfully

broadcast statements were considered abusive. For the CRTC, even unintentional abusive material was illegal.

Similarly, subsection (c), which dealt with obscenity, presented broadcasters with an additional standard that print journalists didn't have to meet. Under the obscenity section of the Criminal Code:

"...any publication a dominant characteristic of which is the undue exploitation of sex, or of sex and any one or more of the following subjects, namely, crime, horror, cruelty and violence, shall be deemed to be obscene."²⁴¹

The print reporter's defence could be that the publication of obscene material was carried out to serve the "public good". But for broadcasters, the CRTC regulation didn't permit the airing of obscene material even if it was newsworthy. Nor did the CRTC have to prove that there was an undue exploitation of sex. The CRTC "prosecutor need only prove that an obscene, indecent or profane word or picture was broadcast..."²⁴²

Thus subsections (b) and (c) forced broadcast journalists to be more careful than newspaper journalists.

Subsection (d), which prohibited the airing of false or misleading news, referred broadcast journalists to several statutes: (1) the various defamation acts enacted by the provinces (commonly known as Libel and Slander Acts); (2) criminal libel under the Criminal Code; and (3) the false news section of the Criminal Code.

Defamation has been under provincial jurisdiction

since Confederation.

Prior to the 1950s, the wording of the various provincial libel and slander acts mentioned only the printed word as a mass medium capable of causing defamation. But with the advent of TV, legislatures were prompted to include broadcasting as a medium capable of transmitting torts against individuals or groups. For example, Ontario amended Section 2 of its Libel and Slander Act in 1958: "Defamatory words in a newspaper or in a *broadcast* shall be deemed to be published and to constitute libel."²⁴³ (author's italics)

Individuals have successfully sued broadcasters for for defamation of character. For instance, "in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1974, a radio network broadcast a report that an expert witness in a commission inquiry in Toronto had sold his testimony, implying that he was paid to hold the opinion he gave at the inquiry. The radio network was found liable to pay damages to the expert witness."²⁴⁴

The false news section of the Criminal Code prohibits the reporter from conveying "information that he knows is false" with the "intent to injure or alarm any person." Chances are that no reporter would publish false news except when planting spoofs, as on April Fools'. To prevent news spoofs from being in bad taste, a second section was added to the Code's false news law: "Everyone who wilfully publishes a statement, tale or news that he knows is false

and that causes or is likely to cause injury or mischief to a public interest is guilty of an indictable offence..."²⁴⁵

Media law expert Stuart Robertson believes this added section of the Code could be applied to news spoofs or parodies which cause terror, such as the 1938 radio broadcast of "War of the Worlds".

But the CRTC regulation concerning false news is not as explicit as the Code. The CRTC does not have to prove prove that a broadcaster intended to injure someone. "Any innocent mistake in broadcast news could be caught under this CRTC regulation," said Robertson.²⁴⁶

Subsection (g) concerning advertising in a newscast is the CRTC regulation which made Canadian news shows sound vastly different from news on American radio. The American FCC does not limit stations from placing ads anywhere in a newscast. That is why on American stations it is common to hear a newscaster read only the top story and then break for a commercial announcement, and then come back with more news. On Canadian radio, an AM newscast could not contain ads. And if a newscaster presented a few headlines before getting into the main body of the newscast, then those headlines were considered a *summary*. CRTC regs also forbid the insertion of advertising between a headlines summary and the main portion of the newscast.

In 1975, the CRTC added an FM regulation which allowed some advertising on FM newscasts. Section 7.1 (1) read:

"The first ten minutes of any newscast shall not be interrupted by a commercial message or public service announcement."²⁴⁷ Since few FM newscasts ran longer than ten minutes, few FM stations were able to take advantage.

The subsection pertaining to telephone interviews and conversations- 5.(1)(k).(i) and (ii)- added another burden that print journalists don't encounter. A radio reporter must to this day, seek permission from an interviewee to either broadcast a telephone conversation live, or on tape. And if a person gave his/her consent during the interview, but withdrew consent before broadcast, then the reporter can't air the tape. The reporter can still use the information by paraphrasing the person's words.

Most broadcasters have found they can live with this regulation because at least it got rid of the nuisance- the beep. Prior to 1976, stations had to equip their phones with a device that produced a beep on the line whenever a reporter was using a tape recorder. Bell Canada called this device a *recorder-connector* and it called the beep a *beeptone*. Western Electric of the United States began manufacturing these devices in 1959 to meet FCC regulations.²⁴⁸ The beep, which sounded every 15 seconds, not only caused interference during tape recordings, but it caused many a newsmaker to lose his/her concentration while answering a reporter's question.

The new *regs* also gave hosts of call-in shows

permission to air a person's voice without seeking consent. It's assumed persons who call phone-in shows have consented automatically.

The regulation on political broadcasts was set out in a combination of CRTC regulations, Elections Acts (federal and provincial), and Ottawa's Broadcasting Act. Together those regulations were responsible for much confusion in the radio industry.

For example, under the heading "Political Broadcasts", Section 6 of both the CRTC's AM and FM regulations said:

"(1) Each station or network operator shall allocate time for the broadcasting of programs, advertisements or announcements of a partisan political character on an equitable basis to all parties and rival candidates.

(2) Political programs, advertisements or announcements shall be broadcast by stations or network operators in accordance with such directions as the Commission may issue from time to time."²⁴⁹

Subsection 6 (1) perplexed many station managers, program directors and reporters. They had trouble understanding the wording of this regulation, especially the phrase: "on an equitable basis". Many stations also didn't know how to interpret what was meant by "programs...of a partisan political character". Some stations thought it required them to air partisan interviews in their newscasts. Others thought the regulation forced them to provide time for free-time political programs. Also there was bewilderment as to when political broadcasts were to run- during,

before, or after elections? Many stations played it safe with the "equitable basis" clause by giving all candidates equal time on newscasts and free-time political programs.

Media lawyer Stuart Robertson published his definition of what the CRTC intended by this regulation:

"(It) does NOT mean that broadcasters between election periods must broadcast partisan programs. It does, however, mean that if you allow one party or rival candidate some air time, you must make an equitable amount of time available to all other parties and rival candidates.

"...What does 'equitable' mean?...Equitable does not necessarily mean equal time...The broadcaster need not make each partisan political program equitable. The duty to provide equitable treatment is spread over the licence of the broadcaster."²⁵⁰

Robertson also explained what significance this regulation had on news content:

"It does mean that a news program that objectively reports in a balanced manner the statements, actions or positions of a party or candidate between elections is subject to the regulation...

"(You) will not be subject to the CRTC regulation...if you limit your news reports and other current affairs reporting to objective and balanced accounts of events in the public interest. The regulation, therefore, is directed to editorials..."²⁵¹

Thus even some media law experts, admit befuddlement still exists. In Robertson's definition- what is the difference between "news reports" and "news programs"? And what should stations have done when they aired news programs of a political nature during elections?

The CRTC regulations were also backed-up by the

federal Elections Act. That act compelled broadcasters to allow political parties and candidates to buy airtime for ads, announcements and partisan programs. Up to six-and-a-half hours during each election had to be made available to the parties in an equitable fashion.

On election night, federal laws also prohibited stations from broadcasting election results of ridings in which the polls had closed, to residents living in ridings where the polls were still open. For example, if the voting had been completed in Toronto, the CBC could broadcast those results to its listeners located in and east of the Eastern Time Zone. The CBC could not go on the air with the Toronto voting results in Winnipeg, located in the Central Time Zone, if polls were still open. But no law could stop an American station located in North Dakota from telling voters in Manitoba how citizens in eastern Canada had voted while the polls in western Canada were still open.

Federal law also limited political advertising to the last 28 days of the election, with the exception of polling day and the day immediately before election day. Broadcasters, running as candidates, also had to remove themselves from the air during elections.

As for provincial and municipal elections, broadcasters had to adhere to provincial legislation. Most provinces had instituted *black-outs* on the last two days of campaigns which meant parties/candidates couldn't advertise

and the news media couldn't run political editorials. But most black-outs didn't prevent reporters from doing fair and balanced *wrap-up* stories on the election right up and including polling day.

For radio reporters such as John McFadyen, these overlapping election-related regulations became overwhelming. "I think one of the most obvious failings of news departments in the late sixties and early seventies was that they knew the Elections Act said certain things about (paid political) commercials and when to put them on the air. And they tended to apply the Elections Act, that was supposed to apply to commercials, to news. So, you've got to be fair, you've got to give these guys equal time. This bent some local election coverage badly out of shape. No body really knew what they were doing. And there certainly wasn't much courage" to find out what the true legal requirements were, said McFadyen.

As a result of stations giving all candidates equal time on newscasts, as opposed to making airtime available for political ads, many fringe candidates were given the same amount of news coverage on radio as major candidates.

McFadyen's colleague, Stu Morrison, says in the 1950s, 1960s and even in some cases today, radio reporters were not only hazy on the broadcasting regulations, but they lacked knowledge on most matters involving media law. Asked if he and his peers had examined news stories for potential

legal problems back then. such as libel or contempt of court. Morrison replied, "We didn't do any of that. We never heard of it. We just trusted the wire and played it really cautiously.

"With local stories that you wrote yourself or that were produced in-house for your local audience, it could be pretty terrifying. Lawyer stories, court cases, and all that kind of stuff probably didn't get on the air until the next day when the reporter had a chance to look through the newspapers and see how the newspapers had done it and they would try to do it the same."

John McFadyen was a radio news director in a small town in the early-1970s before coming to Toronto. And he echoed Morrison's observations. "Our legal counsel was the local judge. And if he saw a local Tory coming up (in a court case) that was going to be a problem, he'd recess and call the reporter into his chambers and say: 'Look- this is the what you have to look for.'" He covered our ass very nicely and was very decent about it."

McFadyen said that in that same town, "there was a guy at least once a week that threatened to sue the radio station: either over the content of a newscast or an editorial comment. You started to just ignore him and unfortunately the down-side to that was you tended to ignore some others that should have been taken more seriously. We had no idea what we were doing."

Morrison is very skeptical about keeping lawyers on retainer. "One of the problems, which still exists to this day, with lawyers that management hires, is that they go out of their way to protect the manager. They don't go out of their way to protect the reporter. Often the interests of the reporter and of a free press and the interests of a manager are not the same thing."

And in smaller markets, Morrison says news directors probably didn't have the authority to phone the stations' lawyer themselves. "because as soon as he calls him, the meter runs. The manager gets the bill and says: 'What the hell are you doing? If you have a problem, come to me- I'll fix it.' So, the way the manager fixed it was by killing the story." With managers telling their news directors to drop potentially troublesome stories, many newsrooms became conditioned to avoiding controversial material.

"Lawyers that are protecting the broadcasters are protecting the managers and are not, for the most part, protecting the right to have free speech," said Morrison.

Without the ability to consult media lawyers, most news directors were denied the opportunity to serve properly as the chief and final editor of the station's news content. Instead of being a mentor to his/her reporters, the news director was relegated to the role of being the one who was responsible for the actions of the newsroom to the general manager. "The manager needed

somebody to crap on if you got the mayor ugly or if you got a sponsor ugly. You had to have somebody in charge," said Morrison, and the news director was that person.

Bert Cannings claims he and the stations he worked for were never sued. His radio news career spanned five decades, ending in 1974 after he had been CFCF's news director for nearly 20 years. "On the question of lawyers, we always had a station lawyer. But, too often they always said no. Normally we couldn't use anything. So as the years went by, you garnered a certain knowledge of libel and slander and I used my own judgement. I wasn't always right, but I was never sued."

A common misconception held by the public and many journalists is that there is a CRTC regulation which forces all radio stations to carry news. The CRTC has no specific regulations that tell stations they must have newscasts.

But radio stations usually won't get licensed by the CRTC unless they promise news.

The CRTC has standardized the radio licence application procedure by classifying the different types of permissible programs: music, news, advertising, the spoken word, items of human interest, commentaries, community service information, etc. Within each content category there are subcategories. For instance, music has several subcategories such as general, rock, jazz, country, opera, classical, folk and others.

Station owners are quite aware that a licence application will be rejected, by the CRTC, if it doesn't promise an adequate amount of news and public affairs programming. What is an adequate amount of news? Usually it is the amount that has been approved by the CRTC in previous licence applications. If the amount of news promised in the application suits the CRTC, then it becomes part of that station's terms of licence, more commonly called the station's *promise of performance*.

The Commission may stipulate more news, and the applicant must accept this. The CRTC can also force the licensee to hire enough newsroom staff, with sufficient resources, to enable it to report local events. The CRTC has not granted licences to commercial stations promising only *rip-and-read* service.

The terms of licences of existing stations, in the same market, act as precedents. Stations renewing their licences must present good arguments to the CRTC if they ask for a reduction in their news commitment.

Station owners also know of the potential harm to their licences when listeners complain to the CRTC. If the complaints are valid, the CRTC can either penalize the station or give it a warning to adhere strictly to its promise of performance. And at renewal time, a station's record is also taken into account by the CRTC.

Stations must also concern themselves with the fact

the CRTC constantly monitors individual stations that have had a history of poor performance. One example of CRTC monitoring produced an interesting twist involving the Commission and the radio station in question, CHER:

"SYDNEY, N-S- The Canadian Radio Television and Telecommunications Commission has rapped the knuckles of a Sydney, Nova Scotia radio station for poor local coverage, and shoddy keeping of log tapes.

The C-R-T-C is also concerned about a series of local newspaper advertisements by radio station CHER that quotes the Commission as praising the AM station for improving its news coverage.

Commission lawyer Pierre Pronovost says while the C-k-T-C is happy CHER is finally meeting a 15-per cent local-content rule imposed in 1981...the ad gave the impression the C-R-T-C was patting the station on the back.

Commissioner Paul McRae did note a change of management last fall had dramatically improved both CHER's news and its co-operation with the Commission."252

The local content policy for news is an assurance to broadcast journalists that every station in Canada has to employ a news staff.

By the 1980s, stations realized the need to hire persons with experience and education in media law. A rash of incidents in the late-1970s persuaded them that their newsrooms were especially vulnerable to breaches of media law:

CASE #1 "In Winnipeg...in 1976, a radio station broadcast an interview with the mother of an accused person. The mother said that her son had already confessed to the police. The broadcaster and reporter were convicted for contempt."

