

When the Toronto meeting between the press and the General Manager of the C.B.C. closed, it was understood there would be another meeting shortly. It was not anticipated that in the meantime the C.B.C. would be subjected to an attack in the press of the most violent and abusive character. It may seem like digging up dry bones to review this, but this picture cannot be appreciated in its true light without realizing the nature and severity of this attack. It was very general but brief quotations from two papers will suffice to disclose its nature:—

The Quebec Chronicle Telegraph January 22nd, 1938:

We saw on Saturday how, notwithstanding the fact that the very object of its existence is to provide Canadian programs that will prevent the Americanization of Canada's air, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for which the American-born minister, Honourable Clarence Decatur Howe is officially responsible has just sold that air for some \$600,000 to American interests. In itself this betrayal of trust, this insult to patriotism is sufficiently contemptible. But Mr. Howe and his subordinates have added a refinement of cynicism to their act that we have no adequate word to qualify.

In view of later developments, what other conclusion can we come to than that the idea underlying the proposed Canadian National Network, of which two units are already functioning, was not to link Canadians together but to sell them as listeners-in to commercial sponsors in the United States.

Indeed, the whole Canadian broadcasting scheme itself will have been Americanized when the network is finally completed for in the United States, a similar network is operated by the National Broadcasting Corporation which lives by selling time to National Sponsors for commercial programs. There is only this difference left that, whereas in the United States no licence fee is charged to set-owners whose ears are sold to the sponsor, here in Canada their ears are likewise sold but they are obliged to pay a licence fee as well, which thus becomes insult added to injury.

The Financial Post on January 15, 1938 said:

The C.B.C. is continuing its drive for new United States contracts, offering on the bargain block the facilities it has built up to reach every corner of the Dominion. . . This network established with public funds and public credit has become the main selling point for piping into Canadian homes more and more programs written, prepared, sponsored and presented in the United States. Canadian musicians have no part in them; Canadian playwrights and Canadian actors find once again that Ottawa has abdicated, that the Canadian entertainment capital is New York. The C.B.C. points out that it needs money. It suggests that it be given time to collect funds from abroad and then it will be healthy enough to go Canadian. It is like a man who says that if he can rob a few more banks he can afford to go straight.

There is only a certain amount of money available, for national advertising in Canada; no matter where that advertising originates this policy in the end re-acts on all types of publications. And as the service given by a newspaper or a magazine must vary with the volume of the advertising any subsidized form of competition in the end will have the effect of weakening editorial service of Canadian publications. Thus the United States penetration of Canadian radio deals Canadian unity a double blow.