

JUNE, 1989

# Broadcaster

CANADA'S COMMUNICATIONS MAGAZINE

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**A WORLD VIEW:**  
CANADA'S MULTICULTURAL  
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On the cover: The world comes to Canada through multicultural television. (Photo by Image Bank)

# Broadcaster

CANADA'S COMMUNICATIONS MAGAZINE

Volume 48 Number 6

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### Broadcaster

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Banff Television Festival, Banff, Alta. Contact (403) 762-3060.

### June 7-10

Independent Film and Video Alliance annual general meeting, Halifax, NS. Contact (514) 277-0328.

### June 9-11

Atlantic Broadcast Engineering Society conference, Chateau Halifax, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Contact (902) 422-1651.

### June 13

National Radio Awards, Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, Ont. Contact (416) 489-1311.

### June 19-22

Satellite User Conference and Exhibition, Ottawa Congress Centre, Ottawa, Ont. Contact (613) 748-8731.

### June 21-24

Broadcast Promotion Marketing Executives and Broadcast Design Association joint seminar, Cobo Centre, Detroit, Michigan. Contact (213) 277-7616.

### July 1

Deadline for entries to Atlantic Canada Radio Awards at the Atlantic Association of Broadcasters convention, Sydney, Nova Scotia. Contact (902) 564-5596.

### July 17-21

British Kinematograph Sound and TV Society, Earls Court Exhibition Centre, London, England. Contact 01-385-1200.

### September 21-24

Atlantic Association of Broadcasters convention, Sydney, Nova Scotia. Contact (902) 564-5596.

### September 23-26

Focus on Video '89 trade show, Regal Constellation Hotel, Toronto, Ont. Contact (416) 763-2121.

### October 17-19

Western Association of Broadcast Engineers convention, Hotel Saskatchewan, Regina, Sask. Contact Art Williams, CKCK Radio, (306) 569-6200.

### October 21-24

SMPTE Technical Conference and Equipment Exhibit, Los Angeles, CA. Contact (914) 761-1100.

### June 25-29, 1990

HDTV '90 International Colloquium, Ottawa, Ont. Contact CBC Engineering, Montreal, Que.



## FREEDOM'S NIGHTMARE

I could have sworn we were living in the era of free speech.

Furthermore, I could have sworn censorship had died with the fed's ridiculous anti-porn bill last year. Apparently, I was sorely mistaken.

A group of upset citizens in London, Ontario, are misguidedly tilting at a windmill they perceive to be harmful to their children; CHCH's broadcast of *Freddie's Nightmares*, a series loosely based on the *Nightmare on Elm Street* films. A local teacher, Ernest Robinson, has stirred up all kinds of outrage against the show and against the Hamilton station that broadcasts it.

I've only seen one episode, and admittedly *Freddie's Nightmares* is no day at the beach; it's full of gratuitous violence and gory mutilations. That, however, is not the point.

Part of Robinson's argument is that, since most homes have VCRs, kids can tape the show (aired late in the evening, well past family time), and watch it later. He wants CHCH to consider this and cancel the show. CHCH officials believe they have done all they are obliged to do by airing the show well after prime time, as freelancer Keith Risler discovered in his story on page 24 of this issue. I support CHCH all the way, and only hope that the station doesn't drop the show in response to the current pressures.

Parents are responsible for what their children watch, not broadcasters. If the industry is suddenly forced to take into account new technology that allows viewers to time shift, well, it will be a sorry day for broadcasting in this country. Where are the parents when these kids are supposedly taping *Freddie's Nightmares* at midnight? It strikes me as typically, woefully Canadian that parents want someone else — the CRTC, and broadcasters — to be held accountable for the drivel turned on their television sets by their children.

While there are many problems with the broadcasting system in the U.S., the freedom to broadcast whatever one chooses is a fundamental right that is fiercely guarded. It is completely distasteful that the Ku Klux Klan has a show on cable in the south, but that is the downside of democracy. In a democratic society, it is not only tasteful content that is allowed — it is *all* content.

Whenever an issue like this surfaces, audiences are quick to blame Canadian broadcasters — the messengers, as it were — for shows produced in the States. CHCH deserves applause and support for its refusal (so far) to bow to right wing intimidation tactics, and I can only hope that station officials continue to fight the teacher's misguided campaign with all they've got. I have half a mind to become a regular viewer of *Freddie's Nightmares* just to spite Ernest Robinson and his ilk, but I'm probably too old for them to care about my viewing habits anyway.

Lynda Ashtey

# A WORLDLY VIEW

Canada's multicultural broadcasting sector brings other cultures home

by Ted Davis

**S**ometime very soon, perhaps as we go to press with this issue, Multicultural Television Inc. (MTV), owned by Rogers Communication Inc., will receive a decision on its application to the CRTC to purchase the national Italian and Spanish pay TV service, Teletelino Network Inc.

MTV has offered \$4 million to buy 100 percent of a company that has not made any profit in five years, and has repeatedly incurred the wrath of the CRTC for failing to fulfil its promises of performance. That Rogers has decided to further commit itself to ethnic TV broadcasting bodes well for a business that, until recently, has appeared very weak. The Teletelino story is particularly demonstrative of this fact.

To wit:

With deficits totalling about \$2 million, Teletelino's investments in Canadian programming have fallen woefully short of the 43 percent of total programming expenditures required by its licence. Expenditures averaged 14.5 percent over the last five years and as a result, its Canadian content obligations have come up short. In its December, 1988 decision to renew Teletelino's licence for a mere five months, the CRTC said, "Teletelino's past performance . . . has been completely unsatisfactory when measured against its original commitments and the conditions of its licence."

Teletelino's fortunes will look decidedly brighter if giant Rogers, through MTV, wins the licence it applied for in the summer of 1988, after making a deal with company president, Emilio Mascia, for his near 70 percent interest and the interest of other investors. In fact, the future of the national Latin pay network might be foretold by making a short journey southwest of its downtown Toronto facilities to the lakeshore offices of MTV, home of CFMT-TV.

There, a three-year overhaul of station management and technical operations, dating from the June, 1986 transfer of the CFMT licence to Rogers, has transformed this once-struggling Toronto-market multicultural broadcaster into a profit-making model for others to emulate. "This is the first year CFMT has been a profitable station since it originally went on the air in 1979," says Peter Foley, MTV's general sales manager. "We are right on schedule to turn this operation around."

This has been no small task, given that



**CFMT's Sole:** Ads "must be meaningful to cultural groups"

CFMT was in fairly desperate straits before Canada's cable TV giant stepped in with its offer to buy the station and promised programming and equipment upgrades that now hover near the \$5 million mark. "We found that some program suppliers to CFMT had not been paid since 1983," says Foley. "In its dying days, many suppliers refused to do business with them."

No one is refusing to do business with CFMT these days. Foley says that most of its advertising inventory has been sold out, in particular time on the station's foreign language shows. These make up 60 percent of CFMT's schedule and address the "prime" ethnic groups — Portuguese, Italian, Chinese and Greek — and 11 other "diversity" groups, including nationalities such as Ukrainian, Japanese, German and Dutch. English-language programming makes up the other 40 percent of the schedule.

This programming target audience of 15 ethnic viewer populations is a far cry from the 33 foreign language groups wooed by CFMT when it first went to air under multicultural media visionary, Dan Iannuzzi. "There was a lot of excitement with the concept of a totally ethnic com-

mercial station in the early days of CFMT but the financial logistics just weren't there," says Foley.

Two years before Rogers even offered to save the sinking CFMT ship, Iannuzzi went to the CRTC to ask for a revision in his station's licence that would lower the number of targeted ethnic groups from 33 to 15 and allow North American English-language product to be aired. This was granted, but by that time, only a major corporate rescue was able to save CFMT from certain receivership.

Whether massive injections of capital from a company the size of Rogers is necessary for survival of an ethnic TV broadcaster is obviously an issue of considerable importance to those in the business. It is one which Mascia, president of Teletelino, wrestled with for the past two years in his negotiations with Rogers. It is a move Mascia now strongly endorses.

"In my case, I probably could have raised the money (to keep Teletelino afloat) but then it became a question of whether these investors know enough about broadcasting to take the risk of getting involved," says Mascia. "I think you need the capital that Rogers can provide but I also think that you need people who understand the business. I have seen what this (combination of financial and professional resources) has done for CFMT."

Indeed, the recovery of CFMT has been accomplished not just by pouring millions of dollars into the operation but by rethinking and revising key elements of the multicultural station, such as advertising, program quality, program scheduling and, of course, broadcasting hardware.

Although changes wrought in these areas have all been significant, it is possibly advertising that has undergone the most dramatic revisions and yielded the most notable results. Revenues from both retail (local) and national clients that advertise on foreign language programs have increased by 65 percent since 1986 when Rogers (MTV) took over. About 80 percent of ad revenues are culled from the retail side, where spots promoting local business are usually scripted, initially, for ethnic audiences. But the remaining 20 percent of "language" advertising inventory is filled by national ads which require some adaptations before being aired on CFMT.

At CFMT, this process has graduated from simple "dubbing" or "translation"

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to "transcreation," to use station jargon. "We're out of the translation business," says Lesley Sole, CFMT's director of programming. "We now make adjustments to the creative in the national ads so that they are more meaningful to the various cultural groups."

While most of the changes to national ads are indeed simply matters of dialogue and graphic translation, the transcreation process has paid off in a few instances. "Slogans translated to Chinese can have meanings totally opposite to what the client has in mind," says Sole. "The 'Pontiac Adds Excitement' slogan had to be modified because it has heavy sexual overtones when translated to Chinese. And we had to change to female voice-over on a packaged goods ad translated to Greek because it was too throaty for their liking."

It's this kind of effort that has helped swing national advertisers and their ad agencies to CFMT, but the ethnic advertising medium is still regarded with suspicion and caution by many. However, nothing speaks louder than numbers, and it is this sort of statistical argument that has been missing from a solid multicultural advertising rationale.

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*Teletatino has weathered many storms, including resistance to carriage by cable companies*

---

Until recently, that is. Last fall, CFMT commissioned A.C. Neilson Ltd. to distribute TV rating ballots, in Portuguese, to Toronto's Portuguese audience. For the first time, those who did not have the language skills to use a standard English ballot could express their television preferences.

The results were encouraging, to say the least. Neilson discovered that the viewership of CFMT's shows from 3 to 7 p.m. was 65 percent higher than conventional English-language surveys had indicated in the past. The study also showed that from 5 to 6:30 — Portuguese primetime — nearly half of the female Portuguese population in Toronto aged 25 to 54 were watching a popular continuing drama series or "novella" being aired on CFMT.

"This study has helped prove that national advertisers are getting their money's worth by advertising with us," says Malcolm Dunlop, supervisor of national language sales. "They are realizing that the English market is eroding in Toronto as the city population becomes more ethnic. They're calling us now instead of the other way around."

