

Martlet MAGAZINE

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A former CBC producer now at Uvic criticizes the recent White Paper on broadcasting and adds some personal recommendations.

Canadian Broadcasting: Not All Black And White

By Peter Garvie

Ask anyone what he remembers about broadcasting this year, and he will be bound to reply "the Seven Days controversy." The White Paper on broadcasting was tabled on July 5th in the midst of that controversy, and in consequence it has not really been assessed apart from it. Seven Days was a symptom; the White Paper claims to find a cure. Now that CBC lies under an uneasy truce, it is worth re-reading this docu-

Mr. Garvie now heads the department of Fine Arts at the University of Victoria.

ment slowly and carefully — and there is really no other way with this grey non-prose, to see what the government proposes for broadcasting.

The White Paper derives from the Fowler Report published the previous year, and accepts some, and rejects others, of its findings. Frequent inquiries into national broadcasting are a Canadian hobby, and even if they do not seem to have affected our viewing and listening very much, they do at the outset have an *ex cathedra* tone. They are not nearly as perceptive or well researched as this tone suggests. In the case of Fowler '65 this meant, for instance, that CBC management could use the shortcomings of the report to deflect attention from those valid criticisms about organization made originally by the Glassco Royal Commission, then by the

CBC'S own internal inquiry, and now finally by the White Paper.

When the author of the White Paper is precise, he is usually shrewd and right. There should be a national concern about foreign ownership, about monopolies in communities where one interest owns broadcasting and the press, and that the use of the limited frequencies remain a public trust, not a private speculation. There are some good suggestions offered for the CBC. Five year financing has long been needed; annual grants have made long-term planning more a gesture than a reality in the past. It is proposed too that the chief executive officer no longer sit on CBC's board of directors, but report to them. Had this been so last summer, there might have been a different outcome to the Seven Days crisis. And the White Paper comes out with a renewed demand for decentralization, a reduction in the



Ex-producer Garvie

staff at head office in Ottawa, and improvements in CBC's internal communications. What is needed is not a juggling of boxes and lines on organization charts, but close and clear relations between men of proven competence who trust and respect each other. It is as important for the revised Board of Broadcast Governors as for the CBC's board that the members really be people of quality and independence of mind.

