

that the project had already been designed and initiated completely by bureaucrats with no initial input from the private sector. The request was rejected.

Often, when corporate decision makers are asked to be involved at the early stages of some project, they are asked to attend "speech-making meetings" that decide little. We have all attended such meetings. They are generally large and within the two to three hours allotted, each person will have the chance to state two or three thoughts. Period. That format may work for the tossing around of ideas and exploration, but it is totally inadequate for the planning and designing of specific and often costly projects. What the industry would like to see is a small group of five or six people determining the foundation for a co-operative venture before any commitments are actually made. The communications strategy would still be shaped by Ottawa, but the content of any specific initiative within that framework would be developed by a true partnership.

If Ottawa wants to have active and aggressively enthusiastic private partners, it must re-think the process of mutual involvement. If that is done and it can be demonstrated that both sides would gain, there would be a number of willing corporate partners.

But there is also a different kind of partnership to consider, namely, in the area of programming. Sometimes companies or foundations may pay for the programming to be aired in a region where the company might want exposure or the foundation may have an interest. The Heritage Minutes in Canada might provide a kind of model where Canada Post and the Charles R. Bronfman Foundation are jointly sponsoring the series.

In other instances, Ottawa would pay. Here, we are talking about the kind of programming that celebrates what's Canadian and does it out of a tradition of excellence that is recognized around the world. Naturally, I immediately think of the CBC and its acknowledged need for more programming dollars.

The federal government would function as a kind of broadcaster by either buying or commissioning programs for air. Given that it doesn't have a network *per se*, it would only be interested in a limited number of very specific kinds of programs rather than having to fill an entire schedule. To air them, it might buy time on a national channel, or it might be allotted the time in the quid pro quo kind of arrangement mentioned earlier.

If we're talking about a strong news and current affairs emphasis, the government might use existing TVO educational series, or CBC programming such as Newsworld International or Newsworld's newly launched WebNet. I recognize that Newsworld International is the child of a partnership between CBC and Power Corporation, but, given that Canada would be targeting either countries not already included in Newsworld International's existing satellite footprint, or regions for only a limited period of time, there might not be a commercial conflict of interest that would prevent Power Corporation from co-operating.

It should be noted that some of the regional markets are not exactly big buyers with big bucks for Canadian programming, so we might not have some of the distribution problems that we would have if we were dealing on a worldwide basis. The question of rights is an additional argument against the broadcasting option.