CASE #2- "In Vancouver...in 1979, a radio reporter covering a drug trial referred to the previous criminal activities of one of the accused. The reporter was convicted for contempt."

In both of these cases,²⁵³ the reporter was convicted for contempt of court because courts feel decisions made by juries and judges can be prejudiced by news reports of confessions, past criminal records or delinquent behavior.

Another incident dealt with consent to broadcast libels:

CASE #3- "In a 1978 case, the Chairman of the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission...successfully sued a radio station for defamation. He had agreed to be interviewed by that station concerning rumours that he had been charged with impaired driving but had managed to have the proceedings quashed. The host of the program accepted the Chairman's denial of the rumours and stated that he was satisfied that they were unfounded.

Later in the show the host took a call from a listener who repeated the rumour and stated she had sources which satisfied her the rumours were correct. The court held that the Chairman had by implication consented to the publication of the defamatory rumour in the initial interview, but that he had not agreed to the opening up of the topic for public discussion following his denial."²⁵⁴

By the late-1970s, news directors on advisory committees at universities and colleges agreed with post-secondary institutions that media law should be compulsory in broadcasting courses.

On September 19, 1986, a one-volume set of new CRTC regulations took effect to govern both AM and FM. The sections on birth control and venereal diseases were eliminated, and so was the section restricting advertising in a newscast. Peter Fleming, director of radio for the

CRTC, says it will be up to the stations to determine if Canadian listeners will tolerate ads inside newscasts.²⁵⁵

The 1986 consolidated *regs* have also tightened the wording of the previously-troublesome section pertaining to "Political Broadcasts": (amendments in italics)

*"6. During an election period, a licensee shall allocate time for the broadcasting of programs, advertisements or announcements of a partisan political character on an equitable basis to all accredited political parties and rival candidates represented in the election or referendum."*²⁵⁶

The Maturing of FM Broadcasting

Currently in Canada, FM broadcasting is an equal but younger sister to AM radio. In many markets in this country, where broadcasters operate both an AM and a FM station, owners claim they have more people listening to their FM station than their AM operation, and they say the FM station is often a better money-maker.

Two main factors have contributed to FM's rapid growth and increased popularity in the past 25 years. In the mid-1960s, stations finally figured out what to do with FM. Distinctive FM formats replaced the simulcasting or imitation of AM programming on FM. With its own formats, FM was allowed to sound different. Secondly, in the mid-1970s, the CRTC made not only the simulcasting of AM material on FM illegal, but it instituted a separate set of regulations for FM. The FM *regs* were intended to make FM programming vastly different from what was permitted on AM stations. The CRTC wanted FM to have more musical variety than AM.

fewer commercials, and more in-depth treatment of music, arts, literature, culture, public affairs, leisure activities and other items of human interest. FM was to broadcast more discussions, analyses, instruction, opinions, and feature interviews than AM.

As FM developed into a medium of its own right and character, it could no longer simulcast AM news.

Even before being forced by the CRTC to abandon simulcasting in 1975, many holders of joint AM-FM licences had taken it upon themselves to provide the associated FM stations with original and independent programming. In the United States, the FCC had ordered a 50 per cent cut in simulcasting by 1967. As many American FM stations began to show profits, some Canadian broadcasters began to carry original programming on their FM stations. Some FM slaves had been finally freed.

In the mid-1960s, stereo albums had become very popular, but a lot of those long-playing discs contained musical compositions that were very long. For FM stations, which needed a lot of stereo music to fill-in airtime, those LPs were welcomed, especially the classical ones.

In the 1960s, the protest music of peace movement and the *heavy metal* or *acid rock* of the hippie drug culture were greeted with open arms and ears by many struggling FM stations. FM needed the audience, so it began to play that kind of music.

Stations which converted to the heavy rock format were labeled "Progressive FM" by those in the radio industry as early as 1966-67. Because this format permitted FM stations to play extremely long heavy rock compositions, members of the *counterculture* felt as if they were listening to *underground* radio- even though anyone with a FM receiver could listen.²⁵⁷

Progressive FM was characterized not only by its choice of music, but by the style of its announcers. "Unlike the rapid-fire delivery of earlier (AM) rock disc jockeys, their new FM counterparts talk in low and seductive voices." In the United States, more so than in Canada, progressive FM stations were known for their "one-sided and argumentative news and features." Many American progressive FM stations ran into trouble for airing newscasts that were prepared by reporters who had held "anti-establishment" viewpoints.²⁵⁸

For the most part, newscasts on Canadian progressive FM stations steered clear of disciplinary measures by not resorting to biased and unbalanced reporting. Unlike some small, renegade FM rockers in the United States, most progressive FMs in Canada, such as Toronto's CHUM-FM, were owned by large broadcasting companies. It was in their best interests not to let the news content of their FM rockers to get out of hand and upset the CRTC. And perhaps the anti-establishment sentiment in Canada was less intense than it was south of the border.

In 1972, Don Johnston became news director at CFRB and one of his first tasks was to hire newscasters for the station's FM outlet- CKFM. Those were the days before the CRTC forced broadcasters to do something special with FM. "FM was an invention whose time was really delayed by the Second World War and then was pre-empted by television. It was sort of an ugly child for awhile and a lot of radio stations didn't know what to do with it until the Americans correctly figured out it should be a 'Muzak' service, because people were starting to get good hi-fi stereo equipment in their houses," said Johnston.

And he says FM stations have not done the most they could to exploit FM's superior transmission of sound. "You still don't hear news in stereo. You very rarely hear interviews: left channel, right channel- which was the only gimmick or attraction when it (FM stereo) first came out."

John McFadyen had moved to Toronto to advance his radio career and eventually he became CKFM's second news director, succeeding Bill Hoyt. "One of my earliest recollections of FM news in this city was on CHFI and I'm going back now to the mid-sixties. The newscaster was one channel and the voice inserts were on the other channel and they'd ping-pong back and forth across the room (from speaker to speaker). That was one of the ways they sold the concept of stereo FM, and very successfully."

After dropping simulcasting and going solo, FM stations

quickly gained their own identity. A different emotional atmosphere was created in the FM studios. Commercials on FM were read with a soft-sell approach, while ads on AM were loud and aggressive. Music announcers on FM were laid-back, compared to the bombastic dee-jays on AM. Newscasters also detected a more sombre mood on the FM side.

McFadyen said many reporters felt they had to change their behaviour for FM. "You almost dressed-up to go on FM. You changed your delivery. You slowed-up and got your voice deeper. You did all those strange things." And because tape material sounded too hissy on stereo, newscasters used less tape than they did on mono AM.

"I worked for a manager in the late-sixties who had it right. He used to ream us once a month about getting silly about the difference between AM and FM. And he was a way ahead of his time. He would say in effect that they were both radio. I mean today, people don't really have the kind of fixation (about FM) that we had then," said McFadyen.

Down the street from CKFM, Dick Smyth became CHUM's news director in 1970. "In those days it (FM) was more detailed, more sober sort of thing. I mean if you go back to CHUM-AM, let's say back in 1970, it was drive-drive, bang-bang-bang! FM was less frantic in its type of delivery.

"I don't know what the thinking behind that was. It just seemed right somehow; probably because the (FM) station was laid-back. You go back to the jocks in those days: Dave

Marsden, Peter Griffin and David Pritchard- this was the quote 'psychedelic' radio of the day. It was more of: 'Hey man, let's smoke a joint' kind of sound. So it was a question of tailoring the news to that sound," said Smyth.

He said that around 1970. "FM was nothing, nobody listened. In those days, CHUM-AM was the giant and FM was that funny little station in the back of the building where people made \$8,000 a year. Boy, did they ever resent the big names on the AM radio station, whoo! The worm has turned totally. Now CHUM-FM is the giant radio station and CHUM-AM is having its problems. It's been a total reversal of roles."

To air newscasts on CHUM-FM, Smyth worked-out a system "where the AM guy would go in and do a FM newscast. That's the reason that to this great day, FM does its news on the half-hour. The guy did the news on the hour on the AM station and had the time to go around to the back of the building and do the news on the FM station."

Fred Ennis worked for Smyth at CHUM as a reporter and newscaster from 1970 to 1975. He says doing the news on the FM side "was like night and day compared to AM. You'd go in there and talk very informally and sometimes the jock would interrupt and say: 'What's that story about?' or any number of things. You would chat with the jock going into the newscast and going out of it. We wouldn't do that on AM. The use of language was very different."

He says most FM stations also had a different policy on the use of taped material. "They tended to go for longer clips. And at various times on FM, there were (management) prohibitions about using telephone tape mainly because telephone tape didn't sound very good on FM. You could hear all of the things that were wrong with it", such as hums on the recording. In addition, most machines didn't record in stereo and FM stations frowned on using *mono* tape.

In 1975, the CRTC created a separate set of *regs* for FM. These regulations had a tremendous impact on FM stations, especially on the newscasts. Subsection 12.2 secured a place for news on FMs owned by AM stations:

"No holder of a joint F.M. licence shall, between six a.m. and twelve midnight of any day, broadcast simultaneously on its F.M. the same matter that is being broadcast on the associated A.M. station in the same market..."^{ase}

Prior to the implementation of the 1975 regulation, stations could legally simulcast their AM news on FM. After that, someone had to read the FM news separately. John McFadyen said CFRB-CKFM achieved this by putting AM and FM news on the air at different times. "That way you saved staff. The guy did the newscast at the top of the hour on AM and on the bottom of the hour on FM (or vice versa). Jack Dennett did the six-thirty (morning) newscast on CFRB and he lengthened it (the same newscast) out on FM at seven. And all he did was pad it with tape on FM. He would use at least one cut from our Ottawa bureau and maybe two depending on how much

other stuff he had."

He says by staggering the newscasts throughout the day, "you could keep staff to a minimum and make them go both ways (reading AM and FM news)." But in the evening hours, when both the AM and FM newscasts ran at the top of the hour, newscasters would read both newscasts- one live and the other on tape. For example, a newscaster would read the ten p.m. major newscast live on FM and give AM a brief pre-recorded newscast for the same hour. At eleven, the same newsreader would re-read on AM the same newscast that had been aired on FM at ten. And for FM's eleven p.m. newscast, the newscaster would record another taped newscast and give it to the FM operator. McFadyen says the evening newscasts were pre-recorded "because often there was only one person (on duty) in the two stations."

The CRTC did allow simulcasting from midnight to six a.m. For CFRB's news director, Don Johnston, the overnight simulcasting of CFRB news on CKFM posed many problems. For example, a CFRB-CKFM newscaster who read the one a.m. newscast could not say: "Good morning, it's five degrees at one o'clock at CFRB." Nor could any of the news copy contain references to CFRB such as "CFRB News has learned that...". And reporters who left taped voicers for use overnight couldn't sign-off with CFRB's call letters. "So we had to drop all call-letter identification; it was just a real nightmare," said Johnston.

But, for stations that had the same call letters on AM and FM, such as CHUM or the CBC, overnight simulcasting of news didn't pose major problems. Their reporters could say: "This is Jane Doe reporting for CHUM News" or "This is the CBC news." There was no need for stations, such as CHUM AM or FM or the CBC AM or FM networks, to add the AM or FM suffixes to their basic call letters. However, reporters working for AM-FM operations, such as CFRB-CKFM, were forced to record voicers with separate sign-offs or produce voicers with generic sign-offs (i.e. "This is John Doe reporting from City Hall").

Subsection 12.1 of the 1975 FM regs played a major role in FM's transformation. In an attempt to prevent FM from duplicating AM's rolling musical format, the CRTC forced FM stations to devote a portion of their overall programming to something the Commission called "foreground format":

"12.1 No station shall, between six a.m. and twelve midnight in any broadcast week, devote to time segments presented in a *foreground format*,
 (a) in the case of a station operated by the holder of a CBC F.M. licence or a joint F.M. licence, less than twenty per cent of the broadcast time of the station; and
 (b) in the case of a station operated by the holder of an independent F.M. licence, less than twelve per cent of the broadcast time of the station."

The definition for "foreground format" was found in 12 (1):

"foreground format means a format of presentation, other than gramophone format or rolling format, in which
 (a) the intrinsic intellectual content of the matter being broadcast is entirely related to a

independent FM station which had to cope with 130 minutes a day of foreground format programming. It signed-on in 1977 and serves communities within a 100-kilometre radius of its 100,000 watt transmitter. Listeners from as far as Huntville to the north, Toronto to the south, Owen Sound to the west and Peterborough to the east, can pick up its signal.

CHAY-FM plays *easy listening* music and it buys its music from a company which specializes in providing stations with pre-packaged musical programming. This company provides stations with several hundred tapes of recorded music. Each tape is coded numerically and contains 30 minutes of music. And they come with accompanying computer-printed playlists. CHAY's announcers simply refer to the daily playlists, find the appropriate tape and put it on the air.

By having its music organized in this fashion, CHAY didn't need its own collection of records. This made it nearly impossible for the announcers to fulfill musical requests phoned-in by listeners. As a result, stations such as CHAY could not meet the foreground obligation by airing musical programs that were designed around a singular theme. CHAY had little choice but to take the newsmagazine route.

CHAY's "Huron Magazine" was a one-hour program that ran three times a day: at 6 a.m., noon, and 6 p.m. But because that show began and ended with newscasts, only about 45 minutes of its content counted as foreground. Those 45

switched to the 20-20 News concept in 1967. But he denies any role in making the Big 8's newscasts irresponsible and obscene. He says the station changed when Byron McGregor succeeded him as news director.

"It's a matter of concern to me because a lot of people think that I had something to do with that- I didn't. Byron and Grant Hudson...got wrapped-up in themselves and they got out of control; it's that simple. Things get occasionally out of control in broadcasting. We certainly did a fast-paced, contemporary style of newscast and we were into a lot of crime and that sort of thing. But, I think there was always a standard of good taste that we didn't violate. That seemed to be thrown out of the window in the in early '70s. I left in '69." said Smyth.

One of the probable reasons why CKLW "got out of control" after Smyth left, was a change in ownership in late 1970. The 1968 Broadcasting Act didn't permit foreign ownership of Canadian stations. Pressured by the CRTC, CKLW's American owner, RKO-General, sold the station to Toronto's Baton Broadcasting. CKLW's TV outlet, meantime, was sold to the CBC, where it became CBET-TV. Baton must take full blame or credit for the news directors it hired after it had purchased CKLW-AM.