Such a specialized analysis of TV viewing audiences costs money, though, and the ability of MTV to commission a survey of its Portuguese audience again emphasizes the benefits of being associated with a major communications interest. This is obviously not lost on Mascia, who says "the infrastructure necessary for



**Mascia: Buyout by Rogers "will benefit everyone"**

national agencies to understand the needs of the ethnic audiences is not in place yet." Mascia says that ethnic television has survived principally on the spendings of ethnic businesses which have come to be associated with ethnic television by more traditional, grassroots methods of communication than is practiced by the agencies.

Clearly, Teletatino, which has already weathered storms ranging from cable carriage resistance, notably by Montreal's Videotron Ltée, to restrictions on the amount of advertising carried, stands to gain from this corporate marriage.

"I see in this merger all the elements to benefit both Teletatino and CFMT and make everyone stronger," says Mascia, who sees those benefits in terms of advertising research, program acquisition, Canadian program production and further nurturing of the Latin audience. And, because Teletatino's licence stipulates that it must gather its revenues from national advertising and pay-TV subscriber fees, and not largely from local retailers (as does CFMT), the competition for income between the two broadcasting entities is minimal.

Such a mutually beneficial relationship is hardly the case between Oriental specialty broadcasters, Cathay International Television Inc. and Chinavision Canada Corp., and it's all because both sell their programming to pay-TV subscribers in Vancouver. With a total population of about only 130,000 Orientals in the Vancouver region, competition between the two services is indeed fierce and the source of some discontent both with one another and with the CRTC.

"Vancouver is the only place in Canada where two pay-TV services are licensed to compete head-on with each other," says Brian Sung, president of Cathay. "I don't know why the CRTC would over-licence this market but the Commission has never been that famous for its rationality."

Sung can probably afford to toss off

these kind of statements, given the performance of his local-market-only pay service at the moment. He says Cathay has signed up nearly 11,000 households, which he says is representative of some 44,000 people or about 35 percent of the total Oriental population in Vancouver. This is a good deal greater than that achieved by Chinavision, the pay service licensed to distribute Oriental programming nationally, which has reached only about 10 percent penetration in Vancouver.

"You have to sell what the people want and Chinavision is not relevant to this community," says Sung. "Cathay is because we pay a lot of attention to local programming," which, Sung says, is covered by 15 news staff who produce six-and-one-half hours of community news a week and other community news specials. "The majority of our budget (60 to 70 percent) is directed at community news programming because that's mainly what the people are paying for. For those who can't speak English, this is the place to get the news that is relevant to them."

Those at Chinavision would like to think that they too have a place in the considerations of Vancouver Chinese who are seeking information from their television sets. The national service has established a news bureau and also produces competitive local programming. With about 40 percent of Canada's Chinese population living in Vancouver and a fee of \$20 per month charged to each subscriber, successful competition with Cathay is indeed crucial to the survival of Chinavision.

A low maximum advertising content, prohibition of the sale of local ads and minimal penetration of the Vancouver market have all conspired to sink Chinavision into debt to the tune of \$4 million. Advertising content has been raised and local advertising is now permitted but "recovery of the company has very much to do with capturing the Vancouver market," says Herman Lam, operations manager at Chinavision. "Without the market now dominated by Cathay, we could not do that in less than five years. But with it, we could increase our Vancouver income by 60 to 70 percent and greatly shorten that period of time."

Capturing Cathay's share of the Oriental pay-TV market may not seem so far-fetched in light of Chinavision's vigorous appeals to the CRTC to change the guidelines under which Cathay does business. The national service is of the strong opinion that Cathay has unfairly gained a foothold in Vancouver by programming almost all Chinese (mostly Cantonese) content with a licence that stipulates service for a variety of cultures living in Vancouver.

This, says Chinavision, is the World View licence, first granted in 1982 to serve 16 nationalities in the Vancouver area, including Chinese. Two years after going on air, World View was bankrupt and Cathay successfully engineered its bid for the licence. But it also won the CRTC's approval for changes to it that

would permit a much greater Chinese programming content.

That was in 1984, the same year that Chinavision was licensed, with the provision that it not distribute its signals in British Columbia for two years. Introduced originally to give World View a chance to get on its feet, the benefits of the embargo were inherited by Cathay. This gave virtual carte blanche to Cathay to establish itself in Vancouver with its largely-Chinese programming content, *without competition from Chinavision.*

"Without the grace period inherited by Cathay, we could have done much better in Vancouver," says Lam. "This was not a fair situation and we feel Cathay is not operating in compliance with its licence."

"We are in compliance with every part of our licence," counters Sung, who explains that the CRTC requires Cathay to distribute programming in two languages other than Chinese. He says that of 95 hours of programming per week, Cathay distributes 30 of that in Hindi, Punjabi and Vietnamese. "That is a sour grapes reaction on their part," says Sung. "Chinavision would like me to disappear and go back to selling real estate."

Sung continues his very frank comments with a condemnation of the very concept of a national Chinese pay service, saying "broadcasting is a regional concern for the most part and the viewer generally doesn't care what's going on in other regions. There is a place for national news, but not on a day-to-day basis. A national Chinese service is basically flawed. I wouldn't want that licence."

Despite this somewhat brutal assessment, Chinavision is doing quite well, and earned the accolade of the CRTC in its October, 1988 decision to renew its licence for four years. The commission said Chinavision "consistently devoted more of its total programming hours to Canadian programs than required by its conditions of licence," and that it has, for the most part, complied with its Canadian program commitments.



**Sung: CRTC not "famous for its rationality"**

The CRTC also granted Chinavision's request to access local advertising revenues and increase its advertising content from three to eight minutes per hour. These changes have already yielded a 100 percent increase in advertising revenues, says Lam, and entrance into the Montreal market in the last year through carriage by cable there has brought new subscribers on board.

And the business of running a national ethnic television service can't be all bad if the determined Iannuzzi intends to apply for new multilingual national TV licence. Iannuzzi says his application for the World Television Network, a satellite-delivered, cable-carried ethnic service supported by local and national ads only, will likely be filed by the end of June.

"We want to wait until we hear the decision on Roger's application for Telelatino before we make our application because that will change the landscape a little bit," says Iannuzzi. As publisher of the Italian daily newspaper *Corriere Canadese*, Iannuzzi says he has assembled investments totalling \$20 million for his multilingual bid. He wants to know,

however, exactly who he will be up against, as rumours persist that Rogers will go for a national ethnic licence as well. If given permission to buy Telelatino, Rogers could well be one step ahead of Iannuzzi toward realizing that goal.

"I don't think you can reasonably develop a business plan for an ethnic network without knowing the CRTC's decision on our application for the Telelatino licence," says Jim Macdonald, director of operations and station manager at CFMT. "I believe there's a certain fragility to the ethnic marketplace and I think the CRTC is very concerned about fragmentation in that market. It is not interested in licensing services that can't fulfil their commitments."

Despite his caution, Macdonald says that MTV will "accelerate the process" of making a decision on applying for a national ethnic network licence if another application (Iannuzzi's) is filed.

But Iannuzzi has no doubts as to the potential success of his proposed enterprise, saying that \$20 million can be stretched a long way with a signal carriage system that relies on satellites and cable systems rather than on microwave towers and stand-alone stations. "This 'software' approach will allow us to spend most of our money on programming, marketing and sales," says Iannuzzi. "We wouldn't be investing \$20 million in this thing if we didn't think it was going to fly."

It's a familiar tune, one sung by many broadcasters who believe a new service can't help but succeed. But Iannuzzi is no stranger to the ethnic broadcasting business and has learned the in and outs of this tough industry the hard way — as one of its earliest pioneers. In fact, all ethnic broadcasters have been subjected to the sometimes harsh realities of the Canadian broadcasting environment and while a few have failed, most have been strengthened by this schooling.

The prognosis for ethnic broadcasting? Still a little weak, perhaps, but quite possibly on the road to good health. ■

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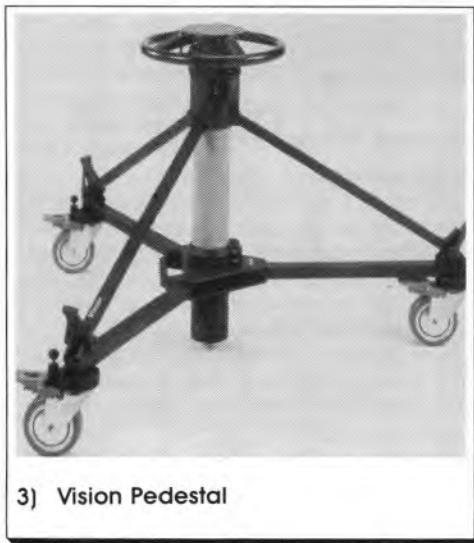
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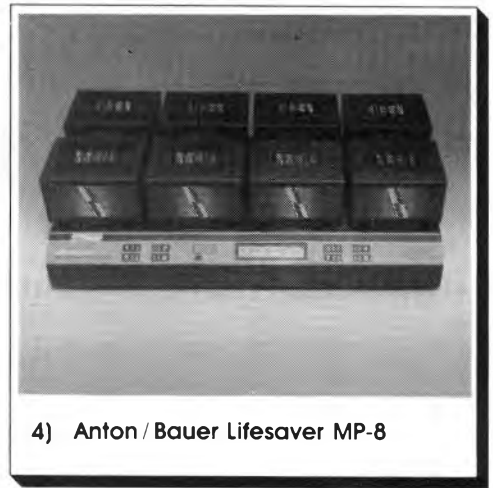
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# AT HOME IN THE DOME

TSN's multi-million dollar production facility

by Ted Davis

There surely must be more controversial cashcows than the Dome Stadium in Toronto, but not many. The great white forum that has been built for the weather-proof entertainment of over 50,000 spectators has risen from Toronto's railway lands amidst protests that it will cause outrageous traffic congestion in an already overcrowded downtown core. It has been assailed by citizens who decry the Dome for siphoning off provincial money to a project that builds Toronto's image rather than building publicly subsidized housing. And its ever-ballooning price-tag, topping the \$500 million mark four years after then-premier Bill Davis announced its cost at \$150 million, has been a regular target of Dome critics.

But just the imposing presence of the SkyDome, and the level of technical sophistication that has been called upon to create Toronto's newest bauble, seems to

have largely subdued the ballyhoo that engulfs it. Most of us are already familiar with such techno-wonders as the massive, three-part roof that will deliver sunshine to 91 percent of the seats on those hot, baseball afternoons but that closes in 20 minutes when the weather turns foul.

Less publicized is the Dome's ability to adapt itself to the various events planned for it. For instance, two ground-level, moveable tiers of seating comprising a total of 18,000 seats can be rolled closer to the south end of the stadium to better view a baseball game, and back towards the centre sidelines for football. The changeable seating gives the football configuration a maximum of 54,000 seats and baseball a maximum of 52,000.

Those seating tiers can also be used in conjunction with Skytent, a systemized array of curtains and or/drop ceilings to shrink the stadium for more "intimate" events. Between 10,000 and 27,000 people will be able to watch anything from basketball

to tennis to opera within the translucent acoustical banners that make up Skytent.

But if its moveable roof and venue changeability are the first and second wonders of the SkyDome, its third is surely the Sony JumboTron. The word "scoreboard" doesn't really do justice to the JumboTron, a massive TV-like screen that is over 110 ft. wide and 33 ft. high — the largest such board in the world. From the south end seats directly across the field from the JumboTron, the picture is as clear and colorful as that seen on any television.

