

Our lack of cultural development is, of course, a collective responsibility and Canadian broadcasters must take a share of that responsibility. Canadian broadcasters certainly have made an ever increasing contribution to our cultural needs (and here I laud private broadcasters for their decision to participate actively and without charge in the preparations for the centennial of our Canadian Confederation), but I think broadcasters can do much more, especially for our performing arts, which are in an almost desperate situation.

It is likely, however, that Canadian broadcasters can do this only if they are certain about their roles, purposes and powers and the regulations governing them.

I am sure many here will agree that several problems and questions involving both public and private broadcasting in Canada must be solved and answered before Canadian broadcasters can properly and fully perform their part in this great national cultural undertaking.

Regulations Unclear

Probably the major problem for broadcasters is the lack of clarity and the shortcomings of the Broadcasting Act of 1958. Unfortunately the Broadcasting Act did not solve what Albert A. Shea, in his book "Broadcasting the Canadian Way" called "the one basic issue... to which all others are related: what are the aims and purposes of broadcasting in Canada and how can broadcasting best be organized to achieve these objectives".

Dr. Andrew Stewart, Chairman of the Board of Broadcast Governors, has publicly told of the Board's distress at this lack of clarity in the Act and the resulting confusion and conflict in its other provisions.

Hence, confusion exists about the aims and roles of public and private broadcasting in Canada, about the relations between the CBC and private broadcasting, about the powers of the CBC and the BBG, and about the extension of television broadcasting.

Jurisdictional Uncertainty

On the question of the Board's authority, for instance, certain clauses of Part I of the Broadcasting Act can be interpreted to mean that the BBG has complete jurisdiction over all Canadian broadcasting, but other clauses in Part II can be construed to mean that the CBC is independent of the BBG in certain instances. By its vagueness, then, the Act has set up potential conflicts between the CBC and the BBG, both organizations apparently operating from different, necessarily self-defined, premises. The Grey Cup issue was a notable example of this confused and difficult situation.

Similarly, Dr. Stewart - quite rightly I think - has alluded to the fuzziness of the Act about the extension of television service in Canada. This, too, has caused certain disagreements, because the CBC apparently feels that it should decide, with the concurrence of the Governor in Council, what stations it can establish, while the BBG is not at all certain that this is a correct interpretation of the Act.