In 1967, CKLW had refined its Top 40 sound by adding the *boss* format to its programming. This format had been introduced by disc jockey-turned-consultant, Bill Drake of

material provided many radio reporters with the opportunity to do more than just gather news for newscasts. As a way of fulfilling the foreground quotas, many stations instituted newsmagazine programs. These shows varied in length and frequency from station to station, but if they filled 216 minutes a day for joint FM stations and 130 minutes a day for independent stations, the CRTC was satisfied.

For radio reporters, these half-hour, one-hour or 90-minute, magazine shows were vehicles to display journalistic and broadcasting abilities. Such shows allowed them to conduct in-depth, feature interviews in all areas of public affairs. They also permitted the news staff to carry-out investigative reporting by giving them sufficient airtime to broadcast hard-hitting documentaries. Unlike AM reporters who were limited to the coverage of hard, spot news, FM reporters did stories with more detail and background.

These magazine shows were equivalent to the feature story pages of daily newspapers.

However, for many FM stations, the 1975 CRTC *regs* concerning foreground content produced as much chaos as did the ones concerning political broadcasts. "I think those *regs* were fairly universally misunderstood, and/or absolutely impractical. They have since been bent, passively, deliberately or with the tacit understanding, by the broadcaster," said John McFadyen.

He says managers at Standard Broadcasting initially

thought the foreground rules obliged them to run 15 minute-long interviews on FM. In other words, when the staff at CKFM had conducted enough 15 minute interviews to fill 216 minutes, the station's daily quota of foreground material had been met. The station thought each interview had to be a quarter-hour. They didn't know that the *regs* only stipulated that each foreground show had to be at least 15 minutes. CKFM didn't realize, let's say, that the airing of five 3-minute interviews, in succession, would have constituted a foreground segment.

According to McFadyen, CKFM's policy in the mid-1970s was to let foreground interviews run 13 minutes and then add two minutes of ads to bring the segments to 15 minutes. "You didn't care what you were saying. You just watched the clock and at the 13-minute mark, you said: 'That's it!' So I'm not sure that in the early going that people (listeners) learned much."

One of McFadyen's daily duties at CKFM was to provide two or three interviews for the foreground quota. "Many days we didn't even allow time for editing. Who cares? Just get that 13 minutes of raw tape on the air. It became fairly quickly here a much more sophisticated exercise, but that was the way it was in the beginning. You'd have a 13 minute piece and you'd go with it."

CFRB news director Don Johnston was also responsible for the news content on CKFM. He said it didn't take long to

figure out that it didn't make any sense to interrupt CKFM's music with foreground interviews. "The smarter of the FM programmers, like Bill Ballantyne of CKFM, realized that the way to exploit the (foreground) format and to exploit FM's value as a music media, was to concentrate all of your information programming into bunches and get it over with."

Johnson says the way CKFM eventually handled the foreground problem was to air a newsmagazine program from noon to 1 p.m. Then the station played music until 5 p.m., breaking only for commercials and a brief newscast at 3:30. Its second newsmagazine show of the day was sandwiched between the 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. news and sports. Thus with one hour at noon, nearly two hours at supertime and some additional interviews in the morning, CKFM had no trouble meeting its foreground quota of 216 minutes a day while at the same time having long periods of continuous music.

Music lovers, who found AM's hourly newscasts and call-in shows distracting, switched to FM. Johnston says modern-day Canadian FM "was driven to its success almost by the formula established for it by programmers and the CRTC."

As the music pushed up the ratings of FM stations, it allowed some broadcasters to plough a portion of their increased earnings back into their FM news operations. And with larger news budgets, many FM stations set higher standards for their newsmagazines. Stations that aired professional and interesting current events programs were in

a better position to retain their audiences than stations which regarded their newsmagazines as total write-offs.

Stu Morrison says FM newsmagazines were also a good starting point for junior reporters. "I think that anybody, who came into the business with their wheels spinning, would look at that as a real interesting challenge to put together a piece which they considered a good job. I can remember I had to do some of those "Year In Review" shows and some of those things would last two hours."

However, some reporters, such as Fred Ennis, believe that the CRTC should have imposed the foreground format on AM. "The CRTC determined that FM should have a distinct character, but at times they had it backwards because FM is the ideal music media and AM is an ideal talk, information and surveillance information media." Innis says the CRTC made a mistake in allowing FM stations to fulfill their foreground quota by using vast amounts of the spoken word. Newsmagazines, being mostly talk, are better suited to AM.

At CFRB-CKFM Toronto, the FM side continued to use the news resources of CFRB until 1986, despite the CRTC ban on simulcasting. To enable the FM side to sound different, news director Don Johnston hired writers and newsreaders for CKFM. But FM still used stories generated by CFRB reporters, and its newscasters still shared the same newsroom.

For Johnston, CFRB and CKFM should have parted ways in 1975 when the new CRTC FM regs came into effect. "Hind sight

being what it is, I wish I'd had nothing to do with CKFM, because at the time they were a competitor and they were in a conflict-of-interest situation. I wish it would have been a complete separation and I wouldn't have had to listen to their bitching, and they wouldn't have had to take any of our stuff. CKFM, with its music and news in between, was cutting into CFRB's audience.

The split finally came in 1986 just a short time before Johnston left Standard Broadcasting. CKFM now has its own newsroom and staff of reporters. But the situation from 1975 to 1986 "was one of the things I regretted over there--having two news staffs, but actually there was only one. Up until that time I was still CKFM's landlord. It was a pain in the ass," said Johnston.

In Montreal, Standard had a better system. The AM and FM operations were separated almost from the start. "When CJAD moved to their new building, CJFM was in a different part of the building. The news departments were different and the two of them had very little contact," said Johnston, adding that "it's still fairly rare that stations that own both an AM and a FM set up a separate newsroom for the FM side." With the exception of newsmagazines, the CRTC allowed FM newscasts to sound like clones of their associated AM newscasts. The public would have benefited more if FM stations would have gathered their own news.

CHAY-FM in Barrie, Ontario, is an example of an

independent FM station which had to cope with 130 minutes a day of foreground format programming. It signed-on in 1977 and serves communities within a 100-kilometre radius of its 100,000 watt transmitter. Listeners from as far as Huntville to the north, Toronto to the south, Owen Sound to the west and Peterborough to the east, can pick up its signal.

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CHAY's "Huron Magazine" was a one-hour program that ran three times a day: at 6 a.m., noon, and 6 p.m. But because that show began and ended with newscasts, only about 45 minutes of its content counted as foreground. Those 45

minutes consisted of about ten separate items on various topics. Those items took the form of expanded news reports, interviews, mini-documentaries and commentaries. Each piece ran an average of three minutes. For example, one item was always an expanded report on the top local story of the day. This piece was called a "timely report".

To produce and air the show, which ran Mondays to Fridays, CHAY employed five reporters, including the news director. Each person in the news department was expected to contribute ten items a week to Huronia Magazine as well as taking turns hosting the program. The same reporters also handled the station's regular run of newscasts.

And since CHAY's listening area was so vast, it was forced to make arrangements with freelance reporters to feed it with news from a dozen or so towns that were distant from Barrie. At least a dozen freelancers contributed material on a payment-per-story basis. CHAY also had a toll-free 800 number to make it easier for the correspondents to phone-in their stories. Often these freelancers submitted feature stories for the newsmagazine.

To give variety and order to the show, each of the five reporters was assigned two different subject areas. For example, one reporter might be asked to handle the environment and entertainment beats. Such a system permitted each reporter to have a serious news beat and a lighter one.

About one-third of the show's content was replaced

each edition. No item was aired on more than three consecutive shows. The noon edition contained about a third of the material that had run on the previous night's evening edition and about a third of the items which were first broadcast on that morning's edition. The rest was fresh material. Thus if a listener missed two consecutive shows, he/she would hear a completely new lineup of stories on the next edition. This show served the surrounding communities so well that it earned many awards for the station. For three hours a day, Huronia Magazine gave CHAY a different dimension from its regular fare of *elevator music*. Many people who didn't like *beautiful music* tuned-in just to hear CHAY's in-depth local news coverage.

1967-1975: The "Big 8" years of CKLW Windsor

With its two million listeners a week, CKLW Windsor was the third-largest radio station in North America and one of the most influential AM rockers on the continent in the late-1960s and early-1970s. It obtained its power by exploiting the large market on the other side of the river-metropolitan Detroit. As a leader in rock music, CKLW could make or break any new musical release. In 1967, CKLW began calling itself the "Big 8"- a reference to the 800-position it had on the AM dial.

In a feature article Richard Brennan wrote for the Windsor Star on the tenth anniversary of the Big 8's "death" in 1975, he said "FM radio really dealt the knockout

punch" to CKLW's glory years.²⁵¹ By the mid-1970s, listeners' tastes had changed and the big FM rockers in Detroit had captured most of the Big 8's fans. Also contributing to its downfall was the controversy caused by its outrageous and sensationalist newscasts.

The "Big 8" and its "20-20" Newscasts

As a super rock station, CKLW's programming called for a bombastic style of news reporting. The Big 8's newscasts, which were called "20-20 News", were probably the most magniloquent and shocking news programs ever heard on Canadian radio.

Windsor Star's Rick Brennan says the Big 8's news style became so exorbitant in the early 1970s that people stopped what they were doing in order to hear the latest blast from 20-20 News. He remembers that many people sat riveted to their radios every time "a radio announcer's voice that seemed larger than life" would bark out "the now-famous phrase: 'This is C.K.L.W. 20-20 News'."

Then the Big 8 newscaster "with the big, booming voice" would speak of "carnage, grisly murders, rape, rotting corpses and 'floaters'." in the Detroit River. One of the hundreds of legendary stories that many loyal Big 8 listeners still remember goes:

"The hitless Tigers could use this guy's talents. Mount Clemens police have a 36-year-old man in custody. It seems he got home about 5 o'clock this morning from an all-night spree, that ticked off the little lady, who unleashed a verbal

barrage at the man. That was apparently the last straw for him. he picked up his genuine. Willie Mays, powerized, lightning-strike Louisville Slugger baseball bat, proceeded to hit a thousand on the woman's head. She's dead. He then turned on children. They're in serious condition."222

While this racy, showbiz and flashy tabloid approach to news captivated CKLW listeners, it also sent shivers of disgust through many others. Those offended by the Big 8's style accused the station of irresponsible journalism. Some of those complaints reached the CRTC.

Brennan says while the "20-20 newscasts gave the impression the world was ending", most people in Windsor-Detroit "will tell you it was those blood-and-guts newscasts" that they remember most. "Even now, its fun to mimic the like of Grant Hudson, Byron McGregor, Randall Carlisle and Lee Marshall (former Big 8 newscasters of the early '70s)." says Brennan. Those news announcers would often leave the Big 8 newsbooth to a round of applause from their colleagues.

In its hey-day, the Big 8 had up to 24 reporters in its 20-20 newsroom and it broke many stories. "It was the first major station to carry the story of the arrest of Patty Hearst (1975)...and when the National Guard shot and killed several students at Kent State University (1970)."223

CKLW also had success with its news tips hotline. It used to regularly remind its audience that "When bullets buzz, buzz the Big 8!". CKLW offered a weekly cash prize for

the best tip and it awarded \$1,000 for the best tip of the year. Listeners kept the hotline busy and some of the tips were bizarre. One day a woman was holding a man hostage with a knife. Wanting a shot at the weekly cash award, she rang up the Big 8 hotline herself while holding the man at bay.

Often eyewitnesses to crimes would "buzz" CKLW before they would inform police. As Brennan recounted, "there was the time a man went beserk with a gun at the Chrysler Jefferson Avenue plant (in Detroit). A witness immediately called the Big 8 and held the phone up so the sound of gunfire could clearly be heard."

Brennan says no matter how inconsequential an event might be. "when the 20-20 boys with their heavy duty pipes, thesaurus in hand, got hold of it, it was the biggest story since the Second World War broke out. It was as much the delivery as the vivid description that made it sensational." As an example, Brennan offered this story of some children finding a body while fishing that had been "pumped up" by the Big 8's Grant Hudson:

"The gang went fishing this afternoon and pulled up something they weren't planning on for dinner- it turned out to be a rotting body.

Eyewitness Charles Evans told the 20-20 hotline that stiff sank to the bottom...The worm-baited hook belonged to Victoria Findlay, who tells what that floater looked like...

[insert actuality of eyewitness here]

Meanwhile, Wayne County Sheriff had a stiff of his own to worry about. The man was shot in the head, right through the blanket he was wrapped in."224

Keith Radford, who was a CKLW newsman from 1971 to

1982. says the most outrageous 20-20 newscasts were often written and read by Grant Hudson. Once he was listening to a Big 8 newscast right after the Detroit area had experienced a rash of murders. He says Hudson put all ten homicides in one newscast, "and the whole newscast rhymed. It went something like this: 'He paid his price in bullets...lead in the head, she's dead...'. I mean it just went on and on. It was unbelievable." That newscast is now referred to as Hudson's "famous Everyone is Dead in Detroit newscast".

Another of Hudson's news stories concerned "frozen Martians being kept on ice at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio." He later admitted to the Windsor Star that although he had researched this "far-fetched" story himself, "I can't tell you whether the story is true or it's just a bunch of bull." However, Hudson maintains the story was one of his "more infamous pieces."

"I don't know how we ever got away with it", Radford told Brennan while looking back at the Big 8. "We used to take great delight in writing a story the most descriptive way we could...We were always the station they used as a bad example in journalism school. They would pull out a CKLW newscast and say 'this is what you shouldn't do'."

The Big 8 years can be divided into two segments: 1967 to 1970 were times of sensational, but responsible news; and 1971 to 1975 were years of lurid journalism.

Dick Smyth had been with CKLW for ten years when it

switched to the 20-20 News concept in 1967. But he denies any role in making the Big 8's newscasts irresponsible and obscene. He says the station changed when Byron McGregor succeeded him as news director.

