

April 6, 1961
(Morning Session)

The meeting opened at 9:40 a.m. with the Chairman presiding.

27. TV Football Rights

The Chairman opened this special one-day meeting of the Board by stating that while the Board agreed to a general policy regarding CBC networks and the relationship to any private networks that might appear which would have some effect on CBC, that everything that had been done to date regarding the non-splitting of CBC network facilities had been in accordance with that policy. The Chairman pointed out, however, that incidents have occurred which the Board members may have seen in the material forwarded to them following the 33rd Executive Committee meeting which might affect the Board's thinking on this policy and which certainly had affected public opinion. The Chairman felt that it was most important that the members of the Board be familiar with all aspects of the situation because no matter which way the Corporation approached this problem, the CBC would be subjected to a tremendous amount of criticism. Mr. Dunsmore was of the opinion that the final outcome would establish a pattern which would affect the Corporation for years to come, as well as having a profound effect on the broadcasting field as a whole.

Mrs. Carter inquired whether this situation had been discussed thoroughly with Dr. Stewart of the Board of Broadcast Governors. The President replied in the affirmative, stating that Dr. Stewart knew that the Board was meeting to consider the Corporation's position in this particular issue. Mr. Ouimet stated further that he would convey the support of the present policy or the decision taken by the Board at this meeting when the Corporation appears before the Board of Broadcast Governors meeting commencing April 11, 1961.

The Chairman drew to the attention of the Board the fact that this special meeting was called because the President was to appear before the BBG next week on the question of not splitting CBC network facilities and that it was most important that he appear with the full support of the Board regarding this question.

Dr. Lumsden inquired whether the meeting of the BBG was to discuss this subject. In reply, the President stated that this would be their regular hearing but that at this time CFTO-TV Toronto might apply for a temporary three-city second network permit. On the other hand, it might well be that Mr. Caldwell will apply for permission to operate a network, which would then form a contest between Mr. Caldwell and CFTO-TV. In any case, the Corporation will have an opportunity to express its views on the applications. Following the appearance of either Mr. Caldwell or CFTO-TV, the principles involved would be thoroughly discussed.

Dr. Lumsden asked whether there would be any possibility that the BBG may bring pressure to have Big Four football broadcasts carried over CBC facilities. The President replied in the negative, stating that it will all depend on the action taken by the fifteen members of the BBG.

The Chairman recalled that at the September 1960 meeting of the Board it approved the Corporation's comments in connection with the conditions governing the establishing of a second TV network as defined by the BBG.

Mrs. Aitken brought to the attention of the Board an article which appeared in the entertainment section of the Toronto Star which presented an interview with Mr. Spence Caldwell about these very things. Mrs. Aitken drew attention particularly to the statement that Mr. Caldwell was successful in getting eight private stations to join his network. Arrangements were made for copies of the article to be duplicated and distributed to the members of the Board.