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CBC - MASTER OR SERVANT?

Address by

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SOCIAL CREDIT NATIONAL LEADER

to the

FORT WILLIAM CANADIAN CLUB
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Revolution is in the air, a revolution by television. It is a revolution that is taking place before our eyes, in our living rooms - yet few have grasped its full meaning. We are being taken unawares. We may grumble a bit, worry a bit, but many busy people still dismiss TV as an idiot box or an unpaid baby-sitter, saying their lives are too full of more urgent and more interesting things. The CBC network now reaches 94% of our population and the average Canadian spends six hours a day watching TV. Six hours a day! That's more than most school children spend in their classrooms.

In the home where I grew up our family used to gather around the hearth, and I suppose most of you did too. This was the place where the family listened and talked to each other. Human beings have been doing that since they lived in caves and first discovered how to make fire. Suddenly it is gone and the new focus is the television set. Around it the family don't talk to each other - they get shushed up if they do. It is some outsider who talks to them. All this has happened during the last dozen years. Everyone in a whole continent can now see one sight, hear one voice, feel one emotion at one and the same time. You will agree, if you will just think back to those tragic days at the time President Kennedy was killed.

"A mighty but unassessed force is changing our children and thereby changing the future of our world", says C. M. Bedford, President of the Canadian Home, School and Teachers Federation. "Canadian children spend about one-sixth of their waking hours watching TV. This massive exposure to a super-charged world of dramatic stimulation, violence and commercial persuasion is moulding the personalities and behaviour of children in a subtle but highly significant way." That is the point. Television is here "one of the most powerful forces ever to affect the thought and actions of people", as the BBC says. It can be a force for good, making next-door neighbours of all mankind, or it can be the curse of Cain upon us warping our minds invisibly like radio active fallout. The outcome, I am convinced, will depend on who controls it.

There has been much talk about broadcasting and telecasting in Canada. A few years ago a Royal Commission studied the problem. A few days ago the Government appointed a special committee to study again the state of Canadian broadcasting. The CBC has been under heavy fire in recent months. Thus I believe my remarks are timely. To some these remarks will seem radical and unorthodox. We do need radical action regarding broadcasting in Canada and this action must be based on principles - principles on which most of us agree, but which few of us do anything about.

Let us look briefly at the television set-up as it is in Canada today. There are 48 privately-owned television stations and 16 owned by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The CBC is in a unique position as a publicly-financed Crown Corporation in that it controls the only coast to coast network. The building of this

4,000-mile network is something of which every Canadian can be proud. It was a triumph over difficulties peculiar to Canada - great distances, two languages involving double production, not to mention competition from larger and richer networks in the United States. The late Hon. C.D. Howe thought of it as a bond to draw the whole country closer together. Strangely, though, the only objective laid down in the Broadcasting Act was that "the CBC is established to operate a national broadcasting service". That's a pretty vague aim. We are told that the CBC's functions are to entertain, to inform and to educate. Inform about what? Educate towards what? If you don't know where you're going, it's pretty hard to know if you are getting there.

The CBC is a Crown Corporation and is, in theory, answerable to your elected representatives in Parliament - not to the Government. It reports through the Secretary of State and annually is voted an appropriation of the taxpayers' money. This amount grows larger each year, and in 1963 it reached the fabulous amount of some 30 million dollars. In spite of this, there are people, some in very prominent positions, who want Parliament to make increased grants over a period of five years, instead of annually, so that Parliament would no longer even have a financial check-rein on the CBC.

Parliament is a debating and legislative body, not an administrative one. The Government is its executive but the Government makes haste to explain that it exercises no influence or control on broadcasting. If you protest about a programme to your Member of Parliament and he raises it in the House, the Secretary of State will reply that the Government cannot interfere. If you write your complaint to the Secretary of State, in reply he will say "the means by which Parliament exercises its responsibilities regarding the CBC has always been a serious problem". This is today's dilemma.

I believe that politics must be kept out of broadcasting. When, however, the Government invests huge sums of the taxpayers' money in a Crown Corporation and lets it become totally independent of Parliament, the Government has abdicated its public trust. If neither Parliament nor Government actually controls the CBC, who does? More and more people across Canada are asking this awkward question.

