

Canadian Educators Speak¹

THE PRESENT SITUATION in Canada with regard to possible developments in the field of radio broadcasting is one that concerns all who are in any way interested in the problems of elementary and adult education.²

Whether the question of national control of broadcasting is considered at the present session of Parliament, it is felt that the situation, so far as education is concerned, should be set forth so as to be readily available to the Cabinet.

In Great Britain and Germany sufficient progress has been made in both elementary and adult education to lead to the conviction that the experimentation period has passed and the leaders in this work know something of the possibilities of radio as an aid to elementary teachers, and are fully convinced of its vast possibilities in the field of adult education.

Nearly a million children in the schools of Great Britain listen for a short period daily to great scientists, artists, and teachers of various subjects. In adult education the principle of group listening during evening hours has been developed to such an extent that there are now in England over 200 study groups listening to courses of lectures on history, literature, astronomy, music, drama, biology, and other subjects.

Can any such work be done under a

private system? We have fairly well demonstrated in Canada already that a certain amount of adult educational work can be successfully sponsored by

WHAT RIGHTS has education of youth in the free allotment of channel rights, which soon seek to become property rights? The Committee believes that youth and education have equities in broadcasting which must be safeguarded and placed on a sure and dependable footing . . . The evidence is abundant that education has in radio a new and tremendous tool.

[From the report of the Committee on Youth Outside of Home and School, Section Three, of the 1930 White House Conference on Child Health and Protection called by President Hoover.]

private broadcasting companies, as witness the splendid historical drama series at present being broadcast by the CNR, and the generous space being given to universities thruout the Dominion on various commercial station programs. There is no doubt therefore that a certain limited amount of adult education would be provided for under a private system of broadcasting in Canada until the time should come—as it has in the United States—when evening hours would be considered too valuable from

an advertising point of view to allow time for straight educational programs. Then of course adult education of a consecutive and constructive character would disappear.

In elementary education, on the other hand, the situation is very different. Radio education in the schools is essentially a state affair. No private company can possibly get the necessary cooperation of trustees and teachers to make the school program effective.

The best example of this is the work at present being carried on by the Columbia network where several millions of dollars have recently been budgeted for school programs. No doubt thousands of schools thruout the United States will be equipped with receiving sets in order to take advantage of these lectures. But the experience of the Department of Education of Ohio—which has some 6000 schools under state supervision equipped with receiving sets and receiving daily programs arranged and broadcast by the Department of Education—is that to get worthwhile results it is not only necessary to have the cooperation of teachers and schoolboards, but that the teachers need a certain amount of instruction while at normal school as to the best way of taking advantage of this supplementary assistance in the regular routine of school work. In other words, *no private system, however powerful or beneficent, can adequately undertake the most important task that radio has to perform in the future, i.e., adaptation of its services to the requirements and opportunities of elementary school work.*

¹A memorandum prepared by R. C. Wallace, president, and E. A. Corbett, director of extension of the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, and already indorsed by eight of the provincial superintendents of education, and by practically every university president in Canada.

²It hardly needs to be pointed out that under a national system such as is proposed by the Aird Commission and the Canadian Radio League, education is necessarily regarded as a provincial matter and educational broadcasts would necessarily come under provincial supervision.

EDUCATIONAL STATION FIRST—More farmers in Ford and Pawnee counties, Kansas, listened to KSAC during 1930 than to any other radio station.¹ The programs of this state agricultural college station—located in Manhattan—were listened to on 151 farms, while only eighty-one listened to the commercial station with the largest following. Increased significance is attached to these findings inasmuch as the survey was made before the college installed its new transmitter. This new, modern broadcasting equipment was first used officially May 7, 1931. ¶Twenty percent of the farms having radios adopted desirable wheat practises as a result of radio instruction. Radio in adult education again has proved its value, since one generally accepted measure of the effectiveness of an extension method is its influence on the adoption of improved farm practises. ¶The survey also revealed the interesting fact that seventy percent of the farmers in these counties have radios, and ninety-three percent use their receiving sets to secure useful farm information. ¶The two counties mentioned are in the western part of the state. One is approximately 150 miles, the other about 200 miles from Manhattan.—¹Jaccard, C. R. *Radio as a Teaching Agency*. Kansas State College of Agriculture and Applied Science, Manhattan, Kansas, 1930.

Radio in Education

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RADIO IS A MAGIC INSTRUMENT of unity and power destined to link nations, to enlarge knowledge, to remove misunderstandings, and to promote truth. It should avoid the crippling restrictions of complete government control, and the unhappy alternative of subject subservience to the profit motive. Broadcasting is fast becoming an integral part of Australian life, and people everywhere, especially in the rural areas, depend on radio for much of their entertainment, diversion, weather information, and market commodity quotations.

