

Hundreds of private business firms operate everything from cable television in small communities to major broadcasting stations in metropolitan centres. In 1969, radio and television companies that were more than 20% foreign-owned earned about 13% of the revenues of the entire industry. In that year, an order-in-council forbade foreign ownership of more than 20% of a broadcasting undertaking — radio, TV or cable. Now all Canadian broadcasting undertakings are at least 80% Canadian-owned.

Public sector broadcasting is at least as significant as the private. The largest broadcasting enterprise in the country is the CBC, a Crown corporation of the federal government. TV Ontario and Radio-Québec are regional educational-TV networks operated by the governments of Ontario and Quebec, respectively. The department of education in Alberta operates a radio network. Many small cable-TV systems and rebroadcasting transmitters are owned by community associations.

Canadians are heavy users of radio and television. According to the CBC research department, an estimated 98% of Canadians had a radio in their homes in 1978, while 86% had an FM radio set; 97% had at least one television set, while 74% had colour TV; and 36% had more than one TV.

A vast and complex array of different types of stations and transmitters are used. In 1979, there were 449 licensed AM radio stations, 416 FM radio stations, 1,045 television stations, 273 low-power relay transmitters, eight short-wave stations, 550 cable television systems, as well as 32 radio and television networks.

CBC coast-to-coast facilities and coverage are described in section 16.5.2. There are no full-time AM or FM networks operated by private commercial interests, though more than 100 private stations are affiliated with the English or French networks of the CBC. Many part-time regional networks of privately owned stations operate to present such specific program services as play-by-play accounts of major sporting events.

Networking in television is more pervasive. The CBC operates two nationwide television networks, one in English and one in French. There are three major commercially operated networks. The CTV network provides an English-language program service from coast to coast, and the Réseau de télévision TVA offers French-language programming across Quebec. The privately owned Global Communications Ltd. serves Southern Ontario. The definition of educational programming is so broad that both TV-Ontario and Radio-Québec are able to fill most of the evening hours with entertainment of a general nature.

Canadian content requirements and related cultural and social objectives have never been easy to achieve because most Canadians live in a strip along the Canada-US border. According to the CRTC, more than 81% of Canadians had access in 1977 to at least one American television channel. About 70% could pick up three American networks, and the American Public Broadcasting Service could be picked up by 70%. In English Canada, 62.4% of the population could pick up four American TV channels while only 45.6% could receive four Canadian channels. In Quebec, 49% of the population could pick up one American channel.

Despite CRTC regulation of cable TV and Canadian content regulations, accessibility of American TV channels has meant that more Canadians watch American programs. Even with an increase in the number of Canadian television stations, the proportion of Canadians watching them declined between 1967 and 1977 from 74.1% to 69.5% in English Canada and from 80.1% to 74.3% for French-language stations in Quebec. This competition has meant that, in spite of the CRTC content regulations, Canadian English-language stations, particularly in the private sector, purchase much American programming. As a result, in 1976 more than 70% of all the programming viewed by Canadian audiences on English-language stations was of foreign origin. For entertainment and sports programming, the figure was 81.7%.

The Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB), the national trade organization for private broadcasters in Canada, offered one explanation for the popularity of American programming in Canada in its January 1979 brief to the committee on the implications of telecommunications for Canadian sovereignty. The major reason is that the competition is funded by a market that in 1977 generated \$6.7 billion. That was the total amount of American TV commercial sales. In Canada the equivalent commercial