The cast of this first-class mystery is as follows. First there is the Board of Broadcast Governors, set up in 1958 to co-ordinate between the CBC and the independent stations. However, its terms of reference were written with such ambiguity that in words of one of the BBG "the Government has appointed 15 good Canadians to sit on the BBG. Likewise it appointed 12 good Canadians to run the CBC. There seems little point in the 15 good Canadians sitting around countermanding the decisions of the 12 good Canadians." The CBC consists of the President of the CBC and his Board of Directors.

Next come the Vice-Presidents of policy divisions - personnel, operations, programming and corporate affairs. They are to be found in Ottawa with the President, in the magnificent new headquarters at Confederation Heights. Beyond this there are three General Managers in charge of the operating divisions; one is located in Montreal, one in Toronto and one for the other regions. Canada is a big country and both radio and television very fast business. In such an administration there are times when a subordinate acts first and checks with Head Office afterwards. It can become a habit and here is where the first control weakness is.

Actual power can be exercised by people who are a long way down the table of organization. As an editorial in *Le Droit* says, "the fast rate of growth forced the CBC to improvise and to call on inexperienced young men who now consider themselves demi-Gods. After a mistake is made the structural complex of the CBC makes it almost impossible to discover the real culprit." Now supposing something goes wrong, who is answerable? The programme director on the spot? The General Manager or Vice-President to whom he reports? The President of the CBC? The BBG? The Secretary of State? Nobody knows. Power corrupts and it is dizzying power for a young man to find himself, by accident of talent or friendship, in a place where he can enormously influence the thinking of millions of people. "Give the public what they want?" said one of these men, "nonsense, the public don't know what they want till they get it".

Men who think they know best will of course be angered when the public raises a clamour, as they are doing now, for some voice in the policy and programs of the organ they finance. There are cries of "no censorship" and "freedom to broadcast" but the fundamental freedom that is at stake in this case is simply that there shall be "no taxation without representation". This is the basis of all free government and no other freedom can survive if this one is transgressed.

The airwaves are not the property of the broadcaster but, as the CBC rightly maintains, they belong to the people. Television must always go into people's homes as a guest, and as President Ouimet says "the CBC rejects any material which would preclude its being freely introduced into mixed company as the subject of ordinary family conversation". No one can claim an inherent right to walk into your sitting-room and start telling dirty stories. Yet is not that very close to what has been happening? It faces us with a very serious national danger, of major proportions.

Commercial interests were quick to understand the advertising power of radio and television and they pour out dollars and fill the air with commercials because they know it brings results. What about the huge money power of organized crime? What about the finances behind organized subversion? Are we wise to think that they will overlook the advantage of television for selling their goods and ideas if they can infiltrate it? Here is what J. Edgar Hoover of the FBI says. "TV is bringing sadism and vice into the sitting-room." An Ottawa Judge who deals with criminal youth cases says "it is not only the increase of crimes of violence but the increase of violence in crime. No longer are these youngsters satisfied just to take their victim's wallet. They must stamp on his face and kick in his ribs too. A dozen years ago that did not happen. We cannot disregard the assumption that this is connected with television." The Canadian Chiefs of Police, at their conference in Montreal this spring, reported "that one of the main causes of crime and delinquency are TV movies exploiting crime and sex - 25 minutes of brutality followed by a 20-second moral." Might this be pleasing advertising for the crime syndicates?

Yet I have heard it said that this violence is all right because it serves as a safety valve for our repressed violence. One would expect a commercial for soap to sell soap, a commercial for violence to sell violence and a commercial for crime to sell crime. One of my parliamentary colleagues in the House recently asked "if it is fit and proper for Ralph Ginsberg, convicted on 28 counts of publishing pornography in the United States, to be allowed to appear on the CBC and how much he was paid as a promoter of perversion?" Members can be told how much the Prime

Minister of Canada earns but we could not learn how much of your money this man was paid. Questions about Crown Corporations are usually answered with a stereotyped phrase, "it is not in the public interest to divulge this information". Even if Ginsberg were paid nothing, it must have been wonderful advertising for his business. It is time we faced the fact that most crime syndicates are built on liquor, sexual vice and dope. Their weapons are bribery, blackmail and intimidation, and, if any industry is weakly supervised, they can find a way to get in. The Daily Times Journal of Fort William said on March 2nd, "Nothing effective has been found thus far to cut out the cancerous growth of lewdness which has found a place in our national broadcasting system."

