

TWENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY OF THE CBC

The following is the text of a message delivered over the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation television network by Prime Minister Diefenbaker, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the CBC on November 2:

"The CBC as a corporation is 25 years old, but the idea of a national and publicly-owned system of broadcasting is 29 years old. Legislation paving the way for the CBC was put before Parliament in 1932. The Prime Minister of the day, the Rt. Hon. R.B. Bennett, established the principle of a public and national broadcasting system.

"He saw broadcasting as a public trust which must, to use his own words, 'respond most directly to the popular will and the national need.' Again, speaking in Parliament, Mr. Bennett said, in 1932, that 'the plan now suggested, when in operation, will permit Canada to enjoy a scheme of radio broadcasting unexcelled in any other country of the world.'

"This statement was concurred in by Parliament and has been the view since of succeeding Prime Ministers.

"A birthday party is a time for retrospect and prospect--of looking back and looking ahead.

UNIFYING INFLUENCE

"National radio has brought the Canadian family together with full recognition of the dual cultural character of this nation. It has given Canadians a sense of oneness. Through national radio, Canadians everywhere have felt the rich heritage of this country.

"Extending the lines of communications has always been a challenge to Canadians. Communication has contributed colorful chapters in the history of Canada. In the building of Canada, one of the most influential factors has been the development of radio communications from coast to coast. Indeed, the public broadcasting networks of Canada are the longest, and probably the most complex, of any in the world.

"A quarter of a century is not a long time, but when we look back on the early national radio broadcasts, it is difficult to imagine society without radio. I recall most vividly the special events of those early days when King George V was speaking to his peoples everywhere from Buckingham Palace at Christmas.

CANADIAN WHEAT IN BELGIUM

As part of its dynamic trade promotion programme, Canada is taking part in the important Euroba II Bakery Exhibition in Brussels, October 28 through November 12. Belgium is at present importing 10 million bushels of Canadian wheat annually, and Canada's exhibit is devoted to the promotion of wheat and flour. In this connection, the Department of Trade and Commerce has published, in French and Dutch, a booklet called *Wheat and Flour From Canada*.

WARTIME ACHIEVEMENT

"During World War II, the CBC rose to splendid heights and was undoubtedly one of the most influential factors in rallying the determination of this nation. For the first time in history, we shared in the world drama and tragedy. How could the indomitable Churchill have inspired us had it not been that we heard him in person in the quiet of our homes?

"I wish to pay a special tribute to the National News Service of the CBC, which has become an institution regarded in many countries as a model.

"Canada's broadcasting structure itself is a compromise between the complete state monopoly of the United Kingdom and the private operation of the United States. Canada has integrated the two ideas into a complex system which reaches almost 100 per cent of all Canadians.

"Broadcasting is a public trust. The benefits of a national radio system must be assured to the people as a whole. A national radio is a public trust and must be free of political direction; equally, it must be free of political partisanship.

THE BBG SET UP

"To further the Canadian system of broadcasting, four years ago Parliament provided for the setting up of the Board of Broadcast Governors and thereby freed the CBC from the awkward role of being a judge in its relations with private broadcasting. We brought order out of confusion and complaint between the private and public systems.

"The public system has been strengthened in these four years and the CBC radio service has become available to an additional two million people and CBC television service has become available to an additional three million Canadians.

"Parliament also makes capital grants for expansion. In the past four years, Parliament has made available a total of \$276 million to maintain and improve the public broadcasting system to the end that it will serve the needs of all Canadians.

"The CBC contributes to national development and has become an expression of nationhood.

"I extend congratulations to all members of the staff and I wish a happy birthday to the CBC after 25 years of service, and hope that in the next 25 challenging years its contribution to Canadian unity, citizenship and culture will be even greater than in the past."