This clarity has been accomplished with the 105 picture modules that make up the board, which contain 67,200 trini-lite cells, the light-emitting lifeblood of the board. These give the board a 200-line resolution and the capability to show anything on videotape, from high-quality slow-motion replays to commercials to rock videos. Even



Dome Productions' vice-president and GM Brian Ross and creative director Jens Olsen: Companies can come in and choose the services they need "a la carte"

Photo by Ricki Horowitz

movies aren't out of the question.

The JumboTron can be split into sections, giving spectators, for example, slow motion video of a player in one section, his playing statistics in another and an advertisement in the third. This information is drawn from a number of sources, including five Beta format playback tape machines, five cameras, a character generator and four channels of still store.

Assemblage and co-ordination of this information for display on the JumboTron is accomplished in a control room across from the board, dubbed Scoreboard Productions. Up to 18 people work here and are not only responsible for manipulating the Sony video board and three smaller auxiliary scoreboards but also for post-production of the ads that will be screened on the JumboTron during an event.

JumboTron advertising has been sold as "event packages," which will give the client time on the board during "at least 100

event days this year," says Brian D'Eall, vice-president of marketing at CMC Inc., the ad representatives for the sale of JumboTron time. Thirty-six of these event packages have been made available to corporate interests, which might give each of them about three 15-second spots at a nine-inning baseball game. Included in the event package are 81 Toronto Blue Jays games, 10 Toronto Argonaut games, and a number of other one-off gatherings, such as a wrestling match, motorcross race and exhibition tennis game.

Each one of these event packages runs a cool \$286,500. When *Broadcaster* went to press, all were expected to be sold by June.

Just down the hall from Scoreboard Productions is the glass-and-polished-steel lobby and banks of monitors that welcomes visitors to Dome Productions, the on-air nerve centre of the SkyDome. Dome Productions boasts two fully-equipped control suites for rental to broadcasters covering an event in the stadium, eliminating the need for a remote control hook-up in a truck parked outside the building.



Gordon Craig, president, TSN Broadcast Group: "SkyDome is the largest TV studio in the world"

While both rooms showcase the latest in broadcast technology, such as Sony D-2

*Dome will provide broadcast personnel according to the needs of the broadcaster renting the facilities*

digital cassette VTRs, BVW-75 Betacam S.P. recorders and Sony professional studio

monitors, they are differentiated by size and amount of equipment. Suite One is the more opulent of the two, offering all the techno-flash a broadcaster is ever likely to need. It has more monitors, more switching capabilities, more audio capabilities and more facilities for isolation directors than does Suite Two.

Isolation directors, who choose which shots on which cameras should be used to go close-up on either live or replayed action, are seated on a tier overlooking the control room in both Suites One and Two, separated from that nervewracking operation by only a sheet of soundproof glass. There, they use Sony slow motion controllers to control any of the 10 D2 digital

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This placement of the often noisy and excited "iso" directors in such close proximity to the tensely hushed control room occupied by the director, assistant director and switcher is "a first for a broadcast facility in North America," says Jens Olsen, creative director of the facility.

Olsen says Dome will provide broadcast personnel according to the needs of the broadcaster renting the facilities, and will retain three fulltime switchers for this purpose. He says contracted freelance camerapersons, directors and others will be available on a per-broadcast basis for those event producers who don't have their own team.

"If NBC comes in to do their baseball game of the week at the Dome, they might bring a director and their cameramen but we would supply the switcher, VTR operators, etc.," explains Olsen. "Being NBC, they would likely rent Suite One. A Canadian network might then rent out Suite Two for their regular broadcast, but they would bring a complete team of their own."

There are about 50 employees at Dome Productions, including the fulltime broadcast staff. But the great majority of the workforce at Dome, excluding management and accounting staff, are the VTR operators who man Dome's post-production facilities. These are the people who are responsible for generating the majority of revenues collected by Dome, which is



McKenna: Dome is "not unlike TSN in its early days"

expected to begin turning a profit in about two years, according to Olsen.

"The revenue base will likely be stronger from the post-production side," says Olsen, who also confirmed that an independent post-production operation was necessary in order to make the broadcast side financially viable. "We might only rent the broadcast facilities for five hours in a day for a baseball game. What do you do for the other 19 hours?"

Dome will stay open 24 hours if need be and the firm offers clients three on-line

video editing and graphic suites with technical menus that include a Grass Valley 300 switcher, Grass Valley 151 editor, Chyron dual channel character generator, Ward Beck audio console and Graham Patten audio mixer. Computer graphics equipment available includes a DFX/200 paint and video effects system, a Silicon Graphics Iris 4D-20 workstation for computer animation and an Abekas A60 digital disk recorder. A film transfer suite features a Rank Mk IV flying spot scanner, DaVinci color corrector and Ultimatte 5 video matte processor.

Accessing this technology and, if needed, the Dome staff who best know how to use it, is again a matter a choice for the client who is coming to Dome for its post-production services. "Companies can come in here a la carte and choose what services they need," states Olsen. "And the broadcast component is run entirely independent of the post-production side so that there is never any chance of a client being shortchanged on equipment or personnel if his job is being done while the Jays are playing. We are a full-time production facility that just happens to be located in the Dome."

While Olsen works at spreading the word that Dome Productions is not just a Dome-dedicated broadcast and production facility — that any post-production project is welcome there — he also negates the suggestion that Dome services might be more expensive than any other production house in the city. "Our prices won't be the cheapest but they won't be the most expensive either," insists Olsen.

In fact, Olsen believes a Dome location may work to the company's advantage, saying, "When we have an open house, many people will come here simply because they are curious about the Dome stadium itself and about a post-production house that is built there. That will generate business."

This should be good news to TSN Inc., the company that owns both The Sports Network sports specialty service and Dome Productions. TSN has sunk \$20 million into Dome and structured it as a separate corporate entity in order to avoid having to report its business activities to the CRTC when The Sports Network comes up for its licence renewal. "We are one of 25 Dome Partners (investors) and we have taken advantage of that access by securing the rights to broadcasting and production at the Dome," says Joanne McKenna, corporate vice-president at Dome.

As for when Dome Productions might be expected to return some of that investment to the mother company, McKenna would only say, "ask me in a year. It's too early to tell now."

Says McKenna, "Dome is not unlike TSN in its early days, when we really didn't know who our audience was and what to expect from them." If Dome Productions can even come close to emulating the performance of TSN, then the fortunes of Dome indeed look bright. ■

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# AMPEX

# CLARIFICATION COMES CLOSER

Canada and the U.S. move toward copyright resolution

by John Ruttle

**N**ineteen eighty-nine is going to be a year to remember for both broadcasters and copyright lawyers. This is the year when the 64-year-old copyright law is brought up-to-date to include some recent developments in broadcasting technology.

At the fore-front of the broadcast copyright issue is cable retransmission. Cable operators who currently do not pay for their programming will be forced to pay some portion to creators under the new law — Article 2006 of the Free Trade Agreement. The Copyright Board has an interesting task ahead; the onerous task of reaching common ground between cable companies and owners of copyright. In order to comply with the FTA, legislation on the Canadian side of the border must be in place by January 1, 1990.

Broadcast signals have never been copyright in Canada, as a government White Paper written in 1984 concluded. But the issue is not completely clear as to whether a broadcast itself needs copyright protection. Even before the changes in the FTA the material within a program was protected by copyright law. Regardless of the nature of the show, it has always been possible for someone to own the rights to what happens within the program. If, for instance, there is a dance sequence in a CBC special, the choreography is — most likely — copyright by the creator of the dance. Therefore, a broadcast in the past, has been an adequate fixation for copyright, but the signal itself has not warranted the payment of a fee.

If the broadcast signal is not what requires copyright, what then is the issue? Clearly, in broadcasting the problem is in the number of people who view a particular product, and whether the owner is being paid adequately for his creation. In broadcasting, especially television, the problem is intensified because of the technical capability to expand the audience almost limitlessly.

The issue today is not in the simple broadcast of a signal, but in the retransmission of a distant signal. If CJOH-TV in Ottawa creates a half-hour talk show, the station, or someone related to the station, owns the right. So, why, if the royalty has been paid to the creator, should the station pay again to broadcast the show? Clearly, it should not. But the creator starts to lose out when a cable company picks up the signal that carries this program, and distributes it to people who otherwise

would never have seen it. The problem is intensified when the retransmitter continues to generate profit from this creation.

There is more than one way to pay someone who has copyright. A television station — or network — pays per program. This means someone goes to the creator and purchases the individual product, thereby paying copyright to the owner.

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*The decision to grant a retransmission right has raised a slew of logistical and technical questions*

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Paying copyright on a retransmitted signal is different than paying copyright to the owner of a television program. Under Article 2006 of the FTA, retransmitters will not pay for the content of the programs, or even on the program's popularity. Instead, the companies pay a sum of money for the right to send that signal, and the programs on it, over long distances. The system will operate similarly to the record industry, where members join a copyright union which pays them a portion of what is collected by the whole.

Interestingly, there exists no document which gives Canadian cable companies the right to take these signals and feed subscribers with this copyright material. It has simply occurred in the absence, or mere ineffectiveness of a Canadian law.

At the Shamrock Summit in 1985, Reagan lobbied Mulroney on behalf of American television program creators who believe their programs are legally "pirated" by Canadian cable companies. The same type of retransmission in the U.S. has entailed a copyright fee since 1977, and Reagan wanted Canada to come clean with American creators.

As a result, a Commons Sub-Committee dealt with broadcast and other copyright issues during the winter of 1985-6. During the hearings, cable companies and copyright owners pleaded their cases before the committee. Recommendations to the government after the hearings included adding a retransmission right so owners of copyright can get compensation for shows that are cabled to distant areas.

The Conservative government, in acting upon these recommendations, did not

include broadcasting in the copyright amendments. Instead, they were built into the Free Trade Agreement:

*Article 2006: Retransmission Rights: Each party's copyright law shall provide a copyright holder of the other party with a right of equitable and non-discriminatory remuneration for any transmission to the public of the copyright holder's program where the original transmission of the program is carried in distant signals intended for free, over-the air reception by the general public.*

This part of the Act does not prescribe a method of remuneration. It merely binds Canada and the U.S. to working out a system where "distant signal" retransmission is paid for.



**Hind-Smith: "Practices must be in line with the rest of the world"**

The FTA also calls for a review of both countries' action:

*Immediately following implementation of the obligations in Paragraph 1, the Parties shall establish a joint advisory committee comprised of government and private sector experts to review outstanding issues related to retransmission rights in both countries to make recommendations to the Parties within 12 months.*

Obviously, the FTA is not where one should go to find the particulars of the changes to retransmissions rights. It out-



lines goals which are to be set. The rest is up to the respective countries.

The above Section 3 of the FTA is also a clear sign that any proposal Canada comes up with must meet with approval south of the border. It is clear even before Canada has started drafting a new law that if the Americans are not involved in the process now, they most certainly will be later.