SEPARATE ELEMENTS

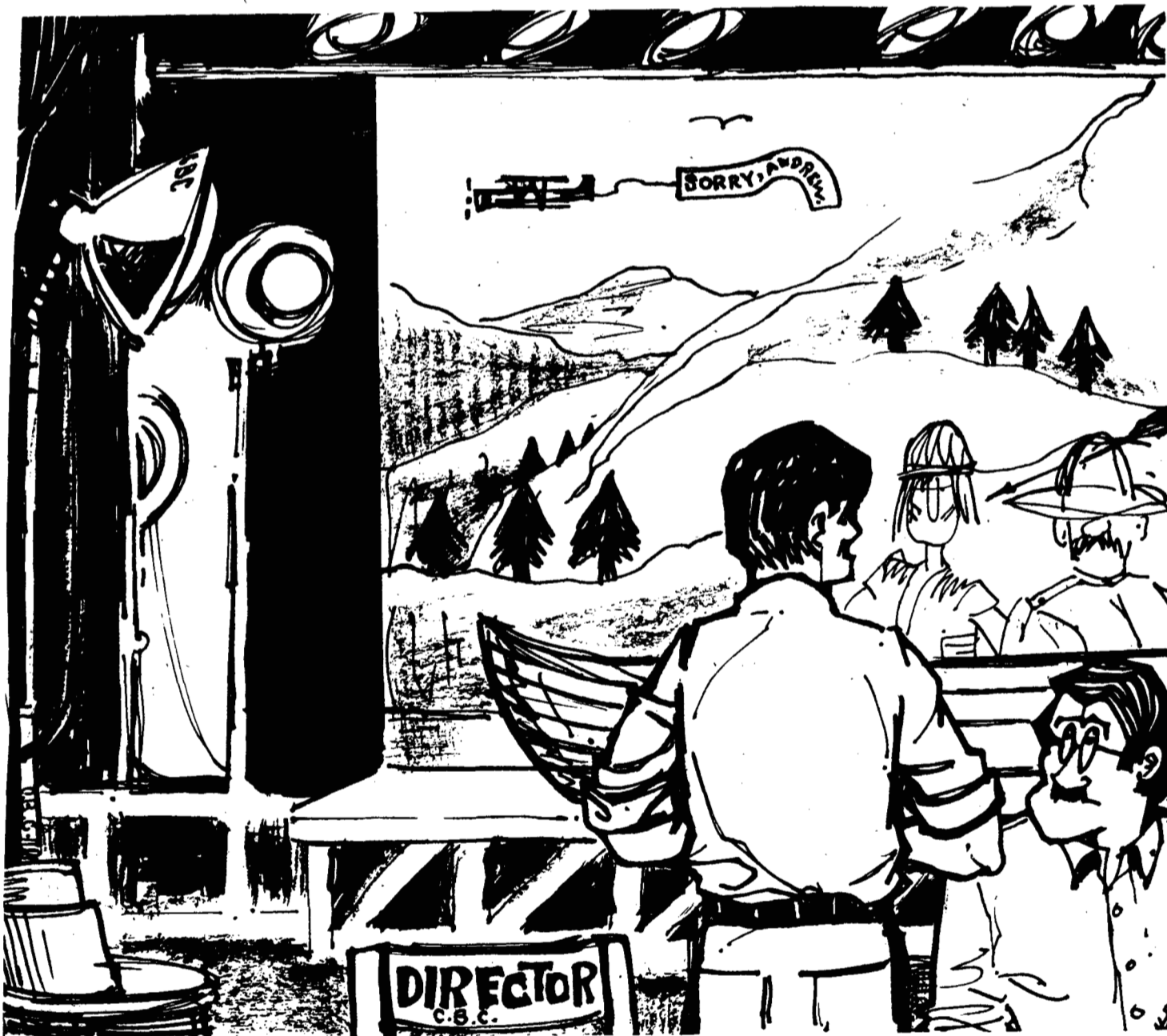
Much of the White Paper, though, is far from precise, and it is hard to tell if that is because the author sometimes misunderstands the nature of broadcasting, or if the ambivalence is deliberate. It is proposed that there be "statutory machinery which distinguishes clearly between the total delegation of authority over programming on the one hand and ultimate authority over the structure of the system on the other." The White Paper accepts "the physical structure of the

"The CBC should be taken out of commercial competition as far as possible."

system and the actual programs broadcast" as "two quite separate elements." In fact they are not separate. The BBG's own rules about Canadian content affect the whole structure of the system in their economic consequences. The effectiveness and integrity of any station's program service depends, not just upon the sum value of the programs, but upon people, money, the frequency of the transmitter, its strength and location, the competition, and many other things besides.

We should begin to worry as we read on. The members of the BBG are to be appointed by the Governor-in-Council. The CBC board in choosing its chief executive officer is subject to the same approval. "Authority will rest with the Governor-in-Council to give formal directions to the Board (i.e. the BBG) on . . . the pre-emption of broadcast time for special purposes or in an emergency." Since CBC is now brought formally under BBG control for the first time, it begins to look as though both the CBC's and the BBG's role as trustees of the national interest in broadcasting is much more subject than before to direction by the government in power.

(continued on page four)



... are you trying to tell me this artistic piece of Canadiana, this epic cultural contribution, this authentic Canadian presentation which both the French-speaking and the English-speaking peoples of Canada watch in glorious unity is 'just a plain flop'?

SHORT

A Child's View

"Father?"

"Yes, dear?"

"What does unibersity mean?"

"University? Well . . . it's a place where They keep knowledge."

"Knowledge? Is knowledge same as truth?"