I called television a revolution and it has had revolutionary effects on the whole political picture. It has played a most profound part of the current so called "revolution" in Quebec. Just return your minds to the 1930's for a moment, to the days when radio was in its infancy. A group of smart young German revolutionaries realized the potential of radio. They did not bother with votes in the Reichstag. They captured the radio networks. When Hitler had the radio he burnt the Reichstag. Today there is a young revolutionary called Castro who governs Cuba almost entirely through television. How does this affect Canadian politics? Parliament quite rightly has censored itself out of direct control of broadcasting. However, broadcasting has not foresworn politics and, in fact, it is about the only means by which political ideas can reach all the people of Canada. And so it could be and should be a great uniting force. In Britain today they are facing a general election when, for the first time, television may be a decisive factor. The Sunday Express last month criticized what they called "the impertinent quiz kids who claim a superior standing of inquisitors over victim. Why should political non-entities be allowed to exercise this growing influence? The proper place for politicians to be subjected to inquisition is in the House of Commons not in TV studios, where those who challenge them have no political status or responsibility. Television's legitimate function is to place the politicians' views fairly before a mass audience." Responsible questioning by competent people is of course quite another thing. The Brantford Expositor puts this problem in clear focus. "Let's look at those political panel shows from both sides of the screen. They present the spectacle of some prominent political leader sitting uncomfortably in front of the TV camera while a battery of eager interviewers fires trick and loaded questions at him. Fun and games you may think, another politician on the hot seat, but is it really such sport? And indeed should it really be allowed to happen at all and at public expense? The whole atmosphere of these political inquisitions is unnatural and unworthy. Just look at the set-up. The politician arrives at the studio unrehearsed. Not so the brightly brittle wise guys, often fresh men in political reportage, who have been hired to heckle him. They arrive with their questions carefully researched and their needles sharp. Most of the questions - and this is a statement from experience - have been fashioned for a single purpose - not to get at the facts, not to have policies explained, simply to score off and show up the politician for the greater glory of the all-wise panel."

This raises the question why the CBC should be allowed almost unlimited public funds to spend, in part, on public humiliation of public figures. It has been suggested by any number of incensed M.P.'s that the CBC may have been working on the theory that, if it could sufficiently cheapen and denigrate the politicians, it might more easily down-grade Parliament and so become even more remote from control in its use of public funds."

Let us be quite clear on the question of freedom of speech. Freedom of speech belongs to all citizens equally and is not the prerogative of the man with the microphone. If he uses his position to push his own political ideas and drown out the voices of those who do not agree with him, he commits a great injustice against all his fellow citizens, who are themselves unable to air their ideas over a national network. The CBC is not like a newspaper, because its employees are paid by the public. As private individuals they have the right to hold any political ideas they please but they have no right to promote them over the air at public expense. If they want to promote the policy of "ban the bomb", let them buy time like any other political group must. The CBC holds absolutely no political mandate from the people of Canada.

This is how Mr. J.D. Lamb put it in the Toronto Star on April 3rd. "It happens that the CBC is oriented very much to the left but the problem would be the same if it were slanted to the right. As a result of this orientation all kinds of programming is perhaps unconsciously slanted to the left, affecting not only the choice of panelists and commentators but even such subtleties as the inflections of the voice of announcers reading the news.

"Perhaps the most eloquent testimonial of the slanting of programmes by the CBC was Roger Lemelin's recent admission that Quebec Separatists have been able to infiltrate the CBC and have succeeded in making the term 'private enterprise' almost a dirty word on the CBC transmissions. Mr. Lemelin chuckled over the success of his friends in using the CBC, a federal instrument, as the unwitting vehicle of separatist sentiment.

"It is interesting to note in this connection that Dr. Marcel Chaput, the Separatist leader, has been given 13 hours and 14 minutes on the CBC English network during the last two years. This is more than any Member of Parliament, including the Prime Minister. Mr. Lamb concludes "it is to free the CBC from such domination by 'an elite'", to use Mr. Lemelin's phrase, "that so many Canadians are today demanding that their parliamentary representatives do something."

A nation can afford only one political forum and in Canada that forum is Parliament. No challenge to its supremacy can be allowed. This is the great constitutional issue that we must face and solve. The problem has arisen before in history. During the 19th century the tremendous industrial growth put such vast riches in the hands of a few men that they could almost buy and sell Parliaments.