"It's a matter of concern to me because a lot of people think that I had something to do with that- I didn't. Byron and Grant Hudson...got wrapped-up in themselves and they got out of control; it's that simple. Things get occasionally out of control in broadcasting. We certainly did a fast-paced, contemporary style of newscast and we were into a lot of crime and that sort of thing. But, I think there was always a standard of good taste that we didn't violate. That seemed to be thrown out of the window in the in early '70s. I left in '69," said Smyth.

One of the probable reasons why CKLW "got out of control" after Smyth left, was a change in ownership in late 1970. The 1968 Broadcasting Act didn't permit foreign ownership of Canadian stations. Pressured by the CRTC, CKLW's American owner, RKO-General, sold the station to Toronto's Baton Broadcasting. CKLW's TV outlet, meantime, was sold to the CBC, where it became CBET-TV. Baton must take full blame or credit for the news directors it hired after it had purchased CKLW-AM.

In 1967, CKLW had refined its Top 40 sound by adding the *boss* format to its programming. This format had been introduced by disc jockey-turned-consultant, Bill Drake of

CHUM'S GEORGE FERGUSON REPORTS: (insert voicer)
 OPENS: THE CORPSE IS STILL
 CLOSE: ID
 TIME: 33 SECS" (sic)

This story, which ran on March 20, 1969, was typed in upper case letters unlike the previous CHUM examples. And as a voicer without clips, it's length was only 33 seconds.

That reporter had also provided the newsroom with a *clip-and-script* version of the same story. Shorter than his *his voicer*, it was used in a minor newscast:

"THE NEW MIDI LOOK HAS HIT TORONTO...WITH IT'S
 PLUNGING HEMLINE BACK TO THE STYLES OF THE MID
 50'S. MANY YOUNGER WOMEN SAY THEY'LL REBEL
 AGAINST THE MIDI...AND STICK WITH THEIR MINI
 LOOK. BUT MIDDLE AGED WOMEN ARE APPARENTLY HAPPY
 WITH THE MIDI LINE...OR AS FASHION EXPERT
 HEIDI SUMAK PUTS IT:

(insert clip)

OPENS: FASHION IS ALSO A
 CLOSE: WHAT AGE SHE IS
 TIME: 13 SECS." (sic) 266

There's no doubt that many reporters from stations such as CKLW and CHUM, helped to implant similar news writing policies in other stations they later worked for.

Fred Ennis left CHUM in 1975 and after several brief jobs as news director at CFGO Ottawa 1976-78, Parliament Hill reporter for Standard Broadcast News 1978-80, and CHNS Halifax reporter 1980-83, he became Newsradio's Ottawa bureau chief in 1983. At Newsradio he instituted a 35-second rule for all voicers coming out of that agency's Ottawa bureau. He says, "we didn't lose a hell of a lot" by not letting voice reports exceed 35 seconds.

the news announcers to talk over the sounds of teletypes.

Announcers could only give their names, the time, temperature, the station's call letters and the title/artist of the tune while a record was fading-in or fading-out. Ennis says this format prevented the D.J.'s from telling any stories on the air. Some of the D.J.'s lost their concentration after playing three songs and three ads in a row, and when it finally came time for them to say something, many of them were not prepared and they muffed their lines.

Ennis remembers that this once happened to CKLW disc-jockey Scott Regan. Regan had begun his show by playing several records followed by a minute of spots. When the second set of records started, he attempted to say: "It's 9 o'clock at the Big 8", over the music. What came out of his mouth was: "It's nine-oh-eight at the Big Clock." "And we kind of said, 'Well, that just about sums it up- it's really just one big clock!'"

Therefore, it seemed logical that Drake had named the news component of his format- "20-20 News". It had more to do with the co-ordinates of the clock than with the properties of having "twenty-twenty vision".

The 20-20 newscasts were brief and the writing was very tight. Major newscasts were six minutes long and the minor ones lasted four minutes. "You were expected in that four minute period to give about 20 stories and a lot of them

were just one line or two," said Ennis.

"They also expected you to get the call letters into the stories frequently. Whenever we went to a piece of tape, we would use a phrase such as: 'The Big 8 microphones were there', or 'so and so told the Big 8 ...'. That would help us put our stamp on the product: to the point that anyone taking part in any kind of survey (i.e. BBM ratings) would instantly know who they were listening to."

While the Drake formula kept D.J. talk to a bare minimum, it also didn't permit the newsroom to use long pieces of tape. "We used to run a lot of three or four-second clips." For example, "This is Mrs. John Doe and she saw the explosion and she says, 'Oh, my God it was awful!'", and bang you are into the next story. Nobody rambled on CKLW," said Ennis. "The more conventional, straight stations were rambling and still are."

He agrees with Smyth that an actuality should express one complete thought only. "There is little excuse for running (a clip) more than 15 seconds. But, I will make an exception and that is when something is particularly dramatic- you know the sound of a shoot-out. You need to establish time references in that. But, it better be compelling to run more than 15 seconds."

Despite having more reporters on staff than stations currently have, newsrooms of the 1960s and early-1970s relied on the phone, as opposed to in-person interviews, to

contact eyewitnesses. Ennis says the Big 8 used to invite its audience to participate by saying: "CKLW pays one-thousand dollars for the best news tips of the year, plus a weekly cash reward. Call the hotlines now! 254-C.K.L.W. in Windsor, 961-N.E.W.S. in Detroit." He says it was a great way of getting good eyewitness tape. For example, "we used to get people who used to say there is a big fire in the river (ships on fire in the Detroit River) and they'd describe it and we'd used that tape on the air."

To get big ratings, CKLW catered to the larger American portion of its listening area. Most of its news came from events which happened in the greater Detroit area. CKLW even had an office in Michigan. Ennis says Big 8 reporters "hardly ever looked at BN mainly because there wasn't that many good Canadian crime stories." But in 1969, the station made it policy to include at least one Canadian story per newscast.

Ennis says most reporters who entered radio, about the same time he did in 1966, learned how to be better writers by trying to copy the best examples of radio writing sent on the wires. "But, I guess the thing which helped my writing more than anything else was going to CKLW in Windsor in 1969."

In 1970, he moved to CHUM Toronto where Dick Smyth had just taken over as news director. Ennis had served under Smyth at the Big 8. In the early 1970s, CHUM's news was

just as punchy as CKLW's, but it wasn't as controversial. The actualities used on CHUM were slightly longer than what was aired on the Big 8, but the news writing was just as economical. Here are some examples of script-and-tape stories CHUM aired July 17, 1969:

"Former Ontario premier Leslie Frost is still recuperating in Wellsley Hospital from the effects of a car accident. Frost was quoted as saying the accident reduced him from a Beau Brummel to a bleeding mess.

Talking to CHUM News, he explains.

(CLIP)....CUT 1 --- 11 sec. CUE --- wasn't that Frost denies that he will be out of hospital next week.

(CLIP)....CUT 2 --- 10 sec. CUE --- TAKE TIME Frost says that he watched every minute of the space shot yesterday...that he never thought when he was a boy that he'd live to see men on the moon." (sic)

This two-clip story was used on the 11 a.m. newscast. By noon, the same CHUM reporter had this story ready:

"Former Ontario premier Leslie Frost, still recovering from a car accident in Wellsley Hospital in Toronto, spent yesterday watching the moon launch. Frost, who's 73 (*GLOBE IS WRONG) tells CHUM news the world has changed since he was a boy...adds the excitement yesterday was a bit too much.

(CLIP)....TAPE 22 sec. CUE --- you understand." (sic) 205

Note: In the reference to Frost's age, the newscaster would not have read what was typed in parentheses. This was done just to alert CHUM newsreaders that the Globe had erred.

In the late-1960s and 1970s, Top 40 radio stations, such as CHUM, were airing quite a few "lifestyle" stories:

"THE MIDI LOOK IN TORONTO IS CAUSING CONCERN AMONGST WOMEN...ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH CLOSETS FULL OF MINI SKIRTS.

CHUM'S GEORGE FERGUSON REPORTS: (insert voicer)
 OPENS: THE CORPSE IS STILL
 CLOSE: ID
 TIME: 33 SECS" (sic)

This story, which ran on March 20, 1969, was typed in upper case letters unlike the previous CHUM examples. And as a voicer without clips, it's length was only 33 seconds.

That reporter had also provided the newsroom with a *clip-and-script* version of the same story. Shorter than his his voicer, it was used in a minor newscast:

"THE NEW MIDI LOOK HAS HIT TORONTO...WITH IT'S
 PLUNGING HEMLINE BACK TO THE STYLES OF THE MID
 50's. MANY YOUNGER WOMEN SAY THEY'LL REBEL
 AGAINST THE MIDI...AND STICK WITH THEIR MINI
 LOOK. BUT MIDDLE AGED WOMEN ARE APPARENTLY HAPPY
 WITH THE MIDI LINE...OR AS FASHION EXPERT
 HEIDI SUMAK PUTS IT:

(insert clip)

OPENS: FASHION IS ALSO A
 CLOSE: WHAT AGE SHE IS
 TIME: 13 SECS." (sic) 266

There's no doubt that many reporters from stations such as CKLW and CHUM, helped to implant similar news writing policies in other stations they later worked for.

Fred Ennis left CHUM in 1975 and after several brief jobs as news director at CFGO Ottawa 1976-78, Parliament Hill reporter for Standard Broadcast News 1978-80, and CHNS Halifax reporter 1980-83, he became Newsradio's Ottawa bureau chief in 1983. At Newsradio he instituted a 35-second rule for all voicers coming out of that agency's Ottawa bureau. He says, "we didn't lose a hell of a lot" by not letting voice reports exceed 35 seconds.

Ennis deplored sloppy writing by his reporters, especially when they were guilty of creating *echo chambers* in their voicers. Echo chambers, or "*parroting*", occur whenever the wording in the introduction of a voicer is repeated in the first sentence of the voicer. For example:

Newscaster's intro- "There are some unusual developments on Parliament Hill today. John Jones reports from Ottawa."

Reporter's voicer- "There were some unusual developments on Parliament Hill today as..."

Echo chambers can also happen inside wrap-around voicers or in script-and-clip stories. Example:

Last words of reporter/newscaster before actuality-

"...the Prime Minister says he feels confident despite the poll results..."

First words of the actuality-

"I feel confident despite the poll results..."

"There's no excuse for that," says Ennis. He prefers that the *intro* to the voicer be designed and written as part of the story. The announcer should read one fact of the story and then hand-off the rest of the piece to the reporter's voicer. He gave an example of what his voicer *intros* contained: "Prime Minister Mulroney has announced an election for November 24. Fred Ennis reports the Prime Minister called on the Governor-General this morning." Then the newscaster would play Ennis' voicer and it would begin with: "Mulroney's announcement came as no surprise to reporters who had staked out Government House this morning

and watched him make an unscheduled call on Jeanne Sauve..." No echo effect. And Ennis saved five seconds of airtime by letting the newscaster say the first line of the story without duplicating any facts in the voicer.

Steve Madely, like Ennis, also worked for CHUM and CKLW- but in the reverse order. When he arrived in Windsor in 1969, "CKLW was without question one of the most professional newsrooms in the country, if not North America. Dick Smyth had left a very good shop behind. We were up to 24 people in the newsroom. We had fully-equipped vehicles, right down to gas masks and bullet-proof vests. Those were the vestiges of police reporting in a city (Detroit) that had been torn with riots in 1966 and 67."

And the CKLW had "lots of audio equipment, technical assistance and writing assistance to help a newscaster get a show together. It was teamwork all the way. There was no such thing as working a shift on your own."

Madely says it was partly because of unionization that the station had two-dozen employees in the newsroom. "NABET insisted that there be technical assistants. ACTRA insisted that there be newscasters and AFTRA insisted that there'd be reporters. That played a major role in ensuring there would be adequate staff to do the job well."

CKLW did an enormous amount of police and crime reporting of the Michigan side because, according to Madely, "it was already over the 700 mark in terms of

murders in Wayne County per year." As a result, the Big 8's policy on covering murders needed constant adjusting.

"There were no 'ma-and-pa' murders (domestic killings), that had already been banned (from the newscasts) when I got there. There was very little reporting of routine murders- routine being a murder that took place between criminals (gangland slayings). It was reporting of victims of a robbery or of a sniping incident. Maybe ten per cent of the murders made it on the air."

With the debate on Vietnam, the opposition to President Nixon's policies, the Supreme Court enforcing school bussing in an attempt to end racial segregation- it was a confrontational time in American society. There was a lot of unrest in Detroit and "a lot of local coverage had a crisis edge to it." Madely says the turbulent mood depicted in CKLW's newscasts "was partly the result of the state of society then, but it was also part of a programming approach that said radio is immediate: you've got to be there while the news was breaking."

During those uneasy and tense years in Detroit, one of CKLW's favourite on-air slogans was: "The Big 8 is there!". Madely said "no matter what the story was, you had to have audio. Even if it was a reporter with an eyewitness or hotline tape. It was show-biz news. Under that kind of news circumstance, it was very difficult for us to present parliamentary news or routine Canadian news."

Shortly after he arrived at CKLW, the station was sold by its American owner to Canadians. In an effort to "Canadianize" CKLW under CRTC supervision, it tried to begin every newscast with a Canadian story. "We were in the peak of the Vietnam War and you were leading with something Canadian and you were calling Chatham (Ontario) to see if they had a fire; kind of scraping the barrel sometimes. But that didn't last long". CKLW reverted to using the best story as its top story, whether or not it was Canadian.

As with Smyth, the decline of the Big 8 and 20-20 News is still a sore point with Madely. After he and news director Byron McGregor left in 1972, the CKLW went through a rapid succession of program and news directors. "In my opinion, they went through a period of inexperienced and weak leadership, not only for the market, but in terms of that kind of radio (Top 40). And some really irresponsible reporting got on the air."

Madely claims CKLW began to deteriorate after 1972. "We were always sensational and I certainly believe that was part of our success. We were...immediate and colourful. But, we weren't sensationalist and we were not 'yellow' (prior to 1972). We weren't crude and always operated under the understanding that you don't offend your listeners- you were an invited guest in your listeners' homes."

CKLW self-destructed after 1972 because of poor management. "and it is my view it was that lack of control

that did the place in. It became a parody of itself. It became a cheap imitation of itself," said Madely.