"Almost. But you see my pet, there are many kinds of knowledge but there is only one Truth."

"How do they keep knowledge Father? Do they put it in boxes like stuff in the attic?"

"Yes, you could say that. You could say that They put it in little boxes and lock it up tight. Then people, called students, come along and pay money, called fees, and They open the little boxes and let the students have a peek."

"They? Who are They?"

"They . . . why They are just grownups."

"Like you and Mommy?"

"Like your father, dear."

"Do you have keys?"

"I have one key. Each grownup at the university has one key to one little box."

"What happens if you want something from one of the other little boxes?"

"There are ways of doing that."

"How?"

Mr. Low is an arts student at the University of Victoria.

"Many ways . . . consulting an associate, things like that."

"Sulting societ? What's that?"

"That's just like asking a friend who knows a lot about a particular little thing that you may want to know about."

"Oh . . . Father?"

"Yes, dear."

"Do you ever wonder what is in the other little boxes?"

"Wonder, my darling has a box of its own."

"Does anyone have the key to the Wonder box?"

"Lots of people."

"Do They have a key?"

"Not likely."

By
Larry Low

"Why not Father?"

"They are too busy with their own little boxes."

"Doing what?"

"Doing Research."

"What's Research?"

"Well, Research is filling up the little box with knowledge."

"Does the one gets his fullest get a gold star like at school?"

"No, Angel, I'm afraid not. Though it's not a bad idea."

women like eggs and grade them accordingly. If you dropped one for chrissake don't pick it up again. That way you only got your fingers sticky. The rum and her behind had done it. He could barely remember the dance, the encounter outside the men's room, the heat in the hall and

By
Hernando Haidaway

the run home. Three bucks to the taxi-wallah and tarantara upstairs for the main performance. She was sitting up in bed behind him. To justify things to himself he began to coin slogans: 'Go to bed with an egg.' An egg a day . . . But this particular one was poached and she soon let him know it.

The voice was sepulchral, catechismal, prepared and tedious, yet it still shrilled in self-righteous indignation.



"What does unibersity mean?"

"Is Research like Truth?"

"A little. You see dear, there is only one Truth, but it is in little bits and pieces scattered through all the little boxes."

"But if you only have one key, no one will never be able to put the bits together will he Father?"

"Ever."

"Huh?"

"No one will Ever be able to put the bits together."

"That's what I said."

"You said never. That's a double negative. Now where were we?"

"Putting the bits together."

"Ah, yes. Somebody could I suppose, try and fit the pieces together."

"When I grow up and get big will I have a key?"

"If you wish to learn the Truth you will need many keys."

"Why don't you have lots of keys then?"

"I did once."

"Did you lose them?"

"I'm afraid so."

"Father?"

"Yes, dear."

"Why?"

"Oh . . . You'll find out when you grow up. Now it's time little girls turned out the light and went to sleep."

"But I'm not tired."

"Well, your poor Father is and he's already three papers behind in his research quota for the term."

"Quota? What's Quota?"

"Tomorrow night, darling. Now give Daddy a kiss and go to sleep."

STORIES

"I don't suppose you're interested, but last month I met a very nice boy called Geoffrey. He works as a monumental sculptor." He had an image of everlasting flowers in a glass case, and a broken column covered by black drapes.

"Are you listening? Anyway, he's asked me to marry him. I have a ring, only it's away being altered. He would have been here, only he had to go home this week and help his father scrape barnacles off his boat or something. Are you hearing me? Are you? I said I'm engaged!"

He gazed at the fire and let his eyes be filled with the orange glow which suffused and spread until it spilled through his brain and seared the furthest corner of his consciousness. Abednego in the fiery furnace for a moment. Blink and out. He turned to feel the outrage still hang-

ing in the air, to see the rising beauty of her breasts and the flight of the third digestive. She munched at him furiously. He paused.

"Congratulations!"

She choked.

