

These legislative objectives reflect the concerns of a country with a small population sharing a continent and a good deal of cultural background with a large and populous neighbour. Either directly or through cable television systems, more than 60% of English-speaking Canadians and more than 40% of French-speaking Canadians have access to United States stations and networks. As well, Canadian broadcast rights to popular programs produced in the US are relatively cheap, since the producer has already recovered costs from US sales. As a result, American programs make up a large proportion of material presented by Canadian television and radio stations.

The concern to have broadcasting service that will safeguard, enrich and strengthen the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of Canada as called for by the Broadcasting Act, is strongly represented by the publicly owned CBC. It also finds expression in CRTC regulations dealing with program content. The amount of broadcast time devoted to non-Canadian programming by television stations and networks is not to exceed 40% between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and midnight. For AM radio broadcasting, 30% of the musical compositions presented by stations and networks between 6:00 a.m. and midnight are to be Canadian according to the criteria set out in CRTC regulations. Individual FM radio station or network operators make specific commitments as to Canadian content which are conditions of their licences.

### Cable television

16.2.1

Although relatively little attention had been paid by government or industry to the significance of cable television until the latter half of the 1960s, more than 10% of Canadian homes had become subscribers to CATV service by 1968. In 1969, the CRTC considered the capability of cable television technology to enlarge the coverage areas of US stations and networks in Canada and concluded that "the rapid acceleration of such a process throughout Canada would represent the most serious threat to Canadian broadcasting since 1932 before Parliament decided to vote the first Broadcasting Act." The regulations for cable television issued by the commission in 1975 reflect this concern: local and regional stations are given precedence over distant stations in the order of priority that CATV must use in assigning the distribution channels available on any given cable television system; and there is provision for the substitution of the signals of a local or regional station for the signals of a distant station of lower priority when an identical program is being transmitted during the same period.

**Pay television.** The CRTC policy on cable television issued in December 1975 said that it was premature to introduce a comprehensive pay television service in Canada at that time. In June 1976 the commission invited submissions on pay television about "the form and function of an organization, institution or agency to assemble, produce and acquire programming for distribution to licensed broadcasting undertakings for pay television on a national or regional basis in English and in French."

Such a structure would have to meet three objectives for pay television set out by the communications minister: It must provide a range of programming which would not duplicate that offered by broadcasters and must do so without siphoning programs from the broadcast system. It must ensure the production of high-quality Canadian programs that Canadians would watch. It must ensure that programs would be produced in Canada for international sale.

In May 1977, the CRTC held public hearings to examine and discuss the material it had received in more than 100 briefs about pay television. The commission was expected to issue its comments on the subject early in 1978.

### Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)

16.2.2

**Facilities and coverage.** The CBC operates two national television networks, English and French; four radio networks, AM and FM in English and French; a special medium and shortwave radio service in the North including native language programs; and an international shortwave and transcription service. In 1977 the CBC owned some 412 radio outlets (full stations or rebroadcasting transmitters), and its radio network service was also carried on 112 privately owned outlets. CBC-owned television stations or rebroadcasters totalled about 296, and the CBC television networks also included 245