As radio is partly an extension of the home, it must be kept clean, and it must aim at elevating the public taste. Wireless has made the world smaller, and brought the constituent nations of the earth closer together. It can play an important part in imperial development, for it is a force that really matters in the affairs of the world.

From the point of view of the public, competition within reason between radio stations is most important in preserving freedom of the air. It must not be said, however, that the dominant purpose of radio is commercial profit. *What appears to be a radio monopoly in America is crushing educational stations, and such a curse must not be imposed upon Australians. The function of broadcasting stations must not be to build up audiences that can be sold to advertisers.*

Above all, the doctrine of free speech must be preserved, and the use of the air for all—not the few—must be protected; for any commonwealth, commercial or advertising monopoly of broadcasting channels would threaten freedom of speech, intellectual liberty, and the right of the individual states to exercise their educational functions. Radio by its very nature is destined to become a public concern, and therefore must be impressed with the trust of the public. Everything practicable should be done to awaken educationists to the possibilities of radio broadcasting in conjunction with the work of schools and colleges. Advertising has a tendency to kill interest in radio broadcasting, for such announcements offend the artistic sensibilities, and

lead to a revolt on the part of the listening public. It should be unnecessary to have to resort to expedients such as advertising in order to secure revenue.

The value of a central control is self-evident. This might be in the nature of a board, comprised of representative interests, particularly educational, and free from political control. In addition to the absence of any commercial motive in broadcasting, and radio being conducted as a public service, a definite policy should be formulated by the board so that the largest number of people possible can listen in on the simplest and cheapest sets. The greatest good to the greatest number should be the aim of the program. The board should be amenable to criticism and suggestions, and should avoid anything in the nature of religious, political, or industrial controversy.

Education by radio is a pioneering movement, and the possibilities of broadcasting need to be explored in the field of education. This discussion represents an attempt to present a few pertinent facts that may prove of some value in the near future. School teaching by radio has become an accomplished fact in a number of countries, and at the present moment an experiment in broadcasting is being conducted in connection with certain schools in South Australia.

Real stimulation is to be received from school radio programs, and not only will radio in schools provide a new medium of education, usher in a new era in instruction, but it will also stimulate the use of sets in the home by those who wish to benefit from instruction by air. There are many points to be watched and considered, however, when introducing a radio program into the schools. What response is likely to be roused in the schools themselves by radio lessons? What results may reasonably be expected, and what is the proper method of meeting the various problems that are sure to be encountered in radio instruction? A careful and thoughtful analysis is likely to cast some light on the proper evaluation and utilization of any efforts that are to be made in the field of educational broadcasting.

There must be some association between broadcasting and education. It

will be necessary for the board to operate thru a series of subcommittees composed of experts, and charged with the responsibility of developing their respective portions of the program. These committees should choose the broadcasting teachers, and should edit the supplementary material which should be published in pamphlet form for use in preparatory and follow-up work. These pamphlets should be illustrated wherever possible, and be designed for the double purpose of bringing about a feeling of intimacy between the listening school children and the broadcasting teacher, and to provide diagrams and illustrations to which the pupils could be referred from time to time during the actual presentation of the lesson. The pupils should be able to purchase pamphlets at a nominal cost.

Lessons in school subjects, such as history, French, nature study, music, biology, hygiene, and English literature, and in more general topics, including mythology and folklore, future careers, modern scientific achievement, English speech, general knowledge, rural science, travel talks, and dramatic readings might be arranged. Committees and teachers must bear in mind that broadcasting lessons are intended only to supplement the work of the class teacher, and, therefore, in addition to a good studio delivery, there must be the cooperation of the class teacher, who must also arrange for good reception in the classroom. The personality of the broadcaster is another important factor which must be sufficiently analysed. Broadcasting lessons should not be compulsory, nor should they replace personal instruction provided by competent teachers.

Let us consider briefly the points that are likely to produce success in school radio. The following appear to be of importance and worthy of consideration:

[1] Consider the curriculum and timetable of each school, together with its general character and special needs, before deciding to participate.

[2] Take all necessary steps to obtain good reception.

[3] Place the loud-speaker in a position which will insure that every pupil will hear the lesson in comfort.

[4] Remember that the broadcasting

lesson is a supplement to the efforts of the teacher.

[5] Study the aims and technic of each broadcast lesson.

[6] See that proper arrangements are made for the provision of maps, specimens, charts, and the like, as indicated in the pamphlets issued to schools.

[7] Arrange for supporting notes or lists of difficult words to be written, if possible, upon the blackboard beforehand.