"Is that all you have to say? My God! What I want to know is what you intend doing about tonight? Do you think you can carry on just as you used to do before? If you did you've got another think coming. You only used to appear when you felt like a cup of coffee. What can I tell Geoffrey? I don't even know if you have any honourable intentions. Can't you hear me? How are you going to explain this?"

His cheroot had gone out. The rum had left his mouth all rough and dry. He took a bite of his digestive, and shambled up and off to the stove to get himself a cup of fresh coffee.

"Well?"

. . . the word stopped him short. He dropped the cup in the sink and walked carefully over to the bed. His hand stretched out and grasped the soft gold hair at the nape of her neck. Her eyes looked up, hurt and puzzled. He paused again.

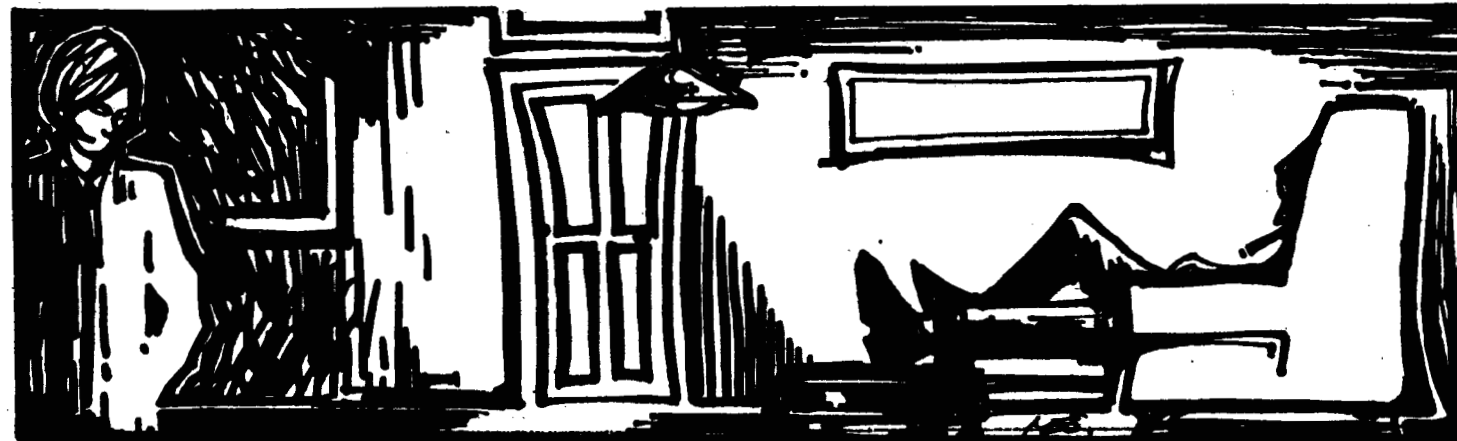
"I've never kissed a girl before with a mouth full of biscuit."

Shouting The Odds

He sat in the darkened room and stretched his toes out towards the single-bar electric fire. A cheroot glowed just under his nose, and a cup of coffee, which he had forgotten, lay undrunk on the floor beside him. He had a digestive biscuit raised half-way to his mouth, but it had been on its way for five minutes, because he knew the cheroot had got there first.

He still could not understand what had come over him. He had broken one of his golden rules. It had always been his habit to treat

Hernando Haidaway is a pseudonym, obviously.



"The voice . . . shrilled in self-righteous indignation."

Letters

Reply

The Martlet magazine is thrilled to receive letters. We welcome any comments, views or criticisms pertinent to our material and will try to print all remarks, together, if possible, with a reply from the author concerned.—Ed.

The Editor, Sir:

In propitiation for shocking the sensibilities of those who hold God, Motherhood and the Premier dear, I offer the following:

Apologia Pro Culpa Mea

Brother Pye and Brother Atkinson

Detect some inflammation

In my forthright declaration

Of King Cece's bad intention

(In his cruel emasculation

Of the politics of B.C.)