Today in Canada we still face the danger of vested power in huge private corporations. However, there has developed a new type of super corporation even more dangerous, which is typified in the CBC. Canadians and their elected Members must face the power of these enthroned Crown Corporations and find a way to make them answerable to the public will.

In point of fact, the Crown Corporation, new to our day, is the only body totally irresponsible in our society. Private firms are responsible through their officers and directors to the shareholders; government departments, through Ministers, are responsible to Parliament. Questions asked about the Crown Corporation are invariably answered with the stereotyped phrase "it is not in the public interest to divulge this information". This of course is not the case. The public is putting up the money and is surely entitled to know what is being done with it.

This is probably one of the first points that needs to be clarified.

To say that the CBC is responsible to Parliament is simply to say it is responsible to nobody. Parliament is a deliberative and legislative body, not an administrative one. It was not designed to be an administrative body and there would be serious disadvantages in trying to make it one.

Moreover, I think we need to take another look at the phrase "political interference". It may be political interference if no one can be hired on a construction gang unless he is related to one of the aldermen. Surely, it is neither political nor interference if the elected representatives of the people want to know what a certain company or firm is doing with their people's money. This phrase "political interference" has been broadened in our time to mean something it was never intended to be and as a result curtails the real responsibilities of the people's watchdogs in Parliament and other elective bodies.

It is quite certain that, if the CBC is to be responsible to the public, the public will have to be responsible for the CBC. Public opinion must be able to tell the CBC what it thinks and not the other way around. The CBC must not be allowed to continue as a law unto itself.

To a very great degree, of course, this dilemma of the CBC is part of the very nature of broadcasting. In our world of free enterprise, we are well aware that if a person wants to enjoy something he has to pay the price of it, and the person who dislikes it can boycott it. Unless a product pleases a sufficient number to pay for the cost of producing it, it withers on the vine, and eventually disappears. "He who pays the piper calls the tune" is the rule.

We are so used to this kind of free enterprise economy, regulated easily and accurately by the forces of the market, that it becomes a real problem for us to know what to do when, as with broadcasting, we find that the customer, who wants to receive a particular program, is, generally speaking, unable to pay for it. We are left entirely without that automatic feed back of the free enterprise system, which allows us, say, to boycott a poor store and patronize a good one, so casting our economic vote for the production of the type of product that we wish to purchase. Rather, we are left in an unpleasant dilemma. If we allow broadcasting to be paid for by commercial sponsors, then it is the sponsors who are the ones to "pay the piper", and, whether we like it or not, they will be the ones who call the tune - their tune, not ours. It will be a tune whose prime purpose will not be to provide good quality entertainment or information, but to attract the largest possible audience and, having attracted it, convince it that it is in desperate need to purchase ever greater quantities of competing brands of automobiles, toothpaste, deodorants, coffee and detergents or what have you.

On the other hand, we can pay for our broadcasting out of the public's money, paid through taxation. True this makes it possible to avoid the excesses of commercialism, but it brings with it the agonizing new problem - who is to decide what the public really wants - or, what may not be the same thing, what it is going to have? At least, with a commercial sponsor, the listener rating means something, and sponsors will avoid programmes that do not attract enough listeners. With a commercial sponsor, too, budgeting of programmes can be closely related

to what the show will bring in by way of return - there is no bottomless public purse to lure the producer on to more and more useless extravagance. It is precisely here that the Government-owned CBC flounders - and flounders badly.

What should be done? This raises a basic question, one that is frequently asked. Do we need a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation as it has become today? I think the answer is yes, we do need the CBC, but we must answer the related questions "in what form" and "what for?" If we go back to the days before the 1932 Act setting up the CBC, it seems pretty obvious that the Government then had a fairly specific purpose in mind. It wanted broadcasting as a chosen instrument to protect the Canadian identity and to reflect the lives of all Canadians to each other. The Government realized that this was too heavy a burden for a private industry to bear so it sought some form of subsidy to enable the industry to perform this extra task.

That subsidy could have taken many forms. It could be as grants to private stations through the Canada Council or the government payment of network connection charges. We might achieve our objective by a revolving fund. Private stations and producers might obtain grants or loans for approved and classified productions. It is significant that the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission in its early stages did not own or operate any stations of its own, but produced programs and paid private stations for carrying them. In essence it was similar to the present operations of the National Film Board.