In the last couple of decades, he says radio has correctly used music and news as the prime weapons needed to wage war with TV. "Music is the skeleton of a radio station, but news is the muscle structure. Information is the meat on the bones. And if you don't have information that people can relate to, you don't have a radio station. And I believe that is what happened to CKLW. They lost the meat and the muscle. They lost their credibility."

CKLW also lost its number one ranking in the ratings in 1975. At its peak it had a 28 share of the Detroit market. But, it dropped to 0.8 when it hit rock bottom. The Big 8 had become the "Little 8" and it switched to playing "Music of Your Life" -- which is nostalgic music for adults-- on April 6, 1984.²⁶⁷

Radio News in the Space-Age, Hi-Tech 1970s & 1980s

The two American historians who co-authored the book, Radio in the Television Age, summed up what the 1970s had meant to radio:

"It was a decade of growth and profits; formats were refined and polished- no untapped audiences were discovered. No new modes of broadcasting were unveiled. It was a time of consolidation when concentration of ownership increased. Techniques and equipment became more sophisticated."²⁶⁸

While this description painted an accurate picture of what happened to the American radio industry, it doesn't

adequately depict what occurred in Canada.

CBC Radio discontinued airing commercial messages in 1974. This made the CBC the largest non-commercial radio operation in North America.²²²

But it took Canadian radio until the 1970s to use formats that began in the United States a decade earlier. One of those formats was the concept of *all-news* radio.

All-news radio stations began in the U.S. in 1960 when KFAX San Francisco began experimenting with the idea of having only information and no music. A year later, Dallas broadcaster Gordon McLendon opened XETRA in Tijuana, Mexico. XETRA was a rip-and-read all-news station whose powerful signal beamed north to Los Angeles and San Diego. It camouflaged its Mexican location by giving the call letters and address in Spanish while reading the news in English. But when West Coast broadcasters complained to the FCC about unfair competition, McLendon closed XETRA.

The first successful all-news station in the U.S. is said to be WNUS (pronounced W-news) which opened in Chicago in 1964. WNUS didn't have its own reporters and used only wire copy. The first all-news stations, to hire reporters and send them out with tape recorders to do on-the-spot and in-depth coverage, were WINS New York and KYW Philadelphia. Both converted to the news format in 1965. WINS became so popular that 22.6 per cent of New York-area listeners were tuned to it during the peak of the November 1965 blackout.

In 1967, WCBS New York became the first flagship station of an American radio network to try the all-news format.²⁷⁰

All-news radio didn't reach Canada until 1977 when Don Foley of Saskatoon-based Agra Industries launched the CKO Network. After getting CRTC approval to operate a dozen all-news stations across the country, CKO opened stations in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Ottawa and London. Halifax was added in 1985 and Winnipeg was licensed in 1989. Only CKO Montreal is on AM, the rest used the FM band. The CRTC constantly pressured CKO to add the three remaining stations--Regina, Saint John and St. John's--to its network.²⁷¹ CKO was a perennial money-loser.

In its 13-year history, CKO never enjoyed high ratings in any of the nine markets it serviced. Being on FM is a disadvantage for talk-only stations, because most people prefer music on that band. But in Montreal, where CKO took over CFOX's frequency when that station folded, even being on AM didn't help.

CKO relied on wire services because it wasn't able to hire the number of reporters needed to run an all-news operation properly. Thus with only a few reporters, it repeated the same bits of information over and over until it had access to fresh wire stories.

There are many reasons why it is harder to operate an all-news station or network in Canada than in the United States. The largest American markets are bigger than the

largest ones in this country. It's easier for an all-news station to survive in New York or Los Angeles than it is in Toronto or Montreal. And American stations do not have to compete against a well-funded, news-oriented, public radio network as CKO did with the CBC.

There are more radio news agencies in the U.S. than in Canada. CKO had only BN Voice, SBN, Newsradio and CHUM News to affiliate with. But since most of these agencies were providing news to CKO's competitors, it didn't make much business sense for CKO to subscribe to them or for the agencies to sell their services to CKO. Before CKO acquired Newsradio from Maclean-Hunter in 1987, it had only its small staff of reporters and the services of UPI-UPC.

In the U.S., the well-established national networks, with their extensive news services, found it relatively easy to convert some of their *owned-and-operated* stations into all-news operations. Independent, single-city, all-news stations had a multitude of U.S.-based news agencies to buy news from. All-news stations, in large markets such as Chicago, Philadelphia and Washington, were making enough money to afford fully-staffed newsrooms.

The future of all-news broadcasting in North America appears headed to TV rather than radio. Atlanta-based Turner Broadcasting's Cable News Network (CNN) has become a success despite being a *Pay TV* service. The CRTC gave CBC the go ahead to launch an all-news TV channel in 1989, so

the same trend can be said to be occurring in Canada. CKO must have found that most of the advertising targeted for all-news audiences was winding-up on all-news TV.

Fred Ennis, who worked for CHUM News, Newsradio, and SBN, doesn't think that CKO made any significant contribution to Canadian radio news. "CKO, if anything, has been an embarrassment to journalism. They never did have the money to do it properly and they just had one problem after another. Their big failing has always been they don't have the troops on the ground to gather the news."

He had hoped the CKO-Newsradio merger would have aided CKO. "Newsradio was a superb organization which now has been dragged down instead of being allowed to bring CKO up. They got rid of everybody who knew how Newsradio worked." - including Ennis who was fired during the CKO takeover.

An integral part of CKO's purchase of Newsradio from Maclean-Hunter was a deal for CKO Toronto to swap its FM frequency for Maclean-Hunter's AM frequency (CKEY Toronto), and \$4 million. CKO would have used that money to launch three new stations. The CRTC not only refused that trade, but stopped giving the network long-term licences.

In 1988, Agra sold CKO to one of its subsidiaries--cable-operator Cybermedix--which it later sold to Cogeco Communications of Montreal. Agra maintained control of CKO pending CRTC approval of the sale.

But before the sale to Cogeco was sanctioned, Agra--

right off the screen. The disc-jockeys write their *show-prep* on computer and read it off the screen," says Madely. The system allows anyone to have access to anything that someone else is working on at another computer terminal. For instance, one reporter can see the news story that another reporter is working on without leaving his/her desk to talk to the other reporter. Or a disc-jockey can access the BN wire on the screen in the control room and see the latest sports scores.

Reporters working on local stories compose them on-screen and the information is stored on floppy disks for easy retrieval. The newscasters are the only ones who don't read their material off the screen. "This is just a hang-up I have that one day someone will reading a newscast and something will happen- the power will go off or the screen will go blank," says Madely. So after writing their stories on the computer, newsreaders make printouts.

But for the 1987 Ontario election, CFRA decided to have its newscasters read the results off the screen. During the election coverage "some hard copy was printed up every 15 minutes just in case the computer crashed," said Madely. "But, we've reached the point now where the computers are all backed-up with mirror images, so even if one of our computers crashes we are still half-functional. And we'll be back fully-functional within ten minutes."

Computerization has allowed his newsroom to adopt a

shows were of such quality that Warner Troyer claimed: "The best of CBC radio was a world leader in public affairs broadcasting by 1980."

"As It Happens", which began broadcasting Monday-to-Friday evenings in 1971, "was the brightest, most feisty and topical daily interview show on English-language radio," said Troyer, adding, because the show was "cheeky and irreverent, it had come to rank with the staid and prestigious Globe and Mail newspaper as a force to be considered by the Ottawa power brokers of the seventies."

Later the CBC broke even newer ground in documentary production with the show "Sunday Morning". Troyer credited it with taking "multi-textured sound presentations a quantum leap beyond those it had succeeded."

Unfortunately for the CBC's News Service, many people, such as Troyer, felt that the Corporation's current events crews were producing shows that were more refreshing and interesting than the newscasts. "While CBC radio news editors were content to rebroadcast the same pedestrian newscasts with the same stories read in the same order, for three, four or more successive hourly broadcasts, day in and day out, 'As It Happens' and 'Sunday Morning' and their like, were making broadcasting an event," said Troyer, who had co-produced CBC-TV's "This Hour Has Seven Days"-- which had been a broadcasting event in its own right.

What impressed listeners most was the dedication and

enthusiasm of those who put together CBC Radio's public affairs shows. "Their staffs still believed in sewing the extra stitch, walking the extra mile, taking the additional pains. They were proving broadcasting could still strike sparks and sound resonances in its listeners," said Troyer.

Thus, with the combination of private radio's punchy musical attack and the CBC's lively public affairs offerings, radio didn't capitulate to TV. "Radio, having finally thrown off the stereotypes of the forties and fifties, was finding some time for reflection and some affection for a few rough edges, even the giddy uncertainty, again, of some live programming," wrote Troyer in The Sound and The Fury.²⁷³ For those who had become tired of TV's videotaped perfection and of Top 40 radio's predictability, the "rough edges" of radio's new age were indeed welcomed.

In many respects, what happened to American radio in the 1970s, finally happened to Canadian radio in the 1980s. As this decade draws to a close, no new major radio audiences have been discovered. Only the equipment, formats and techniques have been improved. For instance, the gimmick of AM stereo and the putting of distant radio signals on cable TV are innovations of 1980's.

In radio news, Newsradio in 1983 became the first voice service to use satellites to transmit material to its customers. SBN and BN Voice quickly followed in

discontinuing microwave and land line transmission. By the mid-1980s, satellite dishes had been erected on the roofs or in the parking lots of hundreds of Canadian stations. And to speed-up the transmission of data via satellite, voice services also equipped their bureaus with computerized printers.

Those private sector radio news agencies got access to satellite channels much the same way they got on the microwave circuits. By the fall of 1983, Canada's publicly-owned satellite agency, Telesat, had several more Anik "B", "C", and "D" satellites in orbit. This meant Telesat had enough capacity to lease channels to the CBC, CTV and private radio. In fact, the Anik B satellite that was launched in December 1978 had 12 commercial radio frequency channels available to broadcasters.²⁷⁴ CBC Radio used some of those channels for its Northern Service.

For private radio, satellite channels were just as costly as leasing microwaves- \$90,000 a year per circuit. To lower the cost, Newsradio's Tayler Parnaby struck another deal with the owner of the CHUM Group.

According to Parnaby, he "made a handshake agreement with Alan Waters on Yonge Street to sublease subcarriers on satellite." Newsradio and CHUM got on satellite by using a subcarrier channel which Waters' "Much Music" pay-TV station didn't require. And by inviting CKO and Selkirk News to share that sub-channel, private radio was able to

reduce the cost of leasing satellites considerably.

Later Parnaby developed technology to stop people, who had satellite dishes, from listening-in to what Newsradio was sending over Anik. Newsradio became worried unauthorized persons might tap into its feed and "steal" the news. Parnaby's invention, called "Radio Net", scrambled the satellite signal so that persons who didn't use decoders couldn't receive the transmission. "Radio Net" offered Newsradio security, copyright and libel protection.

Fred Ennis oversaw the installation of satellite links and computers at Newsradio's Ottawa bureau. "The biggest move was satellites. (They) not only produced a much better sound, but affected the whole economics of the network. (Before) if you wanted to add a station some 500 miles from where you already had a station, you had to buy 500 miles of circuit (land line or microwave repeaters). Now you just put up an antenna. It's totally insensitive to distance.

"The second biggest thing was computerization," said Ennis. "The idea that one of our reporters could virtually from anywhere in the world, file a story on computer (over phones) and the thing could be printed out almost instantly to all of our clients' newsrooms was a big thing."

Computers, Satellite Hookups and the Individual Station

In 1985, CFRA Ottawa became the first private station in Canada to computerize its news operation.

In a joint experiment with Broadcast News, CFRA tested

out an IBM-based personal computer. Instead of having all the BN wire material going to a teletype printer, the station rerouted the BN feed into the memory banks of the computer. The news staff was then able to go back to the P.C. and see what had been sent by BN. They could then select the stories they wanted and order printouts.

CFRA's news director, Steve Madely, wanted more from computerization, not just using a computer as a word processor to store BN. He understood that a radio station would only obtain the maximum benefits if the whole news and announcing operation were computerized.

After experimenting with other systems, CFRA finally decided on the BASYS computer, which again is an IBM-based P.C. system.

The BASYS computer has "all of our writers, reporters and our announcers hooked-up on the same system. We have no typewriters left except as stand-by machines. And except for the printing of scripts, we have eliminated paper," said Madely.

This system does away with typing weather forecasts, traffic reports, and public service announcements and making photocopies for the AM and FM announcers, newscasters, receptionist and anyone else in the station who needs a copy. Instead, all of the announce booths, control rooms and reporting stations in the newsroom have a video screen

"Our announcers read the traffic, weather and P.S.A.'s

right off the screen. The disc-jockeys write their *show-prep* on computer and read it off the screen," says Madely. The system allows anyone to have access to anything that someone else is working on at another computer terminal. For instance, one reporter can see the news story that another reporter is working on without leaving his/her desk to talk to the other reporter. Or a disc-jockey can access the BN wire on the screen in the control room and see the latest sports scores.

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"team approach" to handling news, instead of having just one newscaster responsible for clearing the wire, doing re-writes, updating local stories and getting the whole newscast together.

"With the team approach to writing, it is possible to say to the newscaster who's going on the air: 'Now, you have eight to ten stories you are going to select. Select the ones you are going to write and assign-out the other ones to the other newscasters who are here'." says Madely.

Computers allows for teamwork in monitoring the wires. Before, it had been the job of just one reporter to watch the wires. If that person got caught-up on the phone, an enormous backlog of wire copy could develop on the teleprinters. Important wire stories were often missed.

Having all the terminals interconnected also permits the newstaff to work as a team in preparing local stories. By opening one file on the computer and having several reporters work simultaneously on that same file, a story can be completed much faster than if it was handled by just one person. It is also much quicker than having several reporters each write a segment of the same story and handing-in several pieces of copy to the newscaster to edit into one story.

For instance, if a big fire breaks out, "there can be this team coverage that says: "You call the fire department, I'll call the police department and Joe you get

in touch with neighbours through the teledirectory. We'll team write this story (using the same computer file). It has to be on the air in another five minutes- make sure you get your part done'." said Madely.

Computers have also solved some communication problems in the newsroom. They prevent a newscaster from inadvertently using an out-of-date or incorrect version of a local story. The computer will only let the newscaster see the updated or corrected copy. That's because the reporter who worked on the story has either edited the mistakes out of the story or has erased the unwanted version from the disk.