I am, they say, political

Where I should be merely critical

And with methods hypocritical

Show slants McCarthy-itical

(In my wicked 'yellow' article

On the Premier of B.C.)

So in form epistolatory

They have furnished an inventory

Of my vices miasmatory

And political grotesquery

(In this, the most unsavory

Of the broadsheets of B.C.)

To atone for my scurrility

And irreverent mendacity

I invite their perspicacity

In a treatise of sagacity

(In praise of the capacity

Of the Premier of B.C.)

Abuse

Sir:

We are writing to protest the flagrant abuse of the Magazine by Richard I. Grivil in his inflammatory critique of Paddy Sherman's book, *Bennett*. Grivil has degraded an already inept magazine section with his particular type of "Yellow Journalism".

Spicy as it may be to review our Premier's ever ascending career over the space of three columns, it is, we feel, unfair to the Premier to precede this with a column of slurs veiled in such cowardly phrases as "not a crook", "not a man of lust", "not a drunkard" (a petty hypocritical technique favoured by McCarthyites). Similarly it is unfair to the author of the book to review it in the final paragraph of this poisonous tirade.

In closing we would like to stress that Mr. Grivil's opinion of the Premier and his low opinion of the electorate of the Province would be better presented in a political rather than critical format. We can understand the current rage to "Publish or Perish" in the academic community but have never seen the two combined as Publish & Perish until we read this article.

W. D. Atkinson

F. C. Pye

—R.G.



Ottawa Manoeuvres

Last month's political exchanges may have real significance for the future of government. Dalton Camp's challenge to continued Diefenbaker leadership, later Gordon's campaign to make an issue out of economic nationalism, and Laurier LaPierre's decision to run for the NDP in Montreal, may not individually seem important but together they are very significant.

The fortunes of the Tories still look pretty bad. In 1958 they had the largest majority in Canada's history. The memory of their rapid dissipation of the nation's goodwill through divided aims and failures to meet the challenge of a modern industrial nation will not fade quickly. The greatest symbol of that failure is the grand old man himself, whose rhetoric failed to fulfil itself in determined policy. Dalton Camp will have the sympathy of the electorate in his bid. The Tories still have a chance to profit from Liberal disarray. If they find themselves a new leader in time to establish a national following before the next election they just might reverse their present gloomy prospects.

GORDON DEBATE

They must be delighted by Walter Gordon's foredoomed challenge to the Liberal Party. Mr. Gordon may be right about economic nationalism. I think he is. He may be sincere and it's difficult to doubt that. But he is also misguided if he thinks he can pursue his policies within the Liberal machine, which is too clearly the embodiment of acquiescent continentalism. As the party of the establishment it, unlike the Tories, is fully in the pockets of those whose other pockets do well out of the sale of Canada to foreign interests. Mr. Gordon says he fully supports Lester Pearson he cannot have it both ways. If he gets his debate it will only underline the party's intellectual bankruptcy. He seems likely to lose the debate and keep his present leader. This, too, must cheer the Tories. The prospect of an even more divided Grit machine fighting another election under ineffectual leadership gives hope to both opposition parties. The issue of economic nationalism will

be raised, as Walter Gordon wants: but by the P.C.s and the NDP. But the Tories, too, are discredited as a nationalist force. As conservative George Grant observed in *Lament for a Nation*, "After 1940 nationalism had to go hand in hand with some measure of socialism". The question of economic nationalism and the question of major party status for the NDP have become the same question.

TWO-PARTY SYSTEM

Laurier LaPierre is 'misguided' according to Walter Gordon. LaPierre has decided to join the party whose policies he agrees with. More to the point, LaPierre believes (according to a *Canadian Dimension* survey) that the NDP will form the government by 1975. He has two things on his side: his own party's standing, and the leadership issue in the older parties. The NDPs following is presently running at 21%, which equals their former high point and is 3% higher than their election tally. The Liberals are three down from their election score; and the Tories are one down, but rising. Unless the Grits get a new infusion of life they will continue to lose strength to the opposition parties. The next election, or the one after, could conceivably produce a two-party system with political debate polarized meaningfully between two distinguishable parties—the NDP and the PCs; or perhaps a three-party system in which the Liberals, the Conservatives and the New Democrats are almost equally balanced.