We shall evolve the right forms if we are clear on certain principles and aims. FIRST, the airwaves are not the private property of any individual or group but belong to us all. Producers and advertisers may borrow them only so long as they serve the unity and best interest of the nation, its families and especially its children. For this reason the CBC must be responsive and responsible to the public will through some elected but non-political authority.

SECOND, television, as a guest in our homes, is totally different from any other form of outside entertainment. There are many shows seen in cinemas, theatres or night clubs which people voluntarily enter but which have no place on television. We have a right to expect that all programs coming into our homes are as healthy as the water out of our taps.

THIRDLY, all broadcasting must be guided not merely by profit or appetites but must subordinate these to the needs and duties of a free society. Public opinion must be able to make itself felt upon the policies and programs of the CBC, not the other way around. We who pay the piper must and shall call the tune, for this is certain, that, if the CBC is to be responsible to the public the public will have to make itself responsible for the CBC.

Finally, I believe we must encourage every development which makes it easier for the viewer himself to control the programmes that come into his own home. At present, it seems to be Government policy rather to frown on innovations such as cable TV, pay TV and so on. This should not be so. I think we might also be encouraged by a development within the United States, where "clubs" of up to 8,000 listeners will voluntarily subscribe to the cost of maintaining a station on the air, for the sake of giving them the listening quality they seek. There seems no good reason why we should expect the CBC to own a high percentage of the TV stations in Canada - rather, it would seem that, if as many stations as possible

were privately owned, and rented network facilities from the CBC, there would again be that control against production of unwanted or undesirable programs which is our ultimate object.

Power without responsibility is always attractive to those who enjoy it - always a danger to those who are exposed to it. The time has come, I believe, when it is for the good of all Canada that more responsibility and effective control be demanded for that Corporation which today enjoys such immense powers of public influence for good or ill - the CBC.

How can this be done? It should be a team effort - Parliament, the public, the Corporation itself, and private enterprise each doing the thing it is best equipped to do, and every part answerable to the voters. The controlling board must be a more representative institution. This is the place where organizations such as yours can play a vital role.

In West Germany, for instance, alarmed at its own pre-war history of the abuse of a government monopoly of broadcasting, the national TV network has a panel of about sixty persons from various representative organizations within the country. This body in fact forms a representative Parliament to decide on broadcast policy for the network, and can give up-to-the-minute views from the audience as to how well the network is serving the public. Would not a system such as this be far better than the vague "control that is no control" we have in Canada? One feels that under a system such as this, programmes of poor quality or in poor taste could not be passed off in the face of public outcry by the bureaucratic evading of responsibility. Rather, there would be an alert cross section of the public who wished to know the reason. It might well be a source of friction between the Corporation and its controllers - I think, though, it would also be a source of a much better quality of programming.

I submit the following suggestions for the reorganization of the CBC, based on national participation in a work of national importance.

1. ORGANIZATION

(a) A Board of Broadcast Governors, consisting of seven members, a chairman and three appointed by the Government and three by the Radio and TV Advisory Council. The latter would be elected by a simple majority vote of the Council but all members would be appointed for a specified term of service such as three or five years.

Since Parliament is not an administrative body, it has historically delegated administrative and regulatory functions to other bodies, such as the Air Transport Board, the Board of Transport Commissioners and a host of others. This should be so with the BBG.

The Board of Broadcast Governors should be a full-time Board, and, to function effectively, it should have the duties of a Canadian Telecommunications Board, with direct responsibility for the licensing of all forms of communications. Such boards have not functioned well in the past if too large in number or if made up of part-time or volunteer members. It is a full-time job vital to the welfare of the nation.

(b) To assist in an advisory capacity, a BBG Advisory Council of 60 members would be appointed serving for specific terms. The members of the Advisory Council would include a representative of each provincial government, ten members of the Federal Parliament according to Party numerical strength, and forty representatives from the democratically-formed associations of labour, agriculture, home and school, civic and service clubs, the professions, women and youth organizations, from the fields of education, science and the arts, and from churches as well.

This Advisory Council would be charged with the duty of laying down guiding principles of policy and programming for the CBC AND private networks and stations, both radio and TV.

