

The demand for a public system came from a very wide cross-section of Canadian opinion. It was a practical demand and not a theoretical demand. It arose from the special consideration of Canadian conditions. For example, the popular request which led to the appointment of the Aird Royal Commission in 1928 came from national organizations, such as the Canadian Legion, the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada, women's organizations and many newspapers and individuals. The demand which led to the special parliamentary committee in 1932 was even more comprehensive and included, as the minutes of the special parliamentary committee of 1932 will show, almost every element in the nation's life—universities, educational institutions, business, professional, women's organizations, national organizations, Boards of Trade, Chambers of Commerce, listeners' societies, national and local farmer and labour organizations, and the majority of Canadian newspapers.

The recommendations of the Aird Commission and those of the parliamentary committee of 1932 were identical in the following respects:

They both took cognizance of the conditions and conclusions which I have just mentioned.

They both recommended a national chain which would include all the high-power stations.

They both agreed on the paramount importance of a single national authority to control, for purposes of co-ordination, all broadcasting in the public interest; this control being especially necessary as a high-power system could for financial and other practical reasons only gradually be established.

The Radio Commission, while embodying the essential principles of unified control and public ownership of high-power stations was considered defective in its machinery since a national broadcasting system requires an independent and flexible constitution:

- (a) Because, from all points of view, it is in fact in the nature of a business;
- (b) because, the character of broadcasting requires the utmost flexibility of administration;
- (c) because, the national broadcasting authority must be removed from the direct control of the government of the day and be non-partisan and independent.

For the above reasons the special parliamentary committee of 1936, while reaffirming the essential principle of unified control, recommended the present basis of independent control which is in fact roughly the sort of constitution envisaged by the Aird Royal Commission. In its constitutional aspect it is similar to the B.B.C. and to most of the public systems in democratic countries.

The CBC plan of national coverage is in essentials the same as that recommended by the Aird Commission and by the parliamentary committee of 1932. It predicates the ownership by the corporation of all high-power stations. It assigns to private stations, except in so far as they are used for network purposes by the corporation, a purely local function. The Aird scheme proposed a chain of seven 50-kilowatt stations and the necessary subsidiary stations. The relevant recommendations of the parliamentary committee of 1932 are as follows. I will read them if I may:—

Your committee recommends that a nationally-owned system of radio broadcasting be instituted, and that all stations required for its proper organization be eventually acquired.

Your committee recommends that consideration be given to the use of five 50-kilowatt stations, one in each of the following provinces of Canada, namely, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and in the maritimes, three 500-watt stations, one for each province, or one 50-kilowatt station, as may be determined by the Commission. In Sas-