A pleasant surprize for Madely was the way computers have allowed his staff to handle fast-breaking stories. In particular, the computer has hastened the dissemination of weather warnings and traffic reports. "It used to be it was taken down shorthand by an operator, retyped in longhand, Xeroxed, ran into the booth and the announcer had to wait until the record was over. It was ten minutes old by the time we had it on the air. By the time the fellow was back in the newsroom, the storm had already moved ten miles."

Now, "we will assign an individual to watch the storm and to track it. That person literally sits at a computer and just writes-in where the storm is moving. It's possible for the announcer to press just one button and have the information on the air the instant it comes in. It affects

your credibility with the listener." says Madely.

With computers, the disc-jockeys are also able to press a button and sneak a peek at what the reporters are preparing for the next newscast. CFRA has taken advantage of this by instructing its disc-jockeys to announce some news headlines, about five minutes before the news, by glancing at what is on the newsroom's computer files.

One example, one day CFRA received a call from the National Capital Commission, at 5:55 p.m. saying that that evening's Canada Day celebrations in Ottawa had been cancelled due to bad weather. The reporter handling the call immediately entered this information into the computer. The disc-jockey, seeing this come up on his screen, announced on the air at three minutes to six: "We've just received word from the newsroom that all Canada Day activities for tonight have been cancelled. We are going to have a full report on the six o'clock news. So, if you are planning to head out tonight, leave your lawn chair in the garage."

Madely says CFRA is planning to install video screens in the newsbooths. This will permit newscasters to glance at the screen for news updates or late-breaking stories. But, they will continue to read the prepared newscast from hard copy. If a newsreader knows that a reporter is still working on a story and that there is a good chance it will be finished before the end of the newscast, the reader will

be able to call up that file and read the story directly off the monitor if the story is ready.

The newsbooth screens will also have the ability of being activated by remote-control from the newsroom. So if a reporter wants to alert the reader during a newscast that he/she had an important update or bulletin, he/she will be able to put the story on the newscaster's screen. That screen will also permit the newscaster to monitor the wires. If a news flash or late ballgame score comes over BN, then the reader will be able to pass it on instantly.

Newscasters may find reading from hard copy and monitoring developments on the screen simultaneously a very difficult thing to do. While reading the news, newscasters can only look at the screen during pauses between stories or when taped voices/actualities are being broadcast. It would be very similar to watching TV while driving a car. It would be safe only when the car was stopped.

Most broadcasters agree that hard news copy typed in large, bold and simple type is easier to read than copy typed in small characters. But, there is no unanimity among radio reporters in the use of upper or lower case in news copy. While the use of majuscule letters creates a bolder effect, a typing style that combines capital and minuscule letters gives the reader more visual information.

In the 1970s, most broadcast journalism schools and broadcasting textbooks were instructing students to use the

upper/lower case method. For example, in Writing News for Broadcast, Edward Bliss and John Patterson advised, "Type all news copy in upper and lower case UNLESS instructed otherwise. Some broadcasters prefer all caps. The... argument for upper and lower case in news copy is that it enables the broadcaster to recognize proper names and the beginning and ending of sentences more readily."275

Mitchell Stephens' textbook, Broadcast News, also dealt with this dilemma:

"A question on which broadcast newsrooms are clearly divided is whether to type all-caps or upper/lower case. Some use capital letters because the letters are large and, they believe easier to read. Others use the standard upper/lower case style, with which most of us are familiar, because it gives more visual information. For instance the distinction between proper names and other words is clearer in upper/lower case:

'President Carter begins a news conference with a threat to VETO those bills in Congress which-- he says-- are pushing federal spending too high'." (sic)276

Note: if Stephens' example had been typed in caps, such as:

"...TO VETO THOSE BILLS IN CONGRESS WHICH..." most newscasters wouldn't have recognized that the word "CONGRESS" was intended to represent a proper name and not the noun "congress".

Similarly, these following examples also illustrate the problem in using all-caps:

Example #1A- "HEALTH MINISTER BEGIN TO ADDRESS UNITED NATIONS PANEL IN NEW YORK CITY TODAY..."

#1B- "Health Minister Begin to address United Nations panel in New York City today..."

Example #2A- "IT WAS CLOSE. BUT NEW GLASGOW POLICE ARRIVED TOO LATE TO PREVENT A HOLD-UP AT A GENERAL TRUST LOCATION..."

#2B "It was close, but New Glasgow police arrived too late to prevent a hold-up at a General Trust location..."

There will always be newscasters who, in a moment of distraction, will mis-read or place the wrong emphasis on words typed in all-caps.

In 1984, many newsrooms cancelled their contracts with Broadcast News when United Press Canada (UPC) launched a broadcast news wire. UPC Radio News printed its text in upper/lower case while BN used all-caps. In many newsrooms that used UPC, most of the reporters also switched to using upper/lower for their local news copy. Oddly enough when BN bought UPC in 1985, most reporters, who had used UPC, continued with the upper/lower style even though BN's service, with all-caps, was back in the newsrooms.

UPC's style reduced the danger of announcers skipping over small, but key words in the news copy:

UPC- "The verdict is in...a Toronto jury has just found John Jones NOT guilty of murder..."

BN- "THE VERDICT IS IN...A TORONTO JURY HAS JUST FOUND JOHN JONES NOT GUILTY OF MURDER..."

The lesson newsrooms learned from experimenting with typefaces in hard copy could be applied to video displays. Perhaps radio news can also learn from TV's expertise in having anchors read the news from electronic cue cards or *teleprompters* as broadcasters call them.

CFRA also plans to equip its news vehicles with computers. The vans will be linked to the main computer by cellular telephone. "So as the reporter writes the story on the terminal in the van, it's appearing on the newscaster's screen in the booth. It will be actually easier for us to get that kind of script on the air than it will for us to get audio on the air. Audio requires somebody here in the control room to throw the right patch to make sure it goes on live," said Steve Madely.

Currently there are about four private radio stations in Canada and the CBC which have computerized newsrooms. When Madely first began pricing computer systems for CFRA news, he was quoted prices around \$190,000. The final cost was \$80,000. "The prices keep dropping and the capabilities keep increasing. It's almost possible now to put the computer in for almost the same price as putting in electric typewriters," said Madely, who began his radio career in Oakville in 1963 by using manual typewriters at CHWO. If the price of computers keeps decreasing, private radio stations will be in a better position to compete with the CBC and the other news media.

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Satellites and Radio News

Not only do satellites permit news agencies to send voice material, but stations are now using them to talk to other stations and to collaborate on live newscasts.

Several years ago CHUM Group linked CHUM Toronto and CFRA Ottawa via satellite. This link permitted the stations to co-anchor a major noon newscast. Dick Smyth in Toronto and Hal Anthony in Ottawa would take turns reading stories.

CFRA and CHUM agree on the make-up and lineup of that co-produced newscast via a closed-circuit satellite conversation. Currently, seven of the CHUM-owned stations use the same satellite channel to exchange material.

With that capability, CHUM's stations in Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax participate in live satellite conferencing. The conference begins a half-hour prior to the CHUM National News which is aired at noon Eastern Time. The other CHUM stations tell the co-anchors in Toronto and Ottawa what stories they can contribute to the newscast. If the co-anchors decide to use those stories, those stations have the choice of sending the items to CHUM Control in Toronto prior to the newscast, or they can stay on the satellite channel and transmit the reports live during the newscast. With the exception of CHUM and CFRA, the CHUM stations have the option of airing the National News or their own local newscasts. Many broadcast their own news due to differences in time zones.

Live satellite conferencing also permits the CHUM stations to become additional anchoring points if circumstances dictate this be done. Usually this happens when important stories occur outside Toronto and Ottawa. A case in point is the severe drought that hit the Prairies in the summer of 1988.

Through a pre-newscast satellite conference, "CHUM National News heard from the Calgary station that the drought was the big story of the day. Other national news agencies, such as CP and BN which are based in central Canada, weren't clued-in on how important the drought had become," says CFRA's Steve Madely. Thus through its affiliate in Alberta, CHUM's National News used Calgary as an additional anchor on that newscast and thus was able to concentrate a major portion of its news to the agricultural disaster which other stations in the East had missed.

Although the TV networks and CBC Radio used satellites before private radio, the CHUM example is still a milestone in the development of private radio news.

CONCLUSION: The Future of Canadian Radio News

If radio's future is going to be anything like its past, we can expect radio journalism to go through many more changes in technology, political policy, regulation, formats, reporting styles and entrepreneurial activity.

As it saw colour TV, pay-TV, satellite TV, and video cassette recorders challenge its existence, radio undoubtedly will experience more competition from even newer forms of mass communication.

As private radio won the struggle for a separate regulatory body, it will have to maintain its diligence in keeping its news content free from unwarranted government interference.

And as it cultivated new audiences by offering new programs, radio news will have to keep abreast of the changing needs of its listeners if it wants to survive.

Where is radio news in Canada headed?

Steve Madely thinks radio news will concentrate its coverage on even more specialized areas of public interest. "I think the days will soon be gone when you will hear a typical radio station give a comprehensive look at all events that could possibly affect you- locally, internationally and nationally. Radio is quickly falling into its 1990's and perhaps year-2000 slot and that slot will be one in which we complement the television and newspaper reporting of events. Updating; causing people to

think about events; and editorializing- I think that will be radio's role."

Dick Smyth, now with CFTR Toronto, would like to see radio news catch up with TV's technology. "I mean we are one of the few businesses still trudging around pieces of paper and (using) manual typewriters. With a little bit of sound processing here and there, the technology is not radically different from when it was 30 years ago. The electronic manufacturers are not designing recorders and equipment specifically tailored for radio news."

Smyth also thinks the time has come for the Canadian news agencies to place radio correspondents in foreign countries. Why do we have to take American sources on non-American news. Can you really trust what you hear from the Persian Gulf coming from ABC Radio? There's got to be some nationalistic bias to it. I really wish we didn't have to plug into ABC (BN's source of international voice material). The others do the same with NBC (Standard) and CBS (Newsradio)."

He believes radio news may have a role in counterbalancing the "deadly serious" approach to news that has been the trademark of TV. "I think there is room in radio for radio to be entertaining." Smyth would rather see radio news spend their efforts producing interesting information than going for the big scoop. "The old idea of 'first, fast and factual' kind of thing really doesn't mean

a thing. It's an ego trip for yourself in your own radio station. Like, 'Wow, we beat Q-107 by 12 seconds!' I mean who gives a damn anyway?"

Stu Morrison believes radio needs to adopt a slightly different news philosophy. "The feeling is nowadays if you listen to people like John Parikhal (a well-known broadcast consultant), is that people are supersaturated with information. And if you want to catch and hold the attention of the listener on your radio station, you have to give him news not that the news director thinks he should have, but what the listener really wants to know. That's a hard, editorial judgement call.

"To hold his attention, you give him just short bits of it. Even if it's a dull story you've got to be able to present it in an interesting way." But, Morrison admits there are different types of "news junkies". "Now, I'm talking from both sides of my mouth because the opposite works very well for the CBC. Everybody is not the same obviously. If the CBC wants to run ten or 12-minutes of news on 'The World at Eight' and run clips that are a minute-and-a-half or two-minutes long- some people will listen to that."

Perhaps too much had been made of the technical and aesthetic aspects of radio journalism. Who benefits from studio-quality *live* radio news reports if they contain serious factual errors? Shoddy journalism cannot be masked

by the use of slick presentations and fancy tape editing.

Some feel that due to the growing trend of placing more value on the technical and design sides of radio reporting, the quality of the content has been neglected. Too often radio journalists are so preoccupied with "how" they sound that they are careless in "what" they say.

In 1960, the Canadian Association of Broadcasters formulated a Code of Ethics defining the responsibilities private broadcasters had to the public. The Code's clause No.5 concerns standards in broadcast news:

"It shall be the responsibility of member stations to ensure that news shall be presented with accuracy and without bias...The fundamental purpose of news dissemination in a democracy is to enable people to know what is happening, and to understand events so that they form their own conclusions.

It is recognized that the full, fair and proper presentation of news, opinion, comment and editorial is the prime and fundamental responsibility of the broadcast publisher."277

Ten years later, the Radio Television News Directors Association of Canada (RTNDA) adopted its Code of Broadcast News Ethics. In it, the RTNDA proclaimed: "The broadcasting of factual, objective and timely news is the finest public service radio or television stations can perform."

The RTNDA's News Code consists of ten points:

- Article 1: News coverage should be accurate and comprehensive.
- Article 2: News stories shall not contain facts that are not pertinent and relevant to the issue being presented. "Errors in fact will be promptly acknowledged and corrected."
- Article 3: "News will be selected on the criteria of

- significance. It excludes sensationalism or misleading emphasis."
- Article 4: "Broadcast Newsmen shall at all times display humane respect for the dignity, privacy and the well-being of persons with whom the news deals."
- Article 5: "Newsmen shall govern their personal lives...in a manner that will protect them from conflict of interest, real or apparent."
- Article 6: "Newsmen shall seek actively to present all news the knowledge of which will serve the public." And reporters will protect the confidentiality of news sources, "unless this would clearly and unmistakably defy the public interest."
- Article 7: News Directors recognize broadcasting's responsibility to present informed analysis and opinion on matters of public interest.
- Article 8: "Broadcast newsmen should attempt to prevent their presence or that of their equipment from distorting the character or importance of events."
- Article 9: "Newsmen shall avoid practices which would tend to interfere with the right of an individual to a fair trial."
- Article 10: The RTNDA shall censure violators of these standards.^{27a}

As it heads into the 21st century, radio journalism must never lose sight of its primary goal- to provide accurate, balanced and timely news which listeners can use and understand. Radio's future must not become dominated by a desire to make technical and stylistical improvements the sole priority. It must return to the basics if wants a healthy future. A good starting point is the spirit of competent radio journalism as cited in the CAB and RTNDA codes of conduct.

It serves no purpose to equip persons with the latest in broadcast journalism paraphernalia if those same persons lack the reporting and writing skills needed to handle news

assignments properly. A thorough understanding of media law, as it applies to broadcasting, is just one of the qualifications all radio reporters must have.

