

In this connection, it is interesting to note that in the majority of countries, particularly in the old world, the domestic telegraph and telephone services are State-owned and -operated, whereas in Canada and in the United States practically all such services are owned and operated by private enterprise. For this reason, neither Canada nor the United States has ever subscribed to the St. Petersburg Convention.

For the same reason neither of these two countries is an adherent to the Telegraph and Telephone Service Regulations issued under the Telecommunication Convention of Madrid, 1932, as revised from time to time. The latest revision of the Radiocommunication Regulations annexed to the said Convention, and to which Canada subscribes, was effected at an administrative conference held at Cairo, Egypt, in 1938.

Transmission of the human voice by radio (radiotelephony) first came into being in Canada in 1918. Apart from its many applications in the field of marine and commercial communications, its value as a means of entertainment and of rapid communication with the public soon became apparent. The Marconi Wireless Telegraph Co. of Canada, Ltd. (now the Canadian Marconi Co.) was licensed by the Department to establish an experimental broadcasting station at Montreal with call letters XWA. After an experimental period, regular organized programs were begun in 1920 by the same Company. In 1922 the establishment of broadcasting stations on a general scale had commenced and 52 Private Commercial and Amateur Broadcasting Licences were granted during the fiscal year 1922-23. The matter of Dominion jurisdiction was questioned by certain of the provinces on different occasions, but on Feb. 9, 1932, the judicial committee of the Imperial Privy Council ruled that the control and regulation of radiocommunication rested within the jurisdiction of the Dominion Parliament. Following this ruling, the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Act was passed in 1932 and power was vested in the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission to control and regulate radio broadcasting in Canada. Without the use of transcontinental transmission wires and broadcasting stations of its own the Commission did not, at the outset, engage in national broadcasting on a substantial scale. In April, 1933, the nucleus of a national network of stations was secured by the acquisition and operation of the three stations of the Canadian National Railways situated at Moncton, Ottawa and Vancouver.

A further phase of national radio broadcasting in Canada was entered upon in 1936, when, with the passage of the Canadian Broadcasting Act, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation replaced the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (see pp. 647-650). The new Act gave the Corporation much wider powers in the operation of the system, and was modelled very largely along the lines of the Act governing the British Broadcasting Corporation. The technical control of all broadcasting stations reverted to the Minister of Transport, who was also empowered to make regulations for the control of any equipment liable to cause interference with radio reception.

However, pursuant to the provisions of the Public Service Rearrangement and Transfer of Duties Act and of the War Measures Act, the duties, powers and functions vested in the Minister of Transport, under the Radio Act, 1938, and the Canadian Broadcasting Act, 1936, were transferred to the Minister of Munitions and Supply by Orders in Council passed in July and September, 1940. A further Order in Council, passed in June, 1941, transferred jurisdiction over the broadcasting activities of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to the Minister of National War Services.