The addition of a copyright protection clause for retransmission in the FTA was hardly a surprise. Even the representatives from the cable companies were fully expecting to pay for the use of the signals. As Michael Hind-Smith, president of the CCTA notes: "we recognize that to meet our international obligations Canadian practice must be in line with the United States and the rest of the world. Therefore, a signal which is distant and would not otherwise be seen in the market is entitled to some form of compensation."

Canada is in the unfortunate position of being beside the largest program producer in the world, and our trade deal had to reflect that.

Still, the decision by this government to grant a retransmission right has raised a slew of logistical and technical questions, all of which must be answered by January 1.

Since the agreement is to grant copyright only to "distant signals," such a term needed defining. In its regulations #825 and 826, dated May 9 and 10 respectively, Cabinet stated that a local signal means:

- 1) In respect of the entire service area of a cable retransmission system, the signal of a terrestrial radio or television station the area of transmission of which covers all of that area;
- 2) in respect of a portion of the service area of a cable retransmission system, the signal of a terrestrial radio or television station the area of transmission of which covers all of that portion, and;
- 3) in respect of the service area of a terrestrial retransmission system utilizing hertzian waves, the signal of a terrestrial radio or television station the area of transmission which covers the site of the transmitter of that retransmission system, and;
- 4) "distant signal" means a signal that is not a local signal.

As Hind-Smith explains, the cable companies are skeptical of these definitions, and argued against them. "We said that they are mechanical definitions that don't have a lot of reality to them. They are definitions which fail to take into account the most-used definition in U.S. law which is a test of which signal is sufficiently viewed . . . (That test) is the one that's most relied on."

Cable companies, amongst other groups, were invited to respond to the proposed regulations. The CCTA submitted a paper on behalf of the retransmitters. While the paper addresses many facets of the argument, in short, the CCTA says the definition of a distant signal casts too wide a net, and too many Canadian subscribers will pay for copyright.

It points out that the Americans have a system that accounts for more than the

*The new legislation has incorporated a clause to relieve smaller cable companies of the burden . . . they are going to get a lower rate than the bigger systems*

mechanical area covered by a signal. The formula is complex. Suffice to say, under the Canadian definition, we will have to pay for a signal from Buffalo, regardless of whether it can be received off-air. But the

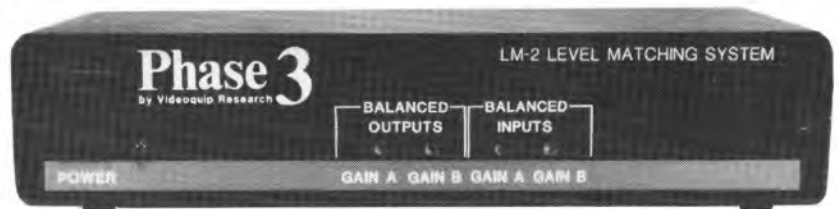
Americans currently do not pay for the same strength signal from Toronto to Buffalo. The CCTA says this is unfair.

The definition of distant signal was not the only formula proposed. Given that sending television signals to remote parts of the country is already an expensive job, the new legislation has incorporated a clause to relieve the smaller cable companies of the burden. They will pay too, but the amount will be less than the larger companies pay. Richard Matthews, senior policy analyst at the DOC, explains: "The way (Northern signal payment) was dealt with is not a complete exemption from payment but rather in the legislation itself it requires the Copyright Board, who is

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fixing the royalties, to assign small retransmitters a preferential rate. So, they are going to get a lower rate than the bigger systems. And the cut-off level proposed is 1000 or fewer subscribers. We found that number captures almost all the systems in remote areas."

It is true that 1000 or less does capture most of the northern cable services, but the definition is inadequate to some. The CCTA's report responds that "by selecting a simple numeric threshold, 1000 premises, many under-served communi-

ties in rural and remote areas that rely heavily on distant signals will not be eligible for preferential treatment." It goes on to say there are systems which have just over 1000 subscribers, and an arbitrary cut-off will cause a disproportionate increase in the fees for that system.

Also, there are unlicensed satellite systems in some urban areas of Canada. Using the less than 1000 premises formula, these broadcasters who operate outside the regulated system would actually be shielded from paying copyright. The threshold of

subscribers, argues the CCTA, fails to incorporate these systems.

The government will consider the comments of the groups involved and come out with the final version in the next Canada Gazette. Once the definitions of distant signal eligibility and small retransmission systems are finalized, the regulations go to the Copyright Board.

The confrontation between cable companies and the government is nothing compared to the battle that will take place this summer. By July 1, copyright owners must tell the Board what they think their signals are worth. Again, the recommended fee will not be a bunch of individual estimates, rather a collective view of what royalty a distant signal should incur.

Of course, Canadian creators aren't the only people interested in getting large compensation for retransmission. Until now, the debate has been waged by the government and domestic broadcasters. The Americans — who provide the majority of distant signals in Canada — will appear before the Board and expect to be heard. Canadians, who will be forced to pay many American creators, will be reluctant to listen. Broadcast lawyer John Hylton explains the government's predicament: "that's why the business of a retransmission right is political at all. There are a number of pro-Canadian forces in government and in lobby groups which want to stop an outflow of funds to the United States. It is already considered to be taking a lot of profit out of this country for the entertainment package it delivers to Canadians." Hylton estimates some 75 percent of the royalty money will go from Canadian cable companies straight to American creators.

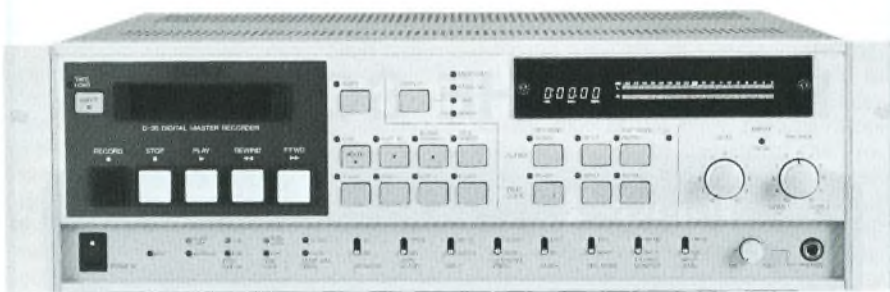
The confrontation this summer is inevitable. The American and Canadian creators will want a large retransmission fee. The cable companies will want a low one. And the Copyright Board will be trying to remunerate the Canadian creators without sending too much money to the United States. (To do that is, of course, impossible.)

The problem is complicated by the fact all creators must be paid equally — Canadians and Americans.

Prior to the FTA, cable companies had no financial commitments to American creators. That is coming to an end. Whether the outflow of Canadian dollars from the cable companies constitutes a drain on Canada's cultural industries remains a matter of debate, but this particular area is a prime example of the economic bordering on the cultural, with no clear delineation.

The total effect of retransmission rights is hard to gauge. It is unlikely any royalty prescribed by the Board will damage the cable industry to the extent where it will change in structure. Hind-Smith says too many questions are still unanswered. "We don't know (what effect it will have) until the actual negotiations are decided. Will

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the Copyright Board be deciding based on the number of distant signals which are carried by a cable system? Or by the number multiplied by some kind of factor? No one can even speculate usefully."

Whatever the outcome, for the cable companies the news is bad. Cable is far more important to Canadians than it is to Americans. Furthermore, distant signals are more important to Canadian cable companies than they are to the Americans. When the U.S. introduced retransmission rights, some of the more expensive and distant signals had to be dropped. It was found some simply weren't worth the royalty they demanded. In Canada, such trade-offs will at least be considered.

Thus far, this paper has looked at issues within this debate which offer options. There is, however, one effect from retransmission rights that is not subject to any debate, for everyone knows it will happen: Canadian cable subscribers, likely a majority of them, will soon pay more for this service. Again, the amount of any increase will be tied directly to what the Copyright Board decides is the proper remuneration for a retransmission. Therefore, dollar figures for cable companies won't be known until late summer. By January 1, 1990, the new policy will actually take effect.

For the average person sitting in front of the television, few topics seem more remote than copyright policy. The whodgets-what for the works of art on screen are decisions made in board rooms, far away from living rooms. But the effects of these changes are going to be felt far beyond the office of Canada's broadcast executives.

*John Ruttle is a journalism student at Carleton University in Ottawa, about to enter his fourth year of the program.*

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# A TEACHER TAKES ON FREDDY

London educator wants *Nightmares* off the air

by Keith Risler



Photo by Keith Risler

It's only a fictional series based on blood and guts nightmares, but for Hamilton, Ontario's CHCH-TV, the gruesomely explicit violence of the popular horror show *Freddy's Nightmares* has spawned some unpleasant daydreams.

That's because London, Ontario music teacher Ernest Robinson found himself idly flipping channels on cable TV in search of something worth watching in early February of 1989, and found something he felt worth squashing instead.

Concerned at the sight of "a man being impaled through his mouth out through the back of his head in full color," Robinson awakened to the presence of *Freddy's Nightmares* — a series loosely derived from the popular *Nightmare On Elm Street* movies — on no less than four of the channel signals carried by cable TV in London.

Cognizant of the cultist popularity of Freddy among the school kids he teaches (all 700 of them on an itinerant basis), Robinson embarked on a skillfully managed media campaign that's attracted the attention of newspapers and broadcast media in Canada and the U.S., and raised intriguing questions about the combined effect of cable TV signals on the potential response of the viewing public, and the series of possibly controversial courses of action that are legitimately open to such consumers.

Robinson began his well-articulated media campaign in February 1989 at a convention of the Ontario English Catho-

**Ernest Robinson, above, has launched a campaign against *Freddy's Nightmares*, whose lead character, pictured below, he claims is harmful to children**



lic Teachers Association, at which 400 of 700 fellow delegates signed a petition seeking Freddy's termination. The protest has been joined by London Mayor Tom Gosnell and Roman Catholic Bishop John Sherlock of the Diocese of London, both of whom object to the cult hero of *Nightmare on Elm Street* movies wafting across the airwaves.

Gosnell gave Robinson a letter on City of London letterhead endorsing the campaign, while Sherlock signed the petition itself, which seeks to boycott those stations that run *Freddy's Nightmares* and their advertisers until they kill the show.

Fuelling the flames was London Free Press staff columnist Morris Dalla Costa, who wrote that, "The mutilation, torture and sexual treatment of women on the program is not suitable for adults, let alone a 10-year-old." He concluded his blistering critique by saying, "Censorship is normally a bad word. But not this time."

Catholic school trustees granted Robinson permission to circulate his petition in London schools after reportedly running out or turning away in revulsion on seeing a clip from the show. The Lon-

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don and Middlesex County Roman Catholic School Board promptly recommended to other Catholic boards across Ontario that they support Robinson's petition campaign.

The petition will also be circulated among local heads of his 27,000 member teacher's association across the province and is endorsed by the association's own president.

CHCH-TV bore the brunt of Robinson's initial assault (which proved only a warm-up for his major petition effort now underway) when it was clearly not the major offender in terms of exposing the show directly to young children. Despite having decided before the start of the TV season that the show is unsuitable for a young audience, and having programmed it accordingly, the station nonetheless found itself at the centre of the controversy.

