



# STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

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## THE EIGHTH LIVELY ART

Address by the Honourable Maurice Lamontagne,  
Secretary of State of Canada, to the Radio and  
Television Executives Club, Chateau Frontenac,  
Quebec, April 6, 1964.

May I say that it was with sincere pleasure that I accepted the invitation to speak to your Club, whose meeting here in Quebec coincides with the annual convention of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters? I am particularly gratified because your invitation has given me a unique opportunity to meet so many of you Canadian broadcasters and because this is the first chance I have had, since assuming my new ministerial responsibilities in February, to publicly review the conditions and problems of broadcasting in Canada today.

"The Eighth Lively Art" is the title I've chosen for the remarks that I'd like to make today. You may recall that in 1924 Gilbert Seldes, the American critic, first published his book "The Seven Lively Arts" and thereby gave a new popular phrase to the English language. In his book, Mr. Seldes discussed the comics, films, jazz and other popular arts, which at the time were not highly touted by the serious critics. Many years later, Mr. Seldes described how, six months after his book was published, he first heard a radio broadcast and realized a new lively art was born - broadcasting. So I think it appropriate to call broadcasting the Eighth Lively Art, which may be more lively than the other seven at the moment, as some of you will agree.

May I take a moment here to extend my congratulations to Canadian broadcasters for their own liveliness in winning international awards during the past year - to the CBC for its Ohio Awards, to radio station CKVL Verdun and its "L'Espoir" series for the Spanish ONDAS Award, and to McKim Advertising for its radio commercial award at the International Broadcasting Awards Competition?

Since I think Canadian broadcasting is best considered in the context of the general state of affairs in the country, as a prologue to my specific remarks on broadcasting I now would like to make some observations about the current crisis in Canada, the great Canadian crisis, which we must solve in order to ensure the survival of our nation.

### A Dialogue of the Deaf

We all realize that at the present time our country is undergoing a period of great tension. Some believe that even the unity of the country has become unacceptable. Others think the very foundations of our federal system should be reviewed. For yet other people, at the other extreme, any change, any evolution towards accommodating Quebec's aspirations appears like a dishonourable concession. This dialogue of the deaf is so prevalent that the voice of moderation, when it speaks, is barely heard.

This confusion of attitudes has deep historical roots. Let us go back, for a moment, to 1867. It is often said that Confederation was not sought for itself; it was a marriage of convenience. In fact, the political unification of Canada - Confederation - effected in 1867 was mainly motivated by political and economic aims.

Politically, in 1867 English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians desired to maintain a Canadian identity distinct from that of the American, to ensure that the Canadian community would survive alongside the United States. Confederation was the means of reaching this goal, and until now it has succeeded in that aim. However, Confederation must, in one form or another, continue to succeed even more in the future for, as Claude Ryan, associate editor of Le Devoir, wrote recently: "I believe that a political society made up of people of different cultures and religious denominations, far from being unviable, can prove to be more favourable than a monolithic society to the development of liberty and the rule of reason."

Economically, in 1867 our country was composed of colonies that believed that economic co-operation could improve their individual and common strength. Confederation was their means of bringing about that improvement, and here again it has succeeded. Today our country is one of the wealthiest in the world, with a standard of living surpassed only by that of the United States and Sweden (though by saying this I don't mean at all that we should be complacent about our economy, about our regional economic difficulties, or about the low standard of living of many Canadians).

### Cultural Development Neglected

It seems to me, however, that in one sense our nation is based on a triangle composed of the political, the economic and the cultural; and while the political and the economic were provided for in 1867, no provision was made for the third side of this basic triangle - our common cultural development. By culture, I mean here culture as suggested by the English author Matthew Arnold; that is, the study and pursuit and enjoyment by the general people of all sides of our humanity - our thoughts, our art, our literature, our performing arts, the best which has been thought and said and fashioned in the world... "and, through this knowledge, to turn a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits".

Since 1867, we have left our cultural life almost exclusively to personal initiative and to private organizations. As a result, the body of our national culture has remained relatively anaemic; and, to the extent of

their development, our principle cultures, French and English speaking, and even our other cultures, have grown up in isolation. This cultural poverty and isolation are two of the main sources of tension in our country today. It is because of them that some people in Canada believe that survival is only possible in isolation and that others cannot appreciate the contribution of a culture different from their own. Those two forms of cultural separatism are no longer possible in Canada, for, as the eminent Canadian historian Frank Underhill stated last summer at the Couchiching Conference:

"There are too many cultural influences today which cross and re-cross national boundaries for a doctrinaire cultural separatism to be viable. And this, of course, is something which we English Canadians need to remember also when we reject opportunities to learn the French language and to enrich our own culture. Cultural interrelationships may be dangerous, but cultural isolationism is in the long run fatal."