[8] Practise auditory perception, so that children may learn to cultivate the habit of disregarding extraneous noise.

[9] Remember that the broadcasting lesson is a form of cooperation between a teacher in the classroom and a teacher at the microphone.

[10] See that each child uses his pamphlet as directed during the lesson, referring to the pictures and diagrams at the instance of the broadcasting teacher.

[11] Practise children in making continuous and neat notes during the broadcasting lesson. See that care is taken to avoid the noisy movement of papers.

[12] Revise and follow up the lesson and encourage research and individual practical work, for this applies with special force to broadcasting lessons where transient auditory impressions are the chief element.

[13] See that questions and exercises play an important part in the revision of broadcasting lessons.

[14] Remember that the broadcasting teacher regards the class teacher as a colleague, and will be glad to be consulted freely on any point of difficulty connected with the course, and considered criticisms both of the lessons and of the pamphlets, together with suggestions for improvement, will be greatly valued.

[15] See that the children are in their seats earlier than would otherwise have been the case.

[16] Obtain the cooperation and interest of the children.

[17] Supply suitable listening appa-

ratus, if possible, similar to that used in other schools. Sets used should be obtained at a reasonable cost, be simple to manipulate, and give a good standard of reception.

[18] Arrange for the periodical visits of an expert wireless mechanic, obtain his technical advice, and let him inspect and maintain the set in an efficient state.

[19] Encourage regular correspondence from pupils, and particularly the sending in of essays and tunes.

[20] See that the broadcaster is an expert, possesses a good delivery and the qualities of a teacher, has some teaching experience and some knowledge of the conditions prevailing in the schools, and has studied the special problem of wireless teaching.

[21] See that the classroom teacher is not out of sympathy with educational broadcasting, and has some knowledge of the subjects treated.

[22] Relieve the class from the strain of uninterrupted listening, by providing individual work in the following lesson.

[23] Arrange for lecturers to speak clearly and slowly, and spell any difficult words, keep a clear thread running thru their lessons, recapitulate the main points at regular intervals, and confine themselves to as simple a presentation of their subjects as possible.

[24] Issue a syllabus giving details of times and subjects for the coming term at the end of each term, and circulate same.

[25] Organize demonstrations of class reception in various parts of the country.

[26] Forward a periodical questionnaire to all participating schools.

[27] Give a class as many changes as possible from passive listening.

[28] Arrange for lectures, except in special circumstances, to be no longer than twenty minutes.

[29] Arrange for the lecturer to communicate with the teacher during the lecture, and for the teacher to comply with such requests.

[30] See that the wireless lesson is taken in the quietest room suitable acoustically.

RADIO CONTROL IN AUSTRALIA

BEFORE the Australian Parliament was dissolved on November 26, it was announced in the House of Representatives that the government would assume control of broadcasting from June 30, 1932.

Hitherto, broadcasting from the A-class stations owned by the government has been operated by a private firm—the Australian Broadcasting Company—under a contract which expires on June 30. In accordance with the labor policy of government control of public utilities, a national broadcasting board would be established to take over full control of radio broadcasting.

A board representing all interests, with a predominance of government representation, would be appointed. Complete divorce from political interference would be effected by giving the board fixed tenure and wide powers, making it virtually independent of the government.

An interesting feature of the new policy would be the establishment of a national orchestra comprising the best Australian talent, subsidized by a portion of the revenue from license fees. The present license system is to be continued. All Australian owners of radio sets pay a license fee of 24 shillings and this money is divided between the government and the broadcasting company.

The A-class stations are located in the six state capitals. The only revenue from these is provided by license fees. Advertising matter is rigidly excluded. Control over programs is exercised thru the Postal Department which has complete powers to regulate the programs in accordance with the regulations.—From the *Christian Science Monitor*, December 18, 1931.

EDUCATION BY RADIO is published weekly by the National Committee on Education by Radio at 1201 Sixteenth Street, Northwest, Washington, D. C. The members of this Committee and the national groups with which they are associated are as follows:

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Everyone who receives a copy of this bulletin is invited to send in suggestions and comments. Save the bulletins for reference or pass them on to your local library or to a friend. Education by radio is a pioneering movement. These bulletins are, therefore, valuable. Earlier numbers will be supplied free on request while the supply lasts. Radio is an extension of the home. Let's keep it clean and free.

\$100,000,000

To the schools of America, radio is worth at least \$100,000,000 a year. This figure is based on the simple calculation that by a careful coordination of radio with the textbook and with the personal guidance of the teacher our schools can be made five percent more effective. Experience in the best schools suggests that five percent is a conservative estimate. For rural schools greater gains would be possible. Can Congress afford to make the schools depend on commercial interests in New York to set up their education by radio?