Its membership would be defined by Parliament, but the various representative bodies would be responsible for the actual individual recommended for appointment to the Advisory Council. The members of this Council would serve on a volunteer basis but the BBG would be responsible for the payment of travelling and incidental expenses.

The guiding principles laid down by such a Board in West Germany relating to Television have been defined as:

"The telecasts provided by the institution shall be designed to convey to tele-viewers all over Germany an unbiased survey of world affairs, and in particular a true and comprehensive picture of events in Germany.

"Above all, these telecasts shall be aimed at being conducive to the reunification of Germany in peace and freedom and understanding between nations. They shall be in conformity with the fundamental standards of a free democracy and enable the public to form their own opinions."

(c) The Director General of the CBC would be appointed for a period of 5 years by the Government.

In consultation and agreement with the Board of Broadcast Governors, the Director General would appoint three senior directors who would each head a department - programming, news and central administration,

The Director General would be held responsible for the administration of the affairs of the CBC and for programming.

2. TRANSMITTING STATIONS

All television and radio stations would be sold or leased to commercial companies to operate on a basis of private enterprise. The exception would be difficult-to-reach areas and in underdeveloped areas where private enterprise could not operate economically. It would likely be necessary and advisable for the CBC to pay for not only the cost of production of the CBC content requirements but also to subsidize the actual cost of broadcasting of certain types of cultural, educational, sports, news and political programmes.

The co-ordination of programming in the multi-station urban areas would also have to be worked out to the mutual benefit of all concerned. The BBG could

be responsible for this co-ordinating of programming.

3. NETWORK MAINTENANCE

The hardware of both radio and television microwave networks would come under the direct maintenance of the Department of Transport. It would thus be available for immediate use in time of national emergency. The most economical and effective maintenance service could well be provided by the Canadian Corps of Signals. Additional facilities would, under this arrangement, be provided by the Department of Transport, as required.

4. The CBC would become a producing and distributing organization with no commercial and only special operational broadcasting duties. It would produce programmes of high national interest and prestige, handle news and current events, develop educational TV and radio programming. It would be responsible for non-commercial political and national affairs programmes, as well as the required minimum hours of CBC programming on private stations including additional special programmes of national interest.

The International Service of the CBC would follow a similar pattern. Direct short-wave broadcasting would cease. Instead the CBC would make arrangements with foreign stations to carry Canadian programmes, either on a commercial basis or on a reciprocal agreement with the national broadcast network facilities concerned. Such programmes would be produced on tape and distributed by air mail and could reach any part of the world in a few days. Even news and news commentaries would not be out of date. Feature programmes would be announced in the language of the countries to which they were being sent and even special sections would be included for Canadians serving in those countries.

It is a known fact that "tuning in" outside stations is all but a thing of the past, even on ordinary wave bands. Poor reception, atmospheric conditions, and the irregularity of programme hours discourage interested listeners and there is not much opportunity for general coverage. Conversely, local broadcasts of Canadian programmes would generate listener appeal. It would not only develop friendly and favourable listener interest but would be an excellent way to assist Canadian trade, Canadian tourism, and promote Canadian good will in a far more effective way than is being done at present. Furthermore, it would result in the savings of many thousands of dollars of taxpayers' money!

In the overall picture of these changes, it has been estimated that the CBC could operate on one-quarter of its present budget and still adequately meet the demands of a public broadcast facility. It may be even more economical if the National Film Board could be integrated into this new set-up. Certainly it would be a much better bargain dollar and a more satisfactory type of programme.

These suggestions are, I believe, logical and practical. They may seem radical, but television is a revolutionary medium and do we not need a radical reorganization to harness its power for good and ward off its power for evil? If all of us in this huge country are to feel the throb of a vision big enough to match our opportunity, we shall need a servant as powerful as television and radio. If

we are to combine our talents to develop this great land, we shall need the air-waves to link our efforts and, if across great distances we are to know and honour all Canadians as our compatriots, we shall need this marvellous invention as a tool of unity.

If uncontrolled broadcasting becomes our master, we could find ourselves as a nation blocked off from any means of creating a free public opinion or of making that opinion heard and, in that blacked-out vacuum, liberty will suffocate. If it becomes our servant controlled by public opinion through their elected supervisors, it may become our national voice between each other and to other nations in a new and greater chapter of democracy.