A lot depends on the leadership issue. If in the next election the people have to choose between an effective new Tory leader, or Mr. Parson, or familiar Mr. Douglas, anything could happen. The vital thing is that some semblance of significant political debate be restored to Ottawa. Only a radical realignment can achieve that: and Mr. Camp, Mr. Gordon and Mr. LaPierre seem to be helping it on.

Editorial:

A GOOF

We hate to make mistakes, since, like most public crimes, they don't do much for one's reputation; nor do they encourage the variety of material we need each week.

Last week we erred by not printing Andrew Carpenter's poem, *While Visiting*, exactly according to the line form he intended. In the original, each stanza consists of three lines, producing a melodic rhythm. In the Magazine there appeared stanzas of four and even five lines which not only disrupted the metre, but added several unintended visual connotations.

We humbly apologize for this and promise not to desecrate, at least not without the author's permission, any other poems or short stories. (A formal apology appears on page one.)

—ed.

" Martlet Magazine

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My Mechanic is a Modern Jehovah

By Robin Jeffrey

Some people dread the dentist. Others have a horror of banks.

What nonsense!

From the president down, banks are staffed by high-school drop-outs. Dentists are licensed sadists and must be treated as such.

But there is a modern-day Jehovah who commands both fear and respect; a man who carries a thunderbolt in each hand and a pressure-gauge in his pocket; a man who must be worshipped as well as obeyed.

I refer, of course, to the car mechanic.

Don't try to impress me with your Ph.D.'s from Cantab and Oxon. They wouldn't know a carburettor from a differential. I thumb my nose at them.

Keep your suave politicians to yourself, too. They think the universal joint is next to the parson's nose. They fill me with no awe.

And although I've never really had the opportunity, I'm sure I could

Mr. Jeffrey, a regular contributor to the Martlet Magazine, is a fourth-year arts student at the University of Victoria.

Broadcasting

(continued from page one)

If we value this concept of trusteeship, then probably the most serious part of the Seven Days affair was that CBC management looked to the politicians to set its own house in order. How does that management withstand pressure or political interference with the content of its programs? That pressure may be exerted through "ultimate authority" over the structure, or by a direction to the BBG for a "pre-emption . . . for special purposes."

"... the most serious part of the Seven Days affair was that CBC management looked to the politicians to set its own house in order."

SINGLE SYSTEM

The White Paper accepts the myth of the single system of broadcasting in Canada, composed of public and private sectors, and seeks to bring incompatibles within one kind of order — the enlarged BBG, subject in some considerable degree to the Governor-in-Council. Yet it also emphasizes that the CBC is largely financed by the people to provide broadcasting in the public interest. The private broadcaster, on the other hand, is a businessman who seeks a profit in radio or television rather than in newspaper ownership or retail merchandising. It is not a single system—not even of complementary services — when CBC and the private operator must compete before the BBG for licenses and in the marketplace for advertising money. The White Paper now envisages bringing yet a third part into "the

take or leave beautiful women if somebody would give me the chance.

No, if you want to overwhelm me, if you want to leave my ego battered and bleeding, bring on a mechanic. A good greasy one, with oil behind his ears and fingernails the color of chocolate pudding. Before him, I quail in terror.

I drove my car into a garage the other day, and a dirty urchin of 12 came out of the office. Well, perhaps I'm exaggerating. He was older than 12. He was closer to 14.

"My name is Jones," I said. I have an appointment with the mechanic, please." I always use a pseudonym at garages.

"I'm the mechanic," he replied.

He looked closer in years to the perambulator than the Pontiac. But I ventured a quick look behind his right ear, and, sure enough, there was oil there, all right. And his fingernails! Yes, he must be the mechanic.

