

The Public Eye. FRANK W. PEERS. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979. xvi, 459 p. ISBN 0 8020 5436 6 \$25.00

The Public Eye is a scholarly examination of the relationship between government and broadcasting in Canada from the beginning of television service in 1952 to the Broadcasting Act of 1968. The central question during this period was the place and future of privately owned stations in a broadcasting system which had been designed to serve national objectives and, accordingly, was dominated and regulated by a public agency, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. In his comprehensive, meticulously documented study, Frank W. Peers, a former CBC employee, has surveyed how in these years several public inquiries, political influence, and relentless pressure from private broadcasters contributed to government policy decisions that fundamentally altered the structure of Canadian broadcasting by eliminating the hegemony of CBC control.

The turning point was the Broadcasting Act of 1958, which placed both private and public services under a new body, the Board of Broadcast Governors. In so doing, the Act removed from the CBC regulatory functions its own Board of Governors had exercised over broadcasting, including the recommendation to the government of licenses for new stations. It also made the CBC dependent upon an annual vote of funds by Parliament. The predominance of the CBC diminished further in the next few years as private companies gained second television stations in cities where previously the CBC had enjoyed exclusive rights. The formation of the rival CTV network of private stations followed soon afterwards. The Canadian broadcasting system was being transformed by government action into two parallel services, private and public, with the commercial private stations achieving remarkable gains as an alternative to the CBC.

The policy shift represented by the 1958 Act and the subsequent encouragement of private broadcasting was consistent with the Progressive Conservative Party's traditional distrust of the CBC. Prime Minister Diefenbaker had himself been a long-time proponent of a regulatory board for broadcasting separate from the CBC Board of Governors. Peers describes how, in winning support for the broadcasting bill, the government left the impression that it was following the recommendations made in 1957 by the Royal Commission on Broadcasting chaired by Robert M. Fowler although, in fact, the Fowler Report had reached quite different conclusions on the regulatory board required and on CBC funding.

The Liberal Party, which had historically championed the cause of a dominant, public broadcasting system, argued fruitlessly against the 1958 Act. Yet, when they returned to power five years later, the Liberals found it impossible to reverse the changes that had occurred to broadcasting. Peers presents convincing reasons for this: the Pearson government's minority situation in the House, the difficulty of eliminating the by then established Board of Broadcast Governors, and the influence of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters, representing private operators whose president, Don Jamieson, had close connections with the Liberal Party. In 1966, after another inquiry headed by Robert Fowler, the government issued a white paper on broadcasting, and two years later the Broadcasting Act of 1968 was passed, which replaced the Board of Broadcast Governors with the similar, but more powerful, Canadian Radio-Television Commission. The new policy direction initiated in 1958 had been confirmed and still endures today.

The Public Eye demonstrates the use which can be made of public records in the writing of recent history. Beyond government publications, the book relies heavily upon three relatively untapped sources: records of various public inquiries investigating Canadian broadcasting in the Public Archives of Canada, documents in the CRTC library, and the archives of the CBC Historical Section. Peers has also talked to nearly all the major participants in the events he describes and he has brought to light a manuscript which, if it is not now in a repository, should be—the unpublished memoirs of the former chairman

of the Board of Broadcast Governors, Andrew Stewart.

The book's detailed examination of broadcasting policy is of obvious interest to students of both public administration and communications. However, it has a wider importance. Peers describes the evolution of Canadian broadcasting from a public service to a system increasingly concerned with commercial gain. At the end of this study, he questions whether the broadcasting structures and policies as they have developed in Canada are adequate to meet the needs of the 1980s. As he notes, in an age on the threshold of pay-TV, video recordings, and the possibility of international satellite penetration, all potential threats to Canadian expression, we must urgently decide which broadcasting tradition, the public or private eye, best serves the national interest and the citizen.

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The Shaping of Peace: Canada and the Search for World Order, 1943-1957.

Volume 1. JOHN W. HOLMES Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979. xvi, 340 p. ISBN 0 8020 5461 7 \$25.00.

Not long ago an American writer wrote a study about the post-World War II decade which he called *The Best Years*. For us too, those years present an ever more agreeable face. There were, of course, many warts: the anti-communist zeal, the blandness of popular culture, and a self-confidence about our values that seemed so arrogant to those who did not share them. And yet our choices were clearer, our ends worthier, and our dreams much fresher than today. For a Canadian diplomat like John Holmes, the post-war period brought unique opportunities to make a better world. Unlike Canadian diplomats of the sixties and seventies, Holmes and his colleagues believed that they could affect international decisions and that what they were doing had the support of their countrymen politicians. Canadians knew that they could not ignore what happened beyond our borders. This feeling did not derive simply from bad memories of the past but also from an awareness of the new forces and dangers in international affairs. Canada thus joined enthusiastically in what Holmes calls the shaping of peace and the search for world order.

Holmes has not written a memoir (the first person almost disappears after the preface), but this is a book that does reflect his wide experience and his deep knowledge of diplomatic practice. He has also checked his memory and broadened his perspective by consulting diplomatic records of the period. The Department of External Affairs records were opened to him, and these were the major source for this study; but, as Holmes, with characteristic candour, admits, "I have graciously left to scholars a considerable range of records unexamined." These unexamined records include the Pearson, St. Laurent and King papers as well as those of more minor actors of the period. Holmes also has not consulted British or American archives which hold many documents illuminating those nations' policies towards Canada. What he has used very well are numerous theses, papers, and secondary works, most of them recent. As a result, his work generally reflects the latest research, and it seems unlikely that a person with Holmes' outlook would have written a different book if he had seen all the documents. Scholars may disagree with that outlook. They may also add new details on many of the issues discussed in this book, but I doubt that future scholars will suggest that Holmes misused or strained the evidence he had.

In his preface Holmes claims that his work was "enormously facilitated" by access to F. H. Soward's "A Survey of Canadian External Policy." He does not exaggerate. Soward wrote this survey in the early fifties for the Department of External Affairs to whose files