Station general manager Reg McGuire concedes Freddy has a cult following, but says "we decided this is not a prime time show in our market for our audience. Our view of the level of acceptability of that show for our audience is that it would not be directly placed at 9:30 at night." CHCH-TV made the decision to air the show at midnight each Friday, and in addition added a disclaimer with a narrated voice-over.

Robinson drew the attention of both Canadian and U.S. news media, appearing on television, on radio and in print. Asked why the main force of his initial assault on Freddy was unleashed on the

CHCH-TV programmers, (although while chatting on WJR radio in Detroit, Robinson fingered its local station WXYZ-TV and not CHCH-TV), Robinson said he was displeased at all four stations for carrying Freddy, but recognizes CHCH-TV is the only Canadian station accountable within Canada.

Robinson's campaign against Freddy and media violence in general is based on his concern over the effects of gratuitous TV violence on young children. It is an argument the industry has heard before, but which is not in this case weakened by the actual look and feel of the show itself, or by the seemingly contradictory marketing of Freddy dolls and multi-bladed Freddy gloves. However, the dolls at least are marketed through New Line Cinema and apparently are not based on the TV series.

The show is undeniably violent; exceptionally so, say its critics. As executive assistant to the London mayor, former broadcast journalist Dan McDonald said both he and the mayor screened two full episodes of *Freddy's Nightmares*:

"I think the thing that hit home to both of us when we reviewed these programs was how explicit they were. During the program I watched, for example, you saw a pulsating bloody heart being ripped from the chest of a man."

McDonald cautions that neither he nor Gosnell are suggesting viewers don't have choices or some responsibility. But he adds that, "In this day of converters and

channel changers and everything else, you flip by and you just happen on these programs. There is a choice — and I know the mayor believes this too — that while there is the off button, it is also contingent upon broadcasters to supply programming that we believe and viewers believe is responsible programming."

The issue of viewer responsibility has always been contentious, and Robinson's crusade makes it even more so. His petition asserts that time-shifting technology makes shows like *Freddy's Nightmares* available at all hours to young children.

It's a point with which McGuire quarrels. "It's easy to be facile that time shifting changes when we air things," he insists.

McGuire questions Robinson's claim that kids are closet time-shifters. "I don't think you're talking of grade two and three kids setting the recorder at midnight, recording a show that their parents don't know about, then screening back for an hour, and their parents don't know."

The arguments go on and on, but the fact remains that in London children have easy access to Freddy, thanks to U.S. broadcasters who let Freddy run amuck as early as 9:00 p.m. Sunday night, contrary to a Lorimar Productions recommendation that the show air only late at night.

As to the correctness of Robinson's approach, the CRTC's director general of information services, Pierre Pontbriand,

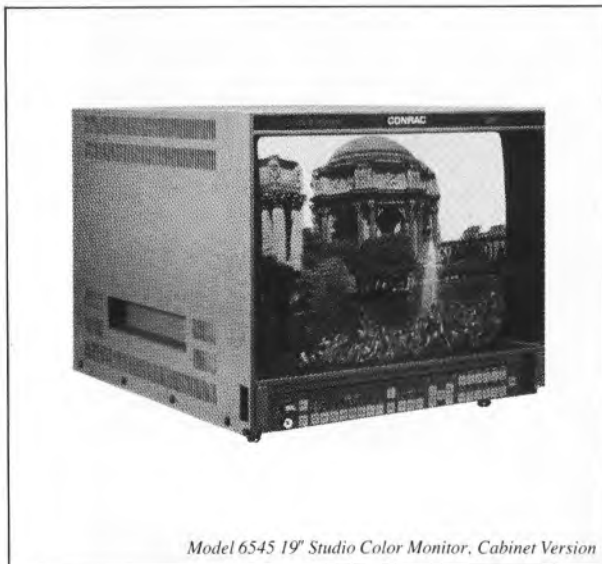
*Continued on page 28*



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# RISKING LIBERTY

*We know no spectacle so ridiculous as the British public in one of its periodical fits of morality.*  
**Thomas Babington Macaulay**

**M**ove over Freddy Krueger, there's a more dangerous man in town. Whereas "fictional" Freddy chooses single victims and is zappable, Ernest Robinson, B.Mus., B.Ed. resident of Fanshawe Park Road, endangers all of us. Even more frightening, "earnest" Ernest cannot be time-shifted by technology. Ernest's views on *Freddy's Nightmares* are well known thanks to the media and to a fundamental principle called Freedom of Expression — a principle which, having served him well, he wishes to deny to others.

What exactly is it that drives individuals to the arrogance of wanting to be their brother's keeper? Time and time again, whenever there are calls for censorship, the same pattern of argument emerges. The thought process goes something like this:

"I am a thinking person. I recognize the danger. The others are too blind, too stupid or too ignorant to understand what I know. I must protect them."

Ernest Robinson, like Freddy Krueger, is nothing new. In 1948, E. Davie Fulton, then a Progressive Conservative M.P., introduced a private bill which makes it a criminal offence to publish or sell a "Crime Comic". What is a "Crime Comic"? According to the Criminal Code of Canada it is "a magazine, periodical or book that exclusively or substantially comprises matter depicting pictorially the commission of crimes, real or fictitious, or events connected with the commission of crimes, real or fictitious, whether occurring before or after the commission of the crime".

Wonder Woman is a crime comic. Don't you feel safer now?

The point is that it is always easy to rally outrage from some segments of society against that which is unconventional. These campaigns do not stem from noble sentiments; they come from fear. What is lost is whether there was really anything to be afraid of in the first place. Was it really necessary for Senator McCarthy to ferret out the "red menace" in the United States? Was it really necessary to imprison the Japanese Canadians during World War II? All these crusades were based on unfounded fears which blinded society to more important principles. If history teaches us anything at all, it is that we must not ban, censor or imprison without clear evidence beyond a reasonable doubt of harmful effects.

Do we have any scientific evidence that Freddy's adventures have caused demonstrable harm to anyone, including children? Is Freddy Krueger any less of a pure fantasy than Frankenstein, Dracula, The Mummy or any of the other creepy monsters that have indulged our imagination for generations? Is there any evidence that anyone could turn those fantasies into foul deeds? As the English philosopher Herbert Spencer said:

"Under a sound social regime . . . , nothing is to be feared from the most uncontrolled utterance of thought and feeling."

Apparently Ernest is not content with merely organizing a boycott of Freddy. He has sent a copy of his correspondence to the chairman of the CRTC, presumably to attract some state involvement in shutting Freddy down. Apart from the obvious question of whether you really want the Commission babysitting your family, the CRTC can hardly involve itself. First the Commission has often stated that it is not a censorship body. Second, although the CRTC's practice has been otherwise, the fact is that neither the *Broadcasting Act* nor regulations thereunder expressly empower the Commission to deal with complaints. Third, any attempt by the CRTC to eviscerate content beyond its strict statutory mandate could offend the Charter of Rights.

We are afraid of Ernest Robinson, the latest crusader for unfounded fears. In his campaign to stop the fantasy violence of Freddy Krueger, he does real violence to fundamental freedoms, including freedom of thought and imagination. Right thinking people would fear Ernest far more than Freddy, but would censor neither. ■

Dan Burnett  
Jon Festinger  
Chris Weafer  
Owen, Bird of Vancouver

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**DOUGLAS M. HOLTBY**

J.R. Peters, President and CEO of WIC Western International Communications Ltd. is pleased to announce the appointment of Douglas M. Holtby as Executive Vice-President of WIC, effective June 1, 1989.

Mr. Holtby brings 15 years of broadcasting experience to the position. He has served as Comptroller, Vice-President and General Manager, and President of Allarcom Limited in Edmonton. As well, he was President of Allarcom Pay Television Ltd. (Superchannel). He is a board member of Canadian Satellite Communications Inc. and a member of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

WIC is a Canadian company which owns nine radio stations and controls BCTV (CHAN-Television Vancouver and CHEK-Television Victoria). Currently pending is the Company's application to the CRTC requesting approval for complete ownership of BCTV, Okanagan Valley Television Co. Ltd., Calgary Television Ltd., Lethbridge Television Ltd. and CJCA and CIRK-FM Radio in Edmonton.

Mr. Holtby's appointment is indicative of WIC's current and on-going commitment to growth and excellence in Canadian broadcasting.

**FREDDY:** *continued from page 26*

observes that viewers unhappy with programming face multiple options. Pontbriand says viewers may write to the CRTC, the station or its advertisers. The CRTC evaluates all complaints regardless of the number of names on them and automatically reviews each complaint.

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*CAB guidelines have little effect on American shows*

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But he agrees that among these choices, approaching advertisers can get fast results: "It is often a very effective way of putting pressure on broadcasters." And he adds that "the consumer is really the person who has a say, and the only way to make their views known is to take this kind of action. They certainly have that right."

Consciously identifying with Terry Rakolta, the Michigan woman who succeeded in pulling ads from the show *Married with Children* by contacting advertisers, Robinson will pass his petition along to advertisers who sponsor *Freddy's Nightmares*.

The Rakolta method has been making more than air waves south of the border, sparking a spate of viewer induced advertiser evacuations of popular but some-



**McGuire: Admits it's "not a prime time show"**

times controversial shows. The fear induced in advertisers not only by mass petitioners but in some cases by isolated individuals has caused many major advertisers to pull commercials from both TV and radio. On April 13, 1989 Pan Am yanked its ads off one U.S. radio station after just one person — a legal secretary — made one brief phone call to the firm objecting to sponsorship of an allegedly sexist program.

The end-run approach is effective, as

Robinson's attention-getting media blitz has demonstrated thus far. Robinson's course of action is more easily understood if his options — or effective lack thereof — are also considered.

CHCH-TV rightly points out that it adheres to the Canadian Association of Broadcasters Voluntary Code regarding Violence in Television Programming. But the code has one big drawback when it comes to purging Freddy from London's airwaves. As the code's own preface states, "it needs to be remembered that broadcasting is international in scope. Therefore, these guidelines can have little or no effect upon broadcast signals or programs available in Canada which originate in another country or jurisdiction.

As Bill Allen of the Canadian Cable Television Association says, Canadian cable companies legitimately play no role in determining the content of cable signals: "When it's a broadcasting signal like CHCH-TV or CBC or any of the others, by regulation cable companies are not allowed to change or delete or do anything to the programming that is on that channel."

As for Ernest Robinson, he seems pleased with the results thus far. He says that if we can start with shows like *Freddy's Nightmares* and get it off the air, it will be a first step to reigning in other offenders. ■

*Keith Risler is a London-based freelance writer.*



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The MTR-100's auto-alignment saves you hours of time by eliminating constant tweaking and re-tweaking between sessions.

that this new way will save you hours spent in non-productive time, the analog choice begins to make even more sense. You see, the MTR-100 features full Auto-Alignment that allows total recalibration of the record and reproduce electronics. This means you can compensate for different tapes in a *fraction* of the time that it previously took, and your studio is not bogged down with constant tweaking and re-tweaking between sessions.

