

POLICY STATEMENT BY CBC BOARD OF DIRECTORS ISSUED AT HALIFAX

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The new Broadcasting Act passed last year made substantial changes in the form of Canada's broadcasting system.

The CBC was affected in two ways. First, regulatory and licensing functions were transferred to the new Board of Broadcast Governors; second, the CBC was given a Board of Directors responsible for setting the broad policies to be followed in the operating of the Corporation.

Though the new Act made changes in form, it expressed the same spirit that the CBC has known since its inception. The Act speaks of "a varied and comprehensive service of a high standard that is basically Canadian in content and character". This is what the CBC has striven for in the past and what it strives for today.

When, ten months ago, the Board of Directors assumed responsibility to Parliament and the Canadian people for the CBC it took over a going concern, a network broadcasting organization that over a period of more than twenty years had established a high reputation in Canada and abroad for the quality of its programs and the skill of those who contributed to them. Over that period, guided by three Royal Commissions and successive Parliamentary Committees, the CBC played its part in the national broadcasting system. It faced the problems inherent in being a publicly-owned Corporation operating in a democratic society in the fields of information, ideas and entertainment. It is unique among the broadcasting organizations of the world in its dependence upon both public and commercial revenues and upon both publicly and privately owned stations.

From this and much else the CBC gained experience which was at the disposal of the Board of Directors. The Board has taken and will continue to take advantage of that experience in reviewing the policies of the Corporation in various fields. That review is already under way. As it progresses the Board will be able to reaffirm and support those detailed policies which the Corporation has evolved through years of Broadcasting practice. As well, it will be able to announce such modifications and developments of those policies as may be necessary to enable the CBC to perform its role in the public service more effectively. From time to time the Board will issue statements setting forth the position of the Corporation on various broadcasting questions.

In all its activity to date the Board has been keenly aware of its position as a trustee for the listener and viewer, in all his variety of tastes and interests, in his regional problems, in his status as a citizen and in his role as a taxpayer supporting the CBC. The Board knows that in broadcasting, as in so much of life, one man's meat is another man's poison. It realizes that radio and television cannot be all things to all men all the time.

It is fully persuaded, however, that broadcasting can do much to enrich the lives of a wide variety of people through programs of entertainment and information - that the CBC must continue to make a contribution to national unity - that it must serve equitably our two main languages and cultures - that it must continue to encourage and develop Canadian talent, while still accepting the best that other countries have to offer - that controversial issues of general interest are proper subjects for broadcasting, provided that the issues are presented as fairly as possible and that the intimate nature of the broadcasting medium is recognized in the selection of subjects, broadcasting times and treatments.

The CBC is primarily a service to the Canadian people. The Board of Directors welcomes the opportunity for that service which the future will bring, the opportunity to play its part in "the provision of a varied and comprehensive broadcasting service of a high standard that is basically Canadian in content and character".

NOTE: For further information contact

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