

We as you know, have been authorized to start with the beginning of a Canadian national system; that beginning consists of production centres at Montreal and Toronto, with associated transmitters. They are planned to be the basis of future network systems across Canada. We had expected these transmitters would be ready for operation this last September. Unfortunately we have been held up by shortages of equipment and materials of various kinds, particularly steel, and now it appears that at the very best we cannot be ready for some months. We are not yet in a position to give a definite date because we are not just sure as to when we will get structural steel for the towers. We have our hopes but we cannot be sure till we have the steel actually on the site. But these centres, as I say, will be more than stations just covering Montreal and Toronto areas, they will be centres in which Canadian programs can be produced and which in the future can be broadcast to other cities in Canada. Looking ahead, the development will depend a good deal on what we are authorized to do, what our finances allow us to do, and that may depend to some extent on the defence production situation.

Looking at the future, we would see the next stage of desirable development taking two simultaneous phases. As you know, we have already arranged for a connection by microwave radio link between Montreal and Toronto, via Ottawa, and connecting with the American systems at Buffalo. As one of the next two concurrent phases, we think the sensible thing would be to extend that Montreal-Toronto link in two directions, one up through the populous Ontario peninsula to Windsor, and another from Montreal to Quebec, and, it seems to me, to have a transmitter at Ottawa taking programs from the network and covering this area. Simultaneously with that, we would like to see the start of stations in more distant areas of Canada. I think the logical one to begin with would be the highly populated areas of Vancouver and Winnipeg. Those stations, of course, for some years at least could not be connected with a network connection. They would have to be supplied by means of kinescope recordings, a system of recording programs from television screens on film. Say a program is produced one night at Toronto, transcribed onto film, flown to Winnipeg or Vancouver, it becomes a program there the next night or two nights after. It is the system being used quite widely in the United States where they have not got direct network connections. Later, of course, we think it will be desirable to develop stations for other main areas in Canada. It would be nice to cover the whole population quickly, but from the point of view of arithmetic and economics it seems practically to only serve first the more populated areas from which the largest revenues will come in one form or another and gradually extend the service out to other areas.

Just before I end this very brief opening, there is one important subject I would like to speak about. There is one field in which the C.B.C. has a very big responsibility—it is not an easy responsibility—and that is the field of opinions and ideas. Broadcasting is a very important medium for the communication of opinions and ideas. I would suggest in this country, it is one of the most important, in some ways perhaps the most important of all. Our country is not rich in national publications, and as the Massey Commission points out, it is not too rich in the number of books circulating in the country. So broadcasting is an extremely important means by which people can hear different ideas and different opinions. And this is broadcasting in a free society which assumes, as I understand it, freedom of mind and opinion; that is one of the main differences between our society and society beyond the iron curtain. In our society we believe that people should