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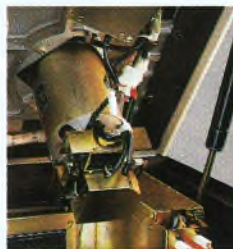
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# UPGRADING CKCO

Kitchener station spends big bucks going state-of-the-art

by Keith Risler

**I**t may be the shape of things to come, but you'd never know by looking that CKCO-TV's brand new Ampex ACR-225 "cart system" presages a new era in highly-automated digital television technology.

Capable of managing and loading thousands of digitally recorded commercial spots, automatically executing play lists, managing a station's computerized database of commercials, and serving as an automated production machine, the station's ACR-225 is the very first of its kind in Canada. And yet it's just one part of CKCO-TV's multi-phased adoption of digital recording and editing technology.

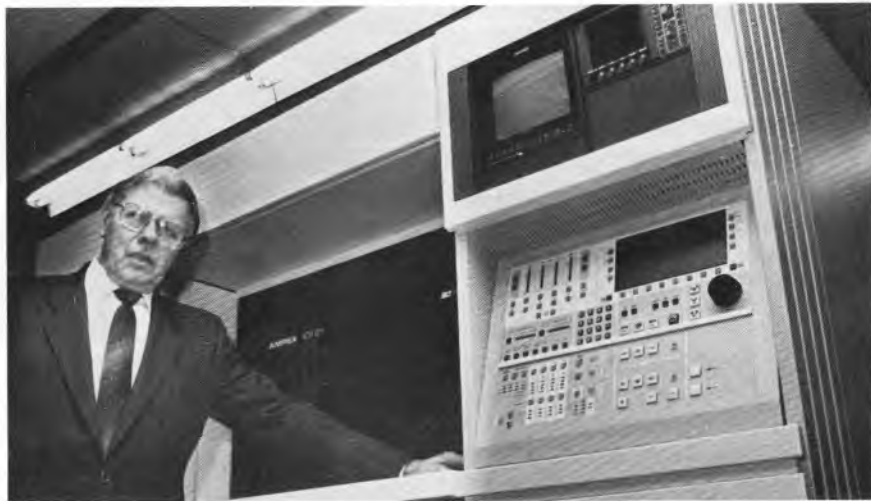
As production and operations director George Moskal says, the decision to go digital was made in face of the proliferation of high-quality TV signals. "Everything is coming in that much more clearly. The picture on everything is that much better and everybody is striving to get the best possible quality," says Moskal in explaining why CKCO-TV began its quest for the clearest, highest quality picture.

Staying ahead of traditional competitors was part of the motivation, but the effort is also driven by other intruders into the traditional TV marketplace.

"The other thing that is happening," muses Moskal, "is that satellites are out there now. They are feeding better quality. You've got pay TV as well as other sources there that are all feeding a quality picture now, and broadcasters have to keep up with it. There's no getting around that, and we feel D-2 is part of the whole system, as far as obtaining the best possible quality at low cost."

Traditional VTR units are the technological back-bone of television, since most programming ends up on tape, even if only for archival purposes. The major problem with traditional NTSC-standard analog VTR systems is that signal quality is not maintained between successive generations of the signal. Each time a tape is edited onto another — a process that's essential in entertainment, news and commercial programming — some signal quality is lost.

But now affordable D-2 digital videotape machines have arrived, and for CKCO-TV they initially comprise the ACR-225 (with four internal recorder/player assemblies all running under computer control), and six Sony DVR-10 units. The six Sonys function much like con-



Production and operations manager George Moskal proudly shows off new digital equipment Photo by Keith Risler

ventional three-quarter inch VTR's, but they record and edit in purely digital form. Edits between DVR units lose no signal quality, and the final product can also be output in conventional analog form if need be. The technology has been acquired at a cost of over \$1 million — about a half million for the six Sonys and another half million for the Ampex ACR-225.

As to the choice of the D-2 format, Moskal stresses it was a question of quality versus cost.

"When we looked at various formats, what we saw was that the best possible quality out there was digital. D-1, as far as we were concerned, was just too costly as a component unit. And when Ampex originally came out with the prototype of the ACR-225 we saw exactly what digital was going to look like and that was it."

D-2 was the only choice for CKCO-TV in maintaining picture quality throughout the video production process. "We found that looking at D-2, and editing in digital format, the quality was still there. You really could not see the difference after quite a few generations," Moskal adds that for news production, the station prefers to go no further than two generations on its analog VTRs, but that D-2 is capable of being copied twenty times with no perceivable loss in picture quality. Essentially, CKCO-TV's Sony DVRs, used in conjunction with the ACR-225, will permit the station to broadcast commercial messages, news footage and even half-hour TV shows with a level of picture

quality limited only by the quality of the original footage.

"We would expect to let the (advertising) agencies be aware that they can send in their best possible tape and we will have that quality on the air for them," says Moskal. "Hopefully, some of them will also do their post-production in the D-2 format, so their final product is on digital tape. We're looking very closely at that."

If D-2 amounts to a dream come true for producers, it is the capabilities built into D-2 technology that render it the technology of choice for CKCO-TV.

The Ampex ACR-225 runs under computer control, featuring its own keyboard and display screen. It can be and is being controlled at CKCO-TV by an 80386-class IBM-compatible personal computer system.

Internally, the ACR-225 maintains its own database of tapes and their contents. Each tape cassette is tracked by its own unique bar code, and when one of the 256 tape slots are filled, the unit's robotic arm reads and catalogs all the tapes by scanning these bar codes. This takes just thirty seconds. It then tracks the contents of each 30-minute tape (filled with up to 60 30-second spots), by referencing the database. The database tracks each distinct item on a tape via time codes.

Moskal says that it's possible to pre-assemble an entire program on floppy disk referencing the desired tapes and time codes, inserting the disparate tapes containing the unedited footage into the

ACR-225's tape rack, and then instructing the ACR-225 to automatically assemble the entire production — with no loss of signal quality relative to the original footage.

Each event on each tape is separately tracked by the ACR-225's database. Play lists for commercial spots can be quickly accessed, and added to via a floppy disk or data input by another computer through an RS-232 serial interface. Play lists are simply selected from the database menu and executed.

The actual playback of program sequences, be they commercials, news stories or half-hour program segments, is done by up to four internally mounted recorder/players. With four units in place, the system can run spots at seven-second intervals as the robotic arm — actually a mundane looking box-like contraption that moves up, down and sideways across the 256 tape grid (which looks like a post-office sorting wicket) — quickly loads and unloads the desired tapes.

The ACR-225 checks the play list, determines if all cassettes needed are present in the machine, and will even verify that the station has the spot in question in its files. It does this all on its own, and warns if there are any such problems with the desired play list.

What, you will ask, does the ACR-225 do if two spots on one tape must run back to back, but are not so arranged on the tape? It's here that Ampex's computerized control really pays off. The ACR-225 resolves the problem by automatically generating a separate copy of the conflicting spot on one of the other recorder/players, or alternatively recording the entire conflicting break on a separate tape.

As for the Sony DVR-10s, they are a perfect substitute for traditional analog VTRs. They look somewhat like Sony's traditional machines, and like the ACR-225, can take input from and direct their output to any analog VTR system. Of course all edits between Sony D-2 DVRs are purely digital, resulting in an edited product equal in quality to the unedited footage. The inter-system compatibility advantage also played a key role in CKCO-TV's choice of D-2 over the much more expensive D-1 technology.

The initial D-2 purchases comprise only the first phase of CKCO-TV's adoption of digital technology. Moskal agrees that going digital is superficially more costly than upgrading with analog tape equipment. But he says digital is economically feasible when considered in the broad context of a station's global production requirements — that is, in terms of the need to produce and edit news, manage and air high-quality commercial spots, and maintain signal quality across all of the visual elements that make up the end product known as CKCO-TV.

"We expect to be able to use them (the Sony DVRs) for commercial productions," adds Moskal in stressing one of the ways CKCO-TV will make D-2 pay. "I expect very shortly they will be in our mobile, so

that we can again take the tapes right from our mobile to the edit suites and again edit digitally," Moskal says.

Digital camcorders and integrated digital graphics systems will eventually round out the start-to-finish digital capabilities of CKCO-TV. Already, the station's Dubner paint system generates D-2-compatible art that can feed directly into either the Sony DVRs or the ACR-225.

"We are starting with recorders and we will end up with some sort of camcorders and source machines in the edit suites," concludes Moskal. "That will be another phase. At the moment we are looking very closely to see what is out there as far as camcorders or portable recorders go

that may possibly be in the digital format, such that we could actually shoot in digital and actually keep everything in digital format right until it goes to air."

As for how the rest of the industry will react to digital technology, George Moskal feels its adoption is virtually inevitable. "I think eventually you're going to find that people will be going into digital. It is the coming format of the future. You will find fewer and fewer one-inch machines. The ultimate is to be able to look at your first generation and your edited version and say there's really no difference between the quality of both." ■

*Keith Risler is a freelance writer based in London, Ont.*

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them on again in different places without the signal losses and degradation that's typical of analog.

The decision to go all digital has already paid dividends for Phoenix. Fully one-third of the production of radio and television commercials in Vancouver is now completed at Phoenix Recorders Inc. The studio also counts among its recent credits the John Denver album "Higher Ground", produced by Roger Nichols (Steely Dan, Toto, Donald Fagen). Grammy award nominee Lee Holdridge ("I'll Take Manhattan, Splash") produced the title track, which will be featured (was featured) in the recent TV special "Higher Ground" in which Denver stars.

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# VIDEO INDUSTRY WEATHERS CHANGE

by James Careless

It's been a tricky year for the Canadian video production industry. Why? Well, the answer depends on which sector is surveyed. If it's theatrical/broadcast, the problem is money — or the lack of money, that is. But, if it's corporate, the problem isn't money, but an ever-increasing number of competitors — especially 'garage operators': one-and-two-person shops that can and do underbid established companies.

Focussing on theatrical, Robert Lantos, co-chairman of Alliance Entertainment Corporation, pinpoints his industry's chief concern. As he puts it, "Funding is the beginning and end of every project."

Lantos has done enough work in film and television to know what he's talking about. On the movie side, Alliance has produced *Quest for Fire*, *Atlantic City*, and *Joshua Then and Now*. As for television, its credits include *Night Heat* (CBS, CTV) and the mini-series *Sword of Gideon* (HBO, CTV). The company is also heavily into program distribution.



Lantos: Few risk-taking private investors

What has made funding more difficult is the modification (some might say 'decimation') of the Capital Cost Allowance (CCA) by finance minister Michael Wilson. Under his last budget (no, not the latest one), this tax writeoff for Canadian productions went from 100 percent over two years to 15 percent for the first year, and then 30 percent of the declining balance in succeeding years.

In real English, here's what this means: Instead of writing off \$1,000,000 over two years, only \$150,000 is written off in the first, leaving a balance of \$850,000. In year two, 30 percent of this \$850,000 can be written off — that's \$255,000. And so on, for years and years. By year 10, there's still \$49,000 left to write off. Hardly the sort of 'quick return' investment that the CCA used to be, and hardly the sort of incentive to lure investors.

