

plays originated by the CBC are either originals or adaptations by Canadian writers.

The CBC, both in the dramatized public affairs features and in spoken word broadcasts, makes a constant effort to reflect fairly the major points of view or trends of opinion. CBC policy is to encourage a frank exchange of opinion and to maintain freedom of speech on the air. Spoken word programmes, apart from news, range from critical analyses of current events to the light and humorous radio cartoon; from book, movie and radio reviews to cooking school of the air; from the reading of original Canadian short stories to the reading of light verse. Within this wide field the objective is to find good radio speakers with something interesting and important to say, and considerable time is spent by talks producers in coaching prospective speakers in microphone technique.

Important questions of the day are presented to listeners in the form of commentaries, discussions, quiz shows, interviews and documentaries or semi-dramatized programmes. One of these is Citizen's Forum, listened to each week by organized groups across the country. The programme is presented in cooperation with the Canadian Association for Adult Education and study bulletins are sent out in advance outlining topics to be discussed. Each week listener groups report their opinions and these are summarized on the broadcast the following week. Several times a year a national report of forum opinion is broadcast.

Political and Controversial Broadcasts

The CBC accepts its responsibility in connection with broadcasts in which opinions are expressed, and its policy in this regard has been laid down in a White Paper on Political and Controversial Broadcasting. This policy is based on the principle that the air waves belong to the people and that therefore no person or group may acquire a proprietary right to them by reason of position or wealth.

For this reason the CBC will not sell time to anyone for broadcasts of matters of opinion. Instead it gives time for these purposes free of charge, providing equal opportunity for the expression of varying points of view. All major points of view about social economic or political questions are represented among licence payers -- and they have a right to hear an expression of the major points of view. It is felt that while frank expression of opinion may arouse criticism this is in the interests not only of good broadcasting but of the preservation of democracy in Canada. Freedom of the air is freedom to share in the opportunities to be derived from this portion of the public domain. Both the CBC and private stations are responsible for seeing that speakers do not violate general broadcasting regulations and that their scripts do not contain libel or obscenity. But the CBC does not in any way censor the expression of ideas in a speaker's script.

Service to Farm Listeners

Similar to Citizens' Forum but of a more specialized nature, is National Farm Radio Forum -- the largest listening-group programme of its type in the world. In its tenth season (1949-50) there were 1,600 groups registered with about 27,000 members; 413 new groups were organized during the season. The programme is produced by the CBC in co-operation with the Canadian Federation of Agriculture and the Canadian Association for Adult Education. It serves as a common meeting hall for Canadian farmers everywhere who exchange views through radio. Another aspect of public service broadcasting as it affects farm families directly is the daily noon hour broadcast for farmers in each region, giving them up-to-the-minute market