#### Body and Spirit Out of Balance

Our cultural poverty is the origin of our present tension in yet another way. For, when we compare this poverty with our economic progress, it reveals a deep imbalance between body and spirit which years ago the celebrated French philosopher Henri Bergson noted in the modern world.

Bergson described the powerful mechanical extensions of man's body through modern technology, extensions which outpaced the development of man's spirit. "Now, in this body so immeasurably enlarged" said Bergson, "the spirit remains what it was, too small to fill the body, too weak to give the body direction... That explains the dangerous social, political and international problems that are so many indications of that void and which, to fill such a void, give rise today to so much unco-ordinated and ineffectual effort... The enlarged body awaits an addition to the spirit."

Since 1867, as I said before, our country has developed materially at an accelerated pace. And yet that wealth has left an increasing void in the lives of our people. We, too, are in need of "an addition to the spirit", and we shall obtain it only if we intensify our cultural life, if we enrich our two main cultural strains, and if we make both of them meet more often.

We need a spiritual reinforcement to provide cultural exchange and enrichment among Canadians, to help us escape the spiritual "wasteland" - if I may use that shivering word among you broadcasters - the spiritual wasteland of our utilitarian tradition, and also to assist us to find a new identity as Canadians, for which we need Canadian information, about ourselves and about others, whether news or entertainment, supplied and clarified by Canadians in our national interest.

#### Tradition of Non-Intervention

In cultural matters, I think we have adhered much too closely to the American tradition of non-intervention by government. As a result, our

cultural life is relatively weak and dangerously exposed to the dominating influence of the United States, and our Canadian identity remains too vague. It is well to realize, when talking of this, that even the Americans recently have seen that complete governmental non-intervention may not be enough even for them. The late President Kennedy hired a special Consultant on the Arts, Mr. August Heckscher, who wrote for him a substantial report on "The Arts and the National Government". And clearly President Kennedy himself had what Nathan Cohen, of the Toronto Star, described as "the vision and sense of commitment to acknowledge that his duty extended to the promotion and fostering of his country's artistic resources".

Our own Canadian history shows that cultural expansion and more frequent cultural contacts will not come about by themselves. The experience of other countries, with the possible exception of the foundation-studded United States, confirms our own. This is why I am convinced that our cultural life needs both protection against impoverishment and stimulus to improvement, and that a deliberate effort to these ends, in which government must have a large role, is not only justified but is most urgently required.

#### Cultural Responsibility of Government

Government must ensure Canadian ownership and control over our means of communication; it must strengthen our existing national cultural institutions, like the National Gallery, and establish new ones; it must offer greater financial assistance to our private cultural sector. But while the Government must play a greater and more systematic role in these matters, its responsibility is not, and should not be, exclusive. Private interests must help.

To arrive at our desired cultural goals, however, I believe we should not seek merely more Canadian content, but better content, and especially better Canadian content - including better Canadian "escapist entertainment". Our objective should not be cultural isolation from the United States, just as it should not be English-Canadian cultural isolation from French Canada and vice versa. Rather, our goal should be the communicating of cultural values for the national benefit, in the manner described by Professor Underhill.

#### A New Agora

Broadcasting, especially television, with its tremendous electric ability to inform, to entertain and to educate, can do much to enrich our cultural life and to promote more internal and international cultural contacts. Along with other electric inventions, broadcasting has partly destroyed the personal isolation of the typographic society in which men lived after the invention of the printing press; broadcasting has created a new kind of communal Agora or market place where we can meet, get to know each other, exchange opinions and try to arrive at common values. In short, radio and television can provide an audaciously effective means of communication, not just for our intellectuals and our artists, but for people of every kind in our society; and therefore, provide all of us a better, more exciting life.

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.

Should the CBC have first call on all TV station applications? Should it have its own stations across the country or should it depend partly upon affiliates? In other words, should the CBC in future work towards a BBC-type system of station ownership, as tentatively suggested by Mr. Ouimet, or should the CBC system be different to fit a different Canadian situation? More generally, should there be statutory conditions under which TV stations can be established by public or private broadcasters? These questions must have answers and the answers obviously depend upon what kind of Canadian broadcasting system is desired - single, dual or mixed.