What makes it worse, according to Lantos, is that "There haven't been any private investors in Canada available for many, many years, in any production, who take actual risk. Private money was available in the combination of guarantee income on the project, plus tax benefits . . . enough to make the deal profitable going in. No exceptions to this."

In the past, this meant that 80 percent of project costs would have to be covered by program presales. This combined with the CCA, would make any project profitable for investors coming in to cover the last 20 percent.

But now, thanks to Wilson's cuts, "instead of 80 percent in presales, the number may well be 90 or 95. At one point it may not be worth bothering, and you might as well go for 100 percent and keep all the profits for oneself."

In short, says Lantos, "The way the disappearance of the Capital Cost Allowance impacts is that it puts greater pressure on the producer to presell his product, not at the level of 80 percent, but for 100 percent."

In this way, then, Canadian film and television ceases to be a safe investment. So the money stops rolling in. This, in a nutshell, is the dilemma that Alliance and other producers are facing.

However, Lantos and his cohorts don't intend to roll over and die. They used the CCA to build their industry. Now they believe they're strong enough to keep going despite the lack of tax breaks.

In Alliance's case, the answer is to draw funds both from its own resources, and from the companies it's worked for in the past. Companies in the States, for example. And Europe, says Lantos. "Europe is as important as the U.S.; in some cases, more so."

One thing that Lantos isn't doing is running to Telefilm Canada for extra funds. Thanks to the changes in the CCA, everybody's doing that, with varying degrees of success. "Projects that would

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not have otherwise gone to Telefilm, or would have gone for a small percentage of their production budget, are now lined up outside of Telefilm's door. Thus, the demand far exceeds the supply, and many of them will not get made. And that is the consequence of the disappearing Capital Cost Allowance," explains Lantos.

Of course, not everybody has huge resources to draw on — including many private broadcasters.

Such is the case for CanWest Broadcasting, the production arm of Izzy Asper's CanWest group of companies. Although it does do co-production work, CanWest hasn't made much use of outside investment to fund its projects. Hence the reduc-

tion of the CCA doesn't really hurt the company, because it never really helped in the first place.

But CanWest can't count on Telefilm for help either, because the fund aids independent producers, not broadcasters. Because of this, CanWest is caught between a rock and a hard place, according to president Don Brinton. "We, as private broadcasters, are really having quite a bit of trouble trying to figure out how we're going to respond to what the CRTC wants us to do, which is more and better Canadiana . . . and, at the same time, satisfy the mandate that Telefilm perceives that it has — that is, to provide some funding for improved Canadian product

to be aired by the broadcasters, but not to be invested in by the broadcasters."

Whether or not this is fair is up for debate. After all, CanWest is part of a company with substantial assets — four stations, plus 62 percent of Global.

But, given the cost of quality productions and the fact that CanWest is creating Canadian content, it seems reasonable that they be eligible for funding. After all, CanWest's projects aren't just less expensive programs like *Kidstreet*, a children's quiz show, but costly dramas as well. (In fact one of their feature dramas, *Tramp at the Door*, has already been aired on CBC and the Disney cable channel in the States.)

In short, here's a private broadcaster who uses its facilities for more than news, weather, and the obligatory CRTC local content . . . and yet can't get government investment.

Small wonder Brinton isn't happy with Telefilm. "In essence what they're saying is, 'You guys are broadcasters? You (might as well be) in some other country altogether.'"

Unfortunately, as Lantos pointed out, Telefilm is already having trouble meeting the needs of its existing mandate. This, combined with the Tories' passion for deficit-slashing, suggests that Brinton's concerns won't be answered in the near future, if at all.

Meanwhile, on the corporate side, the issue isn't the CCA or Telefilm. That's because this industry doesn't produce shows, but products made-to-order. Once the sale is made, it's made, just like a house or car or burger.

Although there are no hard figures, companies contacted by *Broadcaster* were by and large bullish about the corporate video markets.

The reason for the optimism is clear: prospective clients are becoming more video-oriented. As Michael Vaughan, president of Tier One Communications, points out, videos are becoming the selling tool of the '90s. "When you're trying to sell a deal to a big company . . . when a decision has to go to the level of Lee Iacocca . . . he doesn't have time to come and inspect facilities, and tour production plants, and so on. But he will say 'show it to me on video'. And you can reach people like that. So it's requests coming down from that level to our clients that gets translated into videos here."

This is a radical departure from the past, according to Gerry Bascombe, president of The Bascombe Group, which produces corporate videos for Northern Telecom and Dow Chemical, who says a lot has changed since he began in 1971. "(Back then) it was a total educational process first, before you could even sell it."

Bascombe adds, "At that point you'd go out and call on prospective clients at their place of business. And it was quite rare to find a playback set in the office. Now it's quite rare if they don't have one."

This video-awareness is a double-edged

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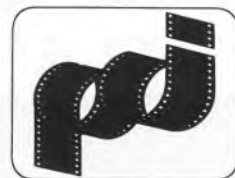
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sword, however. Potential clients are aware of corporate video, says Bascombe, but they don't know who's good and who's bad — who's reputable and who's little more than a nameplate and a secondhand Betacam.

This problem, combined with the proliferation of small bare-bones competitors, is making life difficult for established people like Bascombe. "I think one of the big dangers that I face . . . is that there are a lot of what I term 'garage operators' around . . . And, consequently, when you get into a proposal situation, they can come in at eight grand, and you're sitting there at 32.5 (thousand). They may say that price

is not a major factor, but it still is. It makes it a very difficult situation unless the person you're speaking to in that company really knows the video field well, and can tell who's a quality operator, and who's not." Unfortunately, as Bascombe says, few outside the actual production industry itself know that sort of thing.

Still, when it comes to assessing the big picture, Bascombe says the corporate industry is in "a pretty solid growth pattern." Tier One's Vaughan echoes this by noting, "At this stage it would be very difficult for us to take on any major new clients. We're full."

As for the theatrical/broadcast side, all

is not doom and gloom. At least not for Alliance, according to Lantos. "The last year has been the best year we've ever had. We did 70 million dollars of new productions. We created a new television series, *Bordertown*, which is the highest-rated show on cable in the United States."

As for the industry itself, in the wake of Michael Wilson?

On this, Lantos is cautiously optimistic. "Are we going to be taking quantum leaps in the volume of production . . . ? I think the answer is, in the foreseeable future, probably not."

But, he hastens to add, "Will the industry collapse? Definitely not." ■

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## LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR:

In reply to Brendan Connor's article, *Daybreak Deejays*, featured in the March issue of *Broadcaster* . . .

"In the wilds of Eastern Nova Scotia, lives a very rare bird. It was thought she didn't exist, but she has been spotted migrating 40 miles, very early in the mornings. She's called, "The Morning M'am."

Yes, I really do exist. And it saddened me to read that I'm such an "odd bird" in the radio world. Are we still living in the broadcasting stone age?

I recently attended the MIC 6 Conference in Toronto, which was sponsored by *The Record*, and though I looked far and wide among the more than eight hundred radio personnel attending, I never did find another "Morning M'am."

Thank God for the foresight, attitude and encouragement of my GM Dave MacLean, and PD Gus MacKinnon at CJFX radio. We've been around for over 46 years, and it's only in the last couple of years that women have been showing up regularly on our air waves. The response has been very good.

Yes, I know we're small by Toronto standards, but we are an institution in Eastern Nova Scotia; in some of our out-lying areas, we're all they have. And our listeners have reacted very positively to the "Morning M'am."

I heartily agree with Wally Crouter/CFRB Toronto, that, "a positive on-air attitude combined with as much visibility as possible in the coverage area," is the secret to success.

Mr. Connor, please help me get the message across to radio management, as well as hopeful "Morning M'am's" across Canada, that the time has come for women deejays to break out of their shells, and help make the "odd bird morning m'am" a more familiar sight, (or sound)!

Marilyn Sceles,

The "Morning M'am" CJFX Radio



# LEGAL BULLETS

by Jonathan Festinger

*Truth is not only violated by falsehood, it may be outraged by silence.*

Henri Amiel,  
Swiss Philosopher

Recently, government officials and many members of the public had yet another opportunity to indulge in a favorite past-time, playing "shoot the messenger." The opportunity was provided by Doug Small and Global Television, who had a summary of the Federal Budget leaked to them.

As always seems to happen when the mighty are threatened, blame is shifted onto the media in an attempt to deflect the responsibility of government. There is what can only be described as overwhelming evidence that politicians can be trusted primarily to blame others and save their own necks. The attacks usually follow a pattern, starting with alleging breaches of the criminal law by the reporter in question. The game then becomes very predictable rantings on the subject of journalistic ethics.

Let's take a closer look at these issues with the benefit of hindsight. First, did Global's Ottawa bureau chief, Doug Small, break the law? The answer is almost certainly not. Small could be convicted of possession of stolen property under the Criminal Code if (1) he had possession of

the budget materials and (2) he knew those materials had been obtained through a breach of trust by a public officer. It is most unlikely Small could be convicted because he apparently never knew for certain the identity of the man who provided the document.

Now let us turn our attention to that unspeakably vague notion — journalistic ethics. The job of journalists is simple: withhold information until "official moments." The contents of the budget are indisputably a matter of public interest. If someone had phoned me two days before the budget was to be released and asked if I was interested in its contents, I would have said "yes" and so would many Canadians. The dangers of broadcasters or newspapers withholding information from the public are well illustrated by the story of the New York Times and the Bay of Pigs Invasion.

According to Gay Talese's book *The Kingdom and the Power*, the Times had advance knowledge of the invasion of Cuba. They were going to run the story prominently on the front page a day or two before the invasion. The story was killed by the publisher at the Times, Orvil Dryfoos, presumably for "ethical" reasons. The well known result was that the invasion proceeded and was a disaster. Later, President John Kennedy speculated that had the Times lived up to its mandate and published the story, the invasion would

have been called off and many lives would have been saved.

The point is that it must not be up to journalists to determine what information should not be communicated to the public. I do not want journalists making decisions about what I am entitled to know, especially if they seek to withhold information from me based on undefined and vague principles based on the public good. The notion of ethics in journalism has been misunderstood by those who define it as self-censorship. Those people should be asked to provide a list of what other information they do not want to be told.

If Global did anything wrong, it was that it did not broadcast the contents of the budget immediately. Instead they announced to the Canadian public that Global had the information, but they did not see fit to provide us with the contents of the Budget Brief until much later. If Global knows something it doesn't see fit to share with its viewers, that damages the credibility of their news. As a viewer I must believe that the reporter is working for me, not for his interpretation of what is good for me.