A reporter needs to do some clever thinking to find the real significance of an event or a series of actions. Sometimes a journalist has to look under the superficial appearances in order to discover the most newsworthy aspect of a story. There is little room in radio for reporters who cannot identify the most important implications of an event or statement. By getting the lead wrong, a reporter has missed the gist of the story and has mislead the listener.

Unacceptable journalism can still be heard on Canadian radio. For example, in Quebec in March 1987, a reporter from CJRC Gatineau aired the testimony that a witness had given a judge while the jury was absent from the courtroom. Because several members of that jury had heard that story on CJRC, the judge later declared a mistrial. The reporter was fined \$1,000 for breaching a section of the Criminal Code that forbids reporters from broadcasting any part of a trial that occurs when the jury is absent.²⁷⁹

If the audience loses faith in radio news, then radio might as well get out of the news business.

The broadcasting industry could do several things to ensure that the next 70 years of radio news will be even better. For example, it should take a serious look at the gender gap which still exists in the employment practices

of radio stations. Recent RTNDA surveys indicate newspapers and TV stations have more women reporters, editors and managers relative to radio. As of 1989, males out-numbered females four-to-one in radio reporting and news announcing, while the BBM surveys repeatedly show that women make up more than half of the listenership in many markets and in many time slots.²⁰⁰ Radio news in Canada does not have a long tradition and wealth of feminine form.

In the early-1950s, Marcelle Barthe became the first woman reporter to be hired by Radio-Canada. Judith Jasmin joined her shortly after.²⁰¹ For English-speaking female newsreaders, the CBC's Jan Tennant was one of the first role models on both radio and TV. In 1974, Tennant became the first female to anchor "The National".

At a National Archives' symposium on "Women and the Media", held in March 1989 in Ottawa, veteran Quebec broadcast journalist Gisele Gauichand said a private radio station turned her down for a reporting position in 1963 because it said she wasn't strong enough to carry heavy reel-to-reel tape recorders and microphone stands. She said the CBC was the first to hire women reporters because of union rules which stipulated each reporting crew must have a reporter and a soundman. Two-person crews made it easier to carry bulky equipment. She says the private sector was not willing to hire soundmen to lug equipment for women reporters. The private sector began hiring female reporters

only when the lighter cassette recorders arrived.

Only the radio industry itself can correct the current gender imbalance in its newsrooms. The gap has to be narrowed if radio wants to reflect our society.

Meantime, there are two, large threats to Canada radio. One is self-destruction brought on by the airing of shoddy journalism and the other is American-style deregulation coming to Canada. It would be a shame to experience the demise of radio news just at a time when the profession has perfected writing for the ear and has excelled in the use of recorded voice and sound. The extinction of radio news would also be humiliating for the Canadians who have developed a variety of news wires and voice services for use on our airwaves.

Those who want to slash news from radio must not be allowed to persuade the CRTC to adopt the same kind of deregulation the FCC permitted in the U.S. The Canadian public will suffer most if news on radio dwindles.

Radio overcame great geographical, educational, economic, and social differences in our society to enable it to provide the news service it currently broadcasts to a majority of Canadians on a regular basis.

In my opinion, if the federal government had rejected the recommendations of the Aird Commission and the Canadian Radio League, private sector news would have flourished much sooner than it did. By delaying its decision on our

broadcasting policy until it formed the CBC in 1936. Ottawa doomed private radio to an uncertain fate from the time the Aird Commission was formed in 1929 to 1941, when the CBC realized it could never become Canada's only broadcaster.

Had the private sector been given assurances in the early-1930s that it was to be given a solid footing next to public radio, Canada most likely would have seen the emergence of national and regional private radio networks. If private networks would have been created in the 1930s, those networks probably would have developed extensive news services similar to the ones American networks have.

Due to the decisions made by the governments of the 1930s and 1940s, Canada, with the exception of the CKO Network, does not have private sector networks. Instead we have several private companies owning strings of stations across the country. The CRTC does not permit these chains to form full-time networks to compete with CBC Radio. Most private radio chains do not have common, unified news services to provide news coverage to their stations. To get national and international stories for those stations, most companies subscribe to privately-owned news agencies, such as Newsradio, SBN and BN. Individual stations, whether they are independents or part of a chain, gather local news and and purchase other news from agencies.

Private radio in Canada has seen the emergence of strong local stations with the emphasis on local news

coverage. National private network newscasts have no tradition in this country. And with the exception of Broadcast News, radio news agencies only began in Canada in the mid-1960s. Had radio news wires, such as Transradio, been allowed to continue operations in Canada the private sector would have had access to better and more varied supplies of national and foreign news. And had news agencies been established earlier, many of them would have been in a position to staff foreign bureaus in the same way CBC Radio does.

Fortunately for private radio, the advent of inexpensive broadcast technology-- such as tape recorders, two-way radios, and telephone recording devices-- gave it the means to compete in local news coverage with the CBC, the newspapers and TV. And later, when ways were found to lower the cost of using microwaves, satellites, and computers, private radio was given the opportunity to challenge CBC Radio in the reporting of national and international events. Affordable technology gave private radio news equality with public radio.

Broadcasting regulation is another story. Until a separate regulatory body for broadcasting was set up in 1958, private radio received unfair treatment from Ottawa. The establishment of the CRTC to replace the BBG in 1968 gave private broadcasting a more equal footing with the CBC. Since the CRTC took over the regulating of radio,

private radio news has finally come of age.

For example, in Quebec, two province-wide radio chains were given CRTC approval to operate as networks. Telemedia, which uses CKAC Montreal as its base, runs a ten-station network. By using satellite dishes, it provides its stations with network newscasts that are beamed out of Montreal. And to give the Telemedia stations some local character on their local newscasts, reports coming out of Montreal are also re-written to suit the needs of listeners not living in Montreal. Radiomutuel, is the other Quebec network. It has four stations and 12 affiliates. Radiomutuel, which uses CJMS Montreal as its base, also provides network newscasts in the same way as Telemedia.²⁸² Together they are giving Radio-Canada much competition.

The past 25 years have been kinder to private radio news than the first 45 years of broadcasting. And although private radio has recently done a lot to improve its news service, one can't help but wonder how much better it could have been had it been allowed to prosper much, much earlier in the game. Its battles with the CRBC, the CBC, CP, and the press over the supply of news in the 1930s and 1940s, were costly. Private radio never recovered fully from those skirmishes. Its development was greatly delayed.

The Canadian Encyclopedia says radio "has proven an extremely flexible medium". And it credits radio for being of great public service:

"The technology of BROADCASTING enabled the producer to reach much larger audiences than was usually possible for the journalist. The reliance on sound alone liberated radio producers from many of the constraints that have restricted their counterparts in visual media...The radio producer can experiment with an array of program types to activate the listener's imagination or engage his mind. Consequently, radio has played many roles in society to meet the changing needs of the public."283

On the evening of May 20, 1927 as Charles Lindbergh and his Spirit of St. Louis passed over eastern Canada on his attempt to become the first aviator to fly non-stop from New York to Paris. CHNS Halifax announced: "The government wireless station at Cape Race, Newfoundland, reported that Lindbergh passed overhead at 7 p.m. EST. The weather is reported as poor."284

After hearing that broadcast, many listeners began to say to others: "The weather is poor; he can't possibly make it. I heard it on the radio!" And tens of millions of Canadians have been quoting from what they have heard on radio news ever since. From take-off to touch-down in Paris, Lindbergh's story lasted nearly 34 hours. Radio news' journey is still unfolding. It is still finding new forms. And despite some turbulence, it has been a great flight from the signing-on of CFCF in 1919, with only five watts of power, to the present.

APPENDIX

ITEM ONE: 1937 CBC NEWSCAST, TRANSCRIPTON AND CRITIQUE

Radio news has its own way of talking about news. Reading a newspaper out loud is not news broadcasting, at least not today. Radio news does not sound like a track announcer calling a horse race either, nor like an auctioneer selling cattle at the stockyards. But, when we hear a newscast on radio we automatically know what it is.

For Professor Bruck, "Radio news is a specific form of discourse (a form of talking) with its own practices and formations. Radio-news, as a form of talking, the world has developed under specific historic, technical and cultural conditions."²⁸⁵ Today one may say that most North American newscasters, except for slight variations in style, have adopted the same linguistic standards and style. This is not because newsreaders and radio reporters are clones. It is because radio has found forms which it thinks does the job of communicating news well in this medium.

The various ways radio talks about news is with us today because of the three conditions Professor Bruck listed- historic, technical and cultural

At the National Archives' Beyond the Printed Word exhibit, which opened in Ottawa in 1988, some 40 recordings of various radio newscasts were put on display for visitors to listen to. Most people I talked to, who had heard the recordings from the 1927-1940 period, said they were amazed

at how "un-radiolike" those early radio reports sounded.

Unfortunately, the oldest surviving disc recording of a complete Canadian radio newscast is from 1937.

Here is a transcription of that newscast. It was broadcast over the CBC's Vancouver outlet, CBR, the evening of December 1, 1937. It was read by Hugh Bartlett and the stories were prepared by Canadian Press. Imagine the announcer reading this script in a monotonous, deliberate manner. (Words that were hard to make out on the disc have been approximated as best as possible-- they are expressed phonetically and indicated by square brackets, [].)

.....
Announcer: "The CBC now brings to you a resume of world and western Canadian news especially compiled in Vancouver through the courtesy of the Canadian Press".

NEWSCAST:

Hugh Bartlett:

STORY #1:- "The United Kingdom and the United States moved another step toward economic co-operation tonight. At Washington and London, the intention was formally announced to negotiate a trade agreement. The first information that the negotiations were considered was on November the eleventh when London and Washington issued a joint statement that a trade agreement was contemplated.

At Washington, the United State's Secretary-of-State, Mr. Howell said that the accord included the British

colonies, protectorates, mandates and Newfoundland (note: pronounced: New-found-land). The dominions, Ireland and India are excluded. However, an announcement is expected shortly with regard to a new trade agreement between Canada and the United States.

Officials at Washington indicated that agreements with the Union of South Africa and Australia will follow. Public hearings on imports and exports, suggested for inclusion into the agreements between Washington and London have been set for March the 14th. Mr. Howell published a list of more than a thousand imports to the United States on which tariff concessions may be granted.

STORY #2- A Spanish government communique from Madrid reports that two-thousand exhausted and starving insurgents have surrendered from the barricaded position which they held in Teruel for more than two weeks.

With the fall of this base, the government says only a few straggling groups of insurgents remain within the city. Their surrender is expected soon.

North of Teruel, the 17-day-old combat is reported to have settled down to trench warfare. However, insurgent columns are reported to swinging southward around the city in an attempt to cut-away a highway to Valencia.

STORY #3- Italy is to begin immediate construction of two, 35-thousand ton battleships, 12 destroyers and a number of submarines. When the new program is completed she

will have a navy of more than 500-thousand tons. It will be the largest in Italian history and close to the total tonnage of the French navy.

Shortly after Premier Mussolini's announcement, French officials at Paris declared that France must increase her warship building to meet the Italian increase.

A reporter for the Navy Budget in the Chamber of Deputies said that Parliament probably would be asked to appropriate money to lay down two battleships equal to the new Italian vessels.

STORY #4- The Italian government has appointed a reception committee to plan a welcome for Chancellor Hitler of Germany when he visits Italy next spring. The exact date has not been fixed, but he is expected to arrive in Rome on May the ninth...the second anniversary of the proclamation of the Italian Empire.

STORY #5- The principal theatre of the Sino-Japanese hostilities is now more than 400 miles west of Shanghai, where a Japanese army is manoeuvring for a stranglehold on the [Lun-Hai] railroad. Running from east-to-west, this system is sometimes called China's last line of defence.

The Japanese ambassador to China declares that peace negotiations are out of the question for the present. And in an interview to newspaper [Mana Shanghai], he said that China needs a new governmental regime- one relying absolutely upon the technical and economic support and the

guidance of Japan.

STORY #6- One exchange of notes between the United States and Japan is reported to have failed to settle the controversy over the alleged encroachment of Japanese fishing vessels in Alaska salmon waters.

American representatives were made after federal agencies investigated charges that Japanese trawlers were threatening the American salmon industry by operating in the Bristol Bay area of Alaska.

STORY #7- One of the greatest searches in history is being conducted off the coast of California for seven United States' navy flyers who have been lost at sea since Wednesday. 35 fighting ships and nearly 300 aeroplanes are taking part in the hunt.

It has already cost the life of one aviator. He fell to his death yesterday while searching for his missing comrades one-hundred miles offshore.

STORY #8- At Washington today, President Roosevelt announced the most sweeping diplomatic shake-up since he took office. It effects United States' diplomatic posts in Canada, Great Britain, Soviet Russia, Germany, Belgium and Chile.

The minister to Canada, Norman Armour will become ambassador to Chile. Joseph P. Kennedy has been named ambassador to Great Britain to fill the post made vacant by the death of the late Robert Bingham.

STORY #9- Government experts at Ottawa have evolved a new method of handling poultry in cold storage which is likely to be of great value to Canadian exporters. The method eliminates the pock-marks, or freezer burns, which ordinarily appear after a few weeks in storage and reduce the birds' saleability. A box of frozen chickens was taken from an Ottawa storage vault after 14 months and not one freezer burn could be seen.

STORY #10- At Ottawa today, Sir George Perley, former cabinet minister...was buried in a snow-clad cemetery after a funeral service in a church where he had worshipped for many years. Thousands lined the streets along which the cortage passed with its cavalry guard of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

The procession into the church was headed by Prime Minister MacKenzie King and the Conservative leader, Mr. Bennett- whose chief lieutenant was once Sir George.

STORY #11- The 1937 operation of the Saskatchewan Dairy Pool, one of the most successful co-operative movements in Canada, is described as a howling success by its manager, C.T. Gooding.

For the year ending last November 30th, the organization increased its assets by 27-thousand dollars to 227-thousand dollars. (record skips at this point)

STORY #12- Farming was described as the forgotten 'million-dollar-industry' of Canada by C.A. Hayden, editor

of the COUNTRY LIFE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, when he addressed the annual convention of the B.C. Coast Growers Association at New Westminster.

He said the founders of the British North America Act did not anticipate the development of agriculture in Canada, nor the problems that such development would create in each province. Therefore, he said, the Act does not safeguard agriculture.