### Special Problems of CBC

Apart from these general questions and problems raised by the uncertainty of the Broadcasting Act, there are related subjects pertaining specifically to the CBC. The structural organization of the CBC is one of them. The Glassco Commission made some general comments about the structural organization of the CBC and, if the Glassco inferences are well founded, important changes must be made in the Corporation. At the moment, the CBC itself has a small "Glassco Committee" studying CBC structures. Undoubtedly it would be useful to make serious appraisal of the findings of that CBC Committee when they are ready.

The Government also feels that there should be a serious look at the whole CBC financing picture, both short-term and long-term. It is of interest to note in this connection that the CBC budget in 1950, before the coming of television, was \$10 million and that in 1963 the CBC budget was \$110 million.

Included in a study of CBC financing, of course, is the subject of advertising and its ramifications in terms of Canadian broadcasting, public and private.

Also involved in CBC financing are the costs of CBC consolidation projects like those contemplated for Montreal and Toronto. In turn, these consolidation projects may influence the future development of Canadian private producers and technical facilities whose general role vis-à-vis the CBC merits serious study and consideration. The Glassco Commission had something to say about this last item, but again its remarks were rather general.

### Re-broadcasting and Pay-TV

I think many of you here will agree that television re-broadcasting stations and pay-TV (excluding community antenna television systems) are raising or may soon raise, special and complicated problems. The President of the CBC, Mr. Ouimet, suggested in the 1962-63 CBC annual report, that some re-broadcasting stations were being established for purposes different from their original objectives, that in effect they might form regional networks, and that they could block the future establishment of full broadcasting stations.

As for pay-TV, though not yet established firmly as a commercial television system in the home, it has been making strides into the cinemas,

as many Ontario hockey fans know very well. And, after the Etobicoke and Hartford experiments, pay-TV is about to get a full trial in California beginning July 1.

As Mr. Ouimet has suggested, TV re-broadcasting stations and pay-TV require study before situations develop in Canada which may or may not be in the best interests of Canadian broadcasting and the Canadian public.

Last year, my predecessor, Mr. Pickersgill, asked three gentlemen - Dr. Stewart, Chairman of the BBG, Mr. Ouimet, President of the CBC and Mr. Jamieson, the President of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters - to consider some of the problems and questions I have cited here. I am told that the Troika, as these gentlemen are more popularly nicknamed, have almost finished their work, envisaged by my predecessor as "an essential first step to a new definition of public policy in the field of broadcasting" and as preliminary to a public inquiry.

With this in mind, and wishing to end the uncertainties in Canadian broadcasting, the Government now feels the time has come to provide for an inquiry into these matters through a committee on broadcasting to be set up by the Government.

The Government hopes to be in a position to make a more detailed announcement about this broadcasting committee in the very near future.

#### Role of Television

No doubt the purpose of television is to entertain, to educate and inform. That is, it must fill an important cultural purpose. It can contribute greatly to the development of our intellectual life by helping our artists and our cultural associations. It can also make culture more accessible to the general public. To the extent that television fulfils its cultural task and takes into account our two cultures, it will become a living and daily testimony of Canadian identity and a powerful element of understanding and of unity in our country.

But I think till now Canadian broadcasting, Canadian television in particular, has not adequately played its essential role. In part this explains why we have cultural poverty in Canada and why we fear foreign cultural domination - why we Canadians know each other so little and why we suffer present tensions.

I hope that this situation will change very soon. I believe it will. To this end, the Government, by deciding to establish the broadcasting committee, wishes to play its part in helping broadcasters to play theirs. Indeed in all fields, whenever and wherever possible and appropriate, the Government intends to actively promote Canadian culture in all its variety.

This endeavour calls out for your help and the help of many other Canadians. And so, to paraphrase a now famous dictum, let us make war on cultural poverty in Canada. Let all Canadians make this their common cause and their common campaign: not to fetter the spirit but to free it; not to

order men's thoughts for a selfish and narrow purpose but to arouse them for an individual and common good; not to excite tensions but to relax them; not to foster discord in adversity but to fashion harmony in diversity. This war on cultural poverty is a great task worthy of all Canadians -- a task to provide for the enrichment and advancement of our people and of our nation.

I say all this as a Canadian and as a politician concerned with what Matthew Arnold described 100 years ago as "the true and noble science of politics". A "true and noble science" because politics negotiates the problem of how man is to live not in isolation but in society. "Of Man in Society", said Matthew Arnold, "the capital need is that the whole body of society should come to live a life worthy of being called human, and corresponding to Man's aspirations and powers. This, the humanization of Man in society, is civilization. The aim for all of us is to promote it and to promote it is above all the aim for the true politician."

Such, I hope, is the aim of all of us assembled here this day.

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