Where does all this leave us? In the recent and brilliant book titled *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of Mass Media*, Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky argued that the media "served to mobilize support for the special interests that dominate the state and private activity, and that their choices, emphasis, and omissions can often be understood best, and sometimes with striking clarity and insight, by analysis of them in such terms. (We) suggest that these choices, emphasis and omissions are in part due to self-censorship and constraints by 'governmental centres of power'. In analyzing how the government of the day reacted to Global's broadcast, it is easy to realize how close to the truth Herman and Chomsky probably are. ■

*Jon Festinger practices law with Owen, Bird in Vancouver.*



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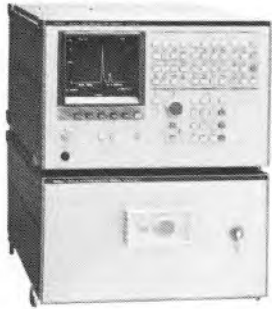
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# NEW PRODUCTS



A new spectrum analyzer from Anritsu, the MS9601A, delivers resolution of 100 MHz, allowing light spectrum to be measured at high modulation rates. Its automatic alignment allows for finesse adjustment, and its peak search function returns a waveform to the screen with a one-key command, even if the waveform should disappear because of frequency drift. The MS9601A also uses a connector for optical input, which eliminates light-axis adjustments.

For more information contact Anritsu America Inc., 15 Thorton Road, Oakland, NJ 07436 or circle 36 on reader service card.

Sony has introduced a new analog multitrack recorder, the APR-24, featuring a 16-bit micro-processor that integrates transport, audio and synchronization control. A newly designed tape transport utilizing a four-inch, deep-webbed casting, additional precision rollers and tape tensioning arms, provides accurate track count in shuttle mode, and improves tape handling. Audio alignment is achieved through a microprocessor assisted design, and can reduce time needed for daily setup. It also comes equipped with a remote control which allows user-friendly

operation, such as transport control functions that incorporate a jog shuttle wheel, common to most video recorders. Additional features include audio monitoring and synchronizer control functions.

For more information contact Sony of Canada, 411 Gordon Baker Road, Willowdale, Ont. M2H 2S6 or circle 37 on reader service card.

A new television audio console from Orion Research utilizes a type of architecture in which the electronics for audio mixing are located in the rack room and the all-digital RS-232 remote control head could be located in an audio booth up to two kilometres away. Suitable for a studio environment where cabling could be simplified to the production truck where control area space is at a premium, the Newsmaker console features modular construction and a disk-based recall system for instant storage, recall and reset of up to 32 on-line files. Available in input configurations of up to 32 mixing channels utilizing P&G faders with a range of options, including seven band equalizers, ESAM-I or II video editor interfaces, the console is backed with a two-year warranty and 24-hour service support.

For more information contact Acura Technology Group, 100 Leek Crescent, Unit 6, Richmond Hill, Ont. L4B 3E6 or circle 38 on reader service card.

The BMI power line monitor GS-1, known as the Glitch Sentry, provides electrical monitoring for several voltage conditions, including power failure, high line voltage, high frequency noise, voltage drop, voltage spike and low line voltage. It also provides monitoring for mini-computer systems and radio and television equipment. Controls for the BMI-

GS-1 include self-test, alarm and eight threshold adjustment trim controls.

For more information contact Duncan Instruments, 121 Milvan Drive, Toronto, Ont. M9L 1Z8 or circle 39 on reader service card.

VGX Inc. has developed the D2500 digital switcher for the post-production industry. Featuring 16-bit processing for total transparency and multiplex key layers with priority control, complex sequences and mattes can be designed and replayed using the advanced sequence automation memory. Integrated digital effects can be achieved with the digital processing loop.

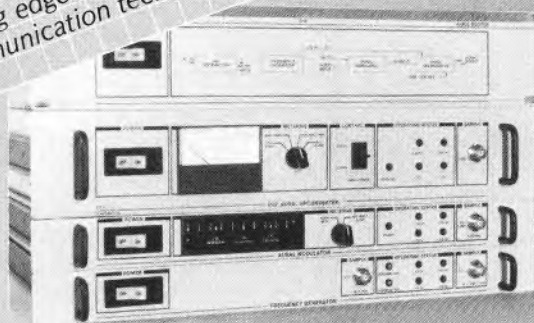
For more information contact Corvis Communications Inc., 620 Alden Rd., Unit 108, Markham, Ont. L3R 9R7 or circle 40 on reader service card.



The TCA-1 SMPTE time code amplifier has been introduced by La Rue Professional Systems, and features a low noise balanced input stage, adjustable input gain, selectable time code filter, and compensating balanced/unbalanced output. It is packaged in a compact aluminum housing, and is connected using quarter-inch tip/ring/sleeve plugs, for convenient use.

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Sennheiser has introduced the HD 25 headphone set for professional usage. The HD 25 are closed dynamic headphones with a maximum sensitivity of 124 dB, attenuation of ambient noise and a split headband for comfort. They have a frequency response of between 30 to 16,000 Hz, power handling capability of .1 W and a THD of .5 percent.

For more information contact TC Electronics Canada Ltd., 87 Brunswick Blvd., Montreal, Que. H9B 2J5 or circle 42 on reader service card.

Panasonic Audio Video Systems Group has introduced an automatic editing controller with full SMPTE time code capability for frame accurate edits. The AG-A800 can operate up to three VCRs in a multi-unit configuration and is capable of providing either Panasonic parallel control or RS-422 serial control. It can edit in or between VHS, S-VHS, three-quarter inch or MII format machines and has an internal memory that can handle up to 128 edit points. This memory function allows the building of complex edit programs and continuous automatic editing sequences.

For more information contact Matsushita Electric of Canada Ltd., 5770 Ambler Dr., Mississauga, Ont. L4W 2T3 or circle 43 on reader service card.

Tectan's new Model 450 is a frequency agile, synthesized FM subcarrier system designed specifically for narrow band multi-channel program audio applications. Each unit contains two independent transmitters or receivers and each channel has its own synthesizer to operate from 1MHz to 9.9MHz in 10 KHz steps. The 450 features a redesigned and improved noise reduction system developed from the Tectan 3:1 compander. The new version offers very low distortion and a wide dynamic range.

For more information contact Tectan Inc., P.O. Box 271872, Concord, CA 94527 or circle 44 on reader service card.

DGH Communications is now distributing the hand-held, battery-operated VVM digital video voltmeter, made by FM Systems Inc. The product measures sync pulse, picture and composite video amplitude in volts peak-to-peak and I.R.E. units in a terminated or loop-through basis. The digital display measures up to 1.99 volts or 199 I.R.E. units so that with a video signal at one volt peak-to-peak, the meter can display the video level in one percent steps or single I.R.E. unit steps. This enables the operator to set video levels more accurately with the VVM than is possible with an oscilloscope or waveform monitor, says FM.

For more information contact DGH Communications Systems Ltd., 3761-5 Victoria Park Ave., Scarborough, Ont. M1W 3S2 or circle 45 on reader service card.

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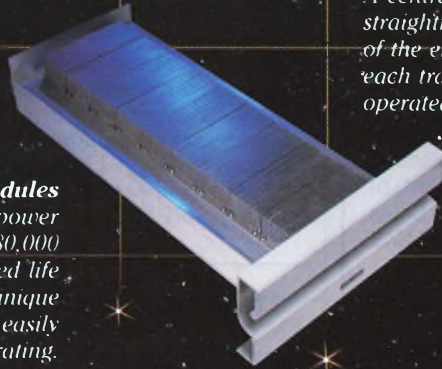
Harris' revolutionary 1 kW through 60 kW **Platinum Series™** VHF solid-state transmitters look different because they *are* different. Quite simply, these rugged, modular transmitters provide unequalled system redundancy to keep your station on the air.

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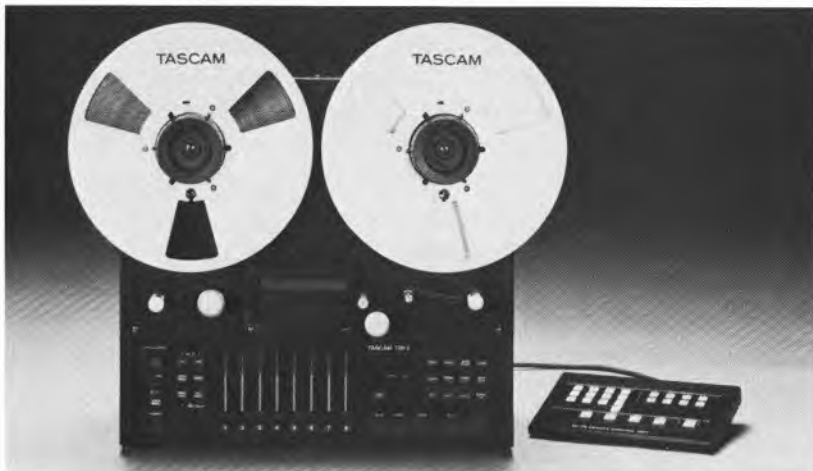
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of putting eight different keys from six different sources on the screen at one time. Each of the eight keys has its own controls for key level, softness, masking, invert, matte color, bordering and border edge intensity. All keys are linear and each

can be bordered independently.

For more information contact Ross Video Ltd., P.O. Box 220, 500 John St., Iroquois, Ont. K0E 1K0 or circle 46 on reader service card.



The new Tascam TSR-8 one-half inch 8-track open reel recorder is the Tascam 38 deck and offers many more production features. Included amongst these are an on-board DBX type 1 noise reduction system, serial and parallel ports for control via MIDI, SMPTE or computer-based syn-

chronizers and advanced monitoring capabilities. Tascam says the TSR-8 will be found anywhere heavy duty use and long term reliability are priorities.

For more information contact Teac Canada Ltd., 340 Brunel Rd., Mississauga, Ont. L4Z 2C2 or circle 47 on reader service card.

The new Schoeps VMS52UB and VMS32UB combine the features of a stereo microphone pre-amplifier, an MS-matrix and a power supply unit for phantom powered condenser mics. It permits studio condenser mics to be used in conjunction with equipment that does not offer microphone inputs such as most DAT and PCM devices. Gain of the pre-amp unit can be switched to 20 or 40 dB and the amplified signal is available at the rear panel. The matrix allows stereo recordings with MS-microphone assemblies and with its line inputs, the matrix can also be used for post-production MS-decoding.

For more information contact Elnova Professional Electronics Ltd., 325 Clement St. W., Lasalle, Que. H8R 4B4 or circle 48 on reader service card.

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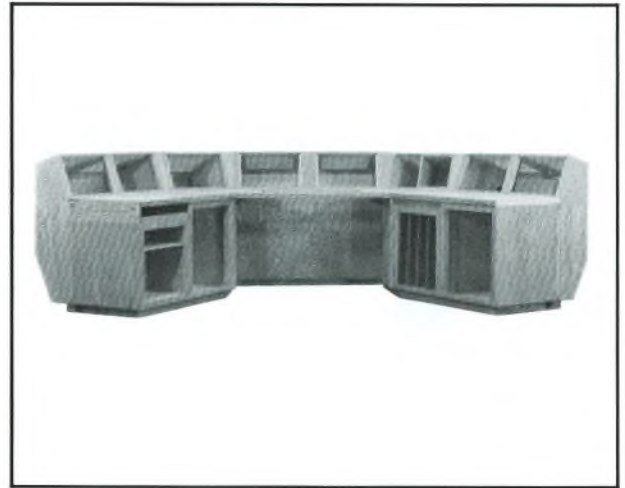
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