STORY #13- Hope for the safety of two trappers who have been unreported since they left Quesnel ten weeks ago is hinging upon the ability of a home-made boat to weather the treacherous waters of the Lower Bear River.

The younger of the two, Ben [Lavit], made the craft with the help of Jim Duffy, a Bear River home-steader. Persons familiar with the river say it is dangerous to attempt to navigate it in anything but a strongly built raft. Lavit's companion, is a trapper named [Ves-throw].

STORY #14- The new Vancouver-to-Whitehorse airline has postponed its inaugural flight a week from next Saturday. Officials of the NORTH WEST AIRWAYS LIMITED of Carcross, say they have decided to delay the start until a new plane is delivered. It is due in Vancouver early next week.

STORY #15- Officials of the Alberta government are preparing for trade discussions with British Columbia's minister of Trade and Industry, Mr. Asselstine. It is believed that the conversations which open at Edmonton on

Monday will deal with the exchange of coal, fruit, fish and other commodities between the two provinces.

STORY #16- The Extention Department of the University of Alberta has offered to donate 25-hundred dollars towards the proposed erection of an auditorium at Banff.

Last year the annual School of Drama and Fine Arts attracted nearly 300 persons to the mountain centre. Some fears have been expressed that the school might be discontinued due to lack of accomodation if the old Britain Hall Theatre were demolished.

STORY #17- An 82-year-old pioneer of [Nanton] Alberta, William White, has been a blacksmith for 67 years and is still at work. His memories go back to the days when ox carts were the principal means of transportation on the Prairies.

More than 50 years ago at Brandon Manitoba, he saw a train of 70 oxen pulling Red River carts on their summer trip with supplies for Edmonton. It took them six months to travel from Winnipeg to the Alberta city. The Red River carts were made entirely of wood with large creaking wheels which were never great.

Mr. White says that they moved across the Prairies making a noise like the howling of a thousand coyotes.

(Note: announcer didn't pause here and continued reading.)

STORY #18- Higher quotations were posted for base metals at London and Montreal today. At New York, silver,

lead and zinc were unchanged, but export copper was firmer. Spot prices on the Montreal market were for copper... eleven-point-80, for tin...44-point-50, for lead... four-point-85, and for zinc...four-point-65, for 100-pounds, F.O.B. Montreal in five-ton lots.

Montreal silver futures were also firmer...60-points up to 25 points off with no sale. The bid for January futures is 43-point-25 and for March- 43-point-five.

The eastern Canadian and New York stock markets closed slightly lower. At Vancouver, Braelorne and Pioneer each advanced five-cents with Braelorne closing at nine-dollars and Pioneer at three-dollars and 20-cents. Big Missouri was up three at 51, and Caribou Gold Quartz also gained three at a dollar-73. Lucky Jim and White Water topped base metal trading with fractional advances. Lucky Jim closed at three-and-a-half and White Water at six and one-eighth. Small recessions were general among the oil stocks.

STORY #19- A club which was started among 17 boys by a Vancouver police constable, less than a year ago, now has a membership of close to 25-hundred.

Its motto..."It is easier to build boys, than to mend men"... is spreading across the Dominion. Constable Ron Evelay of the Vancouver City Police tells how the club was started by chance one April day last year. Police broke up a boys' baseball game when a foul-ball smashed through

the window of a nearby house. As the players straggled past Evely's home, he asked them how they would like to start a club and have a regular place to play? That was the beginning.

In less than a month the group had 150 members and a service club advanced enough money to purchase an abandoned factory which the boys made into a gymnasium. Now there are four divisions of the club in Vancouver and it has been incorporated under the Company's Act as the Junior G-Men of Canada.

Inquiries have come from several parts of Canada and a branch is already being organized in Edmonton.

STORY #20- At New York tonight a former San Francisco bellhop, Fred Apostoli, proved his right to be called the number one challenger for the middle-weight title of champion Freddie Steele.

The referee stopped the scheduled 12-round bout in the ninth round to save a dazed and battered Steele from further punishment.

Apostoli weighed-in at 161 pounds and Steele was 158. In spite of his defeat, Steele is still the official holder of the World middle-weight championship.

STORY #21- After March the 31st, no British Columbia timber licences that have been allowed to lapse will be re-instated. This carries out an amendment to the Forest Act which was passed during the last session of the

provincial legislature. By an order-in-council today, the government re-instated 12 licences, collecting 12-thousand dollars in back fines."

Announcer: "The CBC has presented a resume of world and western Canada news especially compiled in Vancouver through the courtesy of Canadian Press.

.....
 END OF NEWSCAST

I acknowledge that there isn't an exclusive and natural news style which is appropriate to the radio medium at all times and places. My critique is based on models of radio news writing currently employed in most Canadian radio newsrooms. Those models stress that good radio copy is copy designed for the ear.

Since this newscast is a compilation of newspaper stories, CP had to condense the stories to produce a ten-minute newscast. In rewriting these stories for broadcast, CP realized it had to reverse the order of parts of the sentences in order to avoid sentences ending in the awkward "...he said" style. Therefore the words which give the story's attribution and the words which contain the newsmakers' statements had to be switched around.

But simply changing the sequence of words of a print story doesn't transform it into a piece of broadcast news. For example, in the first story, "...the intention was formally announced to negotiate a trade agreement. The

first information that the negotiations were considered was on November 11th when London and Washington issued a joint statement that a trade agreement was contemplated." is too formal for use on modern radio. Good radio writing should be conversational, not stiff and long-winded. And good radio stories usually communicate one main element or thought per story. Today, most radio journalists would write the same story in a manner similar to this:

"The word from Washington tonight is that the Americans and the British are going to negotiate a trade agreement. Public hearings on which imports and exports will be covered in the proposed deal will begin March 14th. American Secretary-of-State Howell says he has listed more than a thousand British imports which may become exempt from tariffs.

The proposed U.S.-British deal will not affect Canada...however a new trade deal between Canada and the U.S. is reported to be in the works...."

In story #2, the attribution phrase "A Spanish government communique from Madrid reports", is too wordy. Such an attribution is too complicated for ear reception. Today, it would be phrased: "The Spanish government says..." In story # 3, "A reporter for the Navy Budget in the Chamber of Deputies said", would probably become "A Navy spokesman says...".

The lead sentence in story #5 resembles the type of writing used in old newsreels. That sentence does not say in plain English what is happening. A lead such as "In China, fighting between Japanese and Chinese troops is now centered at a vital railway line some 400 miles west of

Shanghai...", would be better.

The first paragraph of story #6 is too abstruse for radio. Broadcasters seldom write or talk in legalese. Story #6 could have been handled this way: "An exchange of letters between Japanese and American officials has failed to settle the fishing dispute between the two countries. The U.S. says Japanese trawlers are fishing illegally for salmon off the coast of Alaska..."

Story #7 contains an example of writing in the passive voice. The sentence, "It has already cost the life of one aviator" uses a form of verb inflection which softens the sense of action. Good radio writing avoids the use of impersonal pronouns conjugated with intransitive verbs. Therefore, a more active style should be chosen:

"Yesterday, the search claimed the life of one pilot..."

In story #10 about Perley's funeral, the words "buried", "cemetery", "funeral service", "church" and "worshipped" were all used in the first sentence, and are redundant. When we talk of a funeral we assume there's going to be a funeral service at a church. Modern usage might be: "Snow fell in Ottawa today as thousands lined the ceremonial route to pay last respects to former cabinet minister, Sir George Perley..." Also the last line of the story "-whose chief lieutenant was once Sir George" is awkwardly phrased for radio. Using "Sir George served as former Prime Minister Bennett's chief lieutenant", would

have been better.

The first paragraphs of stories 11 and 12 are written in newspaper style. In story #11, the lead could have been: "The manager of the Saskatchewan Dairy Pool says 1937 was a howling success for the co-operative. C.T. Gooding reports the Pool increased its assets by 27-thousand dollars over the previous year..." And for story #12: "The editor of Country Life in B.C. magazine says farming is Canada's forgotten million-dollar industry. C.A. Hayden told delegates attending the B.C. Coast Growers convention in New Westminster...that the Fathers of Confederation didn't anticipate the problems Canada's farmers are experiencing today..."

Story #13 does not make it clear in the first paragraph what the two trappers are trying to accomplish.

And story #14 in using the phrase "a week from next Saturday" to establish a time reference, causes confusion for those listening. The mind can't cope with dates if they are voiced that way. It's better to mention the exact date. Example: "...the inaugural flight has now been postponed to December tenth."

Story # 17 about the pioneer and his recollection of ox carts is simply not a story that fits into today's criteria of what constitutes news on radio. This story is not timely and was probably condensed from a CP feature article that had been written for use in Saturday's papers.

Story # 19 about the boys' club is also of marginal value for use on radio. There's not the immediacy in this story to warrant inclusion into a ten-minute newscast where time is precious.

You have probably noticed that in 1937 news writers used the word "at" instead of "in" when referring to the story's place or origin. I think this was just part of a writing style that was in vogue back then and its use was not detrimental.

ITEM TWO: EARLIEST RECORDED PRIVATE RADIO NEWSCAST

The following is a partial transcript of Al Vardy reading a 1939 newscast on VONF St. John's, Nfld., with material from Transradio. According to the National Archives it is one of the earliest and complete private radio newscasts to have been recorded on disc and preserved:

Announcer's introduction: The Newfoundland Butter Company, makers of Green Label, that outstanding spread for bread, presents Al Vardy the NBC news commentator, in 15 minutes of news comments based upon reports furnished by Transradio Press.

Vardy: How do you do Ladies and Gentlemen?

A somewhat stiffer attitude on the part of Turkey was seen today following the announcement from Ankara that the mobilization of industry and natural resources had been ordered. The Ankara announcement came directly on the heels of the dispatch of Turkey's answer to Hitler's message to President Ismet Inonu.

The government's first move was the nationalization of all coal and owners will be compensated for property taken over by the state. However, official sources declined to reveal the text of the reply sent to Hitler. But it was disclosed that the answer was in Turkish, a sardonic commentary on the fact that Hitler's message was written in German without an accompanying translation.

Semi-official newspaper commentaries in Istanbul said that Hitler's message was an invitation for Turkey to send a high-ranking government representative, presumably the Foreign Minister or President Inonu, to Berlin for a conference with Hitler.

Or the Nazi chieftain was said to have offered to send a ranking Nazi official to Ankara, presumably Von Rippentropp if the Turks prefer.

The Turkish government is reported to have declined both invitations. The influential Member of Parliament, Deputy Joachim, in a semi-official article in the newspaper Yeni Shabah, said that now that Germany is Turkey's neighbour on the Bulgarian frontier, every Turk must now be more on alert than ever.

There is a flagrant contradiction in Germany's reported friendly overtures and the rapid advance of the Nazi armies in the Balkans.

Incidentally, Hitler's invitation to the Turkish head, to visit him, is quite in keeping with Nazi practice. It was disclosed today that Prince Paul, the Yugoslav Regent, visited Berchtesgaden on Monday last. At the time he was reported to have met the Nazi head at a point near the Nazi frontier. Belgrade denied this earlier report, but it is now disclosed that the Regent went all the way to talk to Hitler.

Meantime, the latest reports from Belgrade, tonight,

state that the German minister to the Yugoslav capital was received for a conference this afternoon by the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Cincar Markovic. Nazi sources said the minister probably was informed of the decisions reached at last night's special meeting of the Yugoslav cabinet and army leaders with Regent Prince Paul.

A communique issued last night failed to disclose any decisions reached at the meeting, but called upon the Yugoslav people to maintain their unity. The communique stated that the government was holding the country's independence above everything else. This was presumed to mean that the government was making a desperate effort to find a way out of its present difficulties, possibly by compromise.

Reports that demands (record skips here)...that Yugoslavia to join the Axis and allow the passage of Nazi troops through that country. We may hear where they stand by the middle of next week.

The Turkish Parliament has been called into session for Monday, and a statement will be given on Wednesday it is anticipated by the Premier, during which he is expected to give the contents of Hitler's offer to the Turkish President. This speech is also expected to disclose Turkey's attitude in relation to a possible German attack on Greece.

And according to a report just received from Belgrade,

a few minutes ago. the Yugoslav government was reported tonight to have decided to make a public statement of its position in regard to the Balkan situation tomorrow. The decision to make a statement on foreign policy was said to have been made in response to demands from leaders of the radical Democrat and National parties.

Meanwhile reports from Sophia today said that the Bulgarian government is considering the freezing of American financial assets in Bulgaria in retaliation for similar actions taken earlier in the week by President Roosevelt. Bulgarian credits in the United States, frozen by President Roosevelt soon after the Nazi military occupation, were said to amount to less than 500-thousand dollars. While American investments in Bulgaria were estimated at more than ten-million dollars.

And now let's look at the progress of the war with Italy..."

Vardy took exactly four minutes just to read this opening story! Compared to the 1937 CBC-CP newscast, this newscast is also very wordy and most of it is written in newspaper style. However, it did provide more detail than the newscast CP provided the CBC. Researchers at the National Archives are not sure if Vardy wrote some of this news copy or if he simply was reading directly from Transradio. In any event, the past tense is used too

frequently for radio and many of Vardy's comments and descriptions are hard to follow. The writing is much too complicated for the ear.

However, I could not detect a pro-German bias in this story, which is what some Canadian officials had accused Transradio of having. But, the sixth paragraph is clearly an opinion. It's not known who wrote: "There is a flagrant contradiction in Gemany's reported..." -but, this comment should have come from a source and not the news service or announcer.

NOTES ON BIBLIOGRAPHICAL STYLE

Reference notes and bibliography in I HEARD IT ON THE RADIO have been prepared according to Roy McKeen Wiles' style manual--Scholarly Reporting in the Humanities--as noted on page iv.

The listing of sources in this book is in compliance with Wiles' classification and arrangement of bibliographical details. "A bibliography--especially a long one--is more serviceable if the works listed are classified according to their importance...or according to their form (as "Manuscripts", "Books", and "Articles"), or according to some other convenient and recognizable scheme. Appropriate headings should be used to indicate the particular nature of each group." In this work, works are listed according to their form: "Books", "Articles", "Interviews", etc.

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