"Please, there's something wrong with my car," I said.

"Turn it over," he said without sympathy.

"I beg your pardon," I said, detecting some vulgar play on words.

"Turn the key in the ignition," he said with poorly concealed patience.

The engine burped.

single system" with the development of educational broadcasting through the granting of licences to provincial governments as well as to individual institutions. This third part would presumably be non-profit, but in no way aim at national coverage or the CBC's variety of programs and audiences served, so a new set of quite different aims has to be accommodated within the myth.

BROADCASTING QUALITY

The White Paper begins and ends with statements about the importance of the "Canadian system" to the national identity and "the essential goal of Canadian unity," so it could hardly admit to more than one system. (Nor does CBC admit how nearly autonomous are its French and English networks, either.) It is sad, however, if a muddled sort of national pride is the only justification that the White Paper can find for the system; it nowhere proposes certain arrangements because these are likely to bring us the best quality of broadcasting per se. Significantly, too, it sets out much clearer objectives for CBC than for the private operators, who are expected only to do the best "they can reasonably afford." The CBC, though urged to continue to make as much commercial revenue as it does now, does not get the benefit of that escape clause. If it is a single system, it has variable criteria of broadcasting quality; and there is a long tradition in Canada of the most lenient enforcement of the rules on even those broadcasters who break them most cynically.

By this point we should hardly be surprised to find the statement that "in programming high quality is more a matter of general excellence than of mere content. So called highbrow programs can be artistically or technically poor, while light



"Before him I quail in terror."

"Hmm," he said, rubbing his peaches-and-oil chin.

He opened the hood and looked inside.

"Rev it up . . . put your foot on the gas," he yelled.

"Hmm," he said when he surfaced again. "What have you been doing with it?"

"Well, sir, mostly it's been parked," I said.

"Well, it's going to need a hys-

entertainment can be excellent." It is only "mere content" that makes King Lear or the St. Matthew Passion more significant than the slickly ephemeral, so that is no reason why it is important that the viewer and listener be offered the experience of our masterpieces.

NO COMMERCIAL

If we do not base our thinking on the myth of "the single system," the problems of Canadian broadcasting may be easier to define and solve. The CBC should be taken out of com-

"... the White Paper comes out with a renewed demand for decentralization, a reduction in the staff at head office in Ottawa, and improvements in CBC's internal communications."

mercial competition as far as possible. In television this is not easy because of the association of certain advertisers with particular programs of great appeal. Radio commercials have made CBC a negligible amount of money, but annoyed listeners to a much greater degree than in television. CBC's primacy as the public broadcaster should be emphasized. It should be scrutinized, perhaps every five or ten years in

terectomy, new pointed plugs, and a tube," he said. It was something like that, anyway.

"When can I have it back, please?" I said. "I have an important appointment . . . tonight . . . at Clover Point."

"I'll try to have it ready for you by then," he said, "but we're pretty busy. And I may have to take it out to try to find just what's wrong."

"Are you old enough to drive?" I blurted out. But he didn't hear me. Thank goodness.

conjunction with the granting of its finances, to ensure that it is fulfilling its mandate. If it continues to do so, then it should be given first choice in the matter of new licences and frequencies.

The private broadcaster should function under an authority to uphold and enforce standards. This might be comparable to the associations that exist in such professions as medicine and the law. Failure to meet the promises that secured a license would mean losing it. And perhaps that private broadcasting authority as well as CBC should be responsible to parliament; and both should have some renewable charter, like that of BBC in Britain. If such matters as license applications and the interpretation of a new broadcasting act require decisions fairly often, there seems no good reason why the experience of the judiciary should not be used — to inquire or to rule — with such technical guidance as may be needed.

What we should want of our broadcasters is that they be free from interference or control by any single interest, e.g. the party in power, but are responsible to us for the way they use the frequencies lent to them. The weakness of the White Paper is that it neither unequivocally guarantees the freedom nor exacts the responsibility.