POLICY FORMATION IN THE ABC NEWS SERVICE, 1942-61

by

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VOLUME II

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CHAPTER 4
ILLUSTRATING THE NEWS

Hamilton and the Period of Stability

The period between Hamilton's appointment in August 1949 and 1961, the point at which this thesis ends, saw a marked decrease in direct political attempts to influence news policy and the end of dissension within the department. Journalists rallied around Hamilton as the focus of Departmental and professional loyalties. The period of divided loyalties between Cotton and Dixon was over, and the new Editor-in-Chief became the sole interpreter and arbiter on Commission news policy. With the decline of Dixon and the defeat of Labor at the polls in 1949, the old ties between Departmental staff and influential Labor politicians were broken. At last the Commission could look forward to a period when it could rely on its policies being carried out by the News Department without argument and without conflict of interest.

Hamilton in his first seven years, say eye to eye with Boyer and his Commissioners on matters concerning news. He impressed the Commission with his dedication, his ideas and the enthusiasm he generated among his staff. Soon so much confidence was placed in him, that all but the most routine news decisions disappeared from Commission agenda. He was left very much to his own devices, as Dixon had been many years before. The difference however was that Hamilton was committed to putting Commission policy into practice, whereas Dixon had been largely left to formulate his own approach to news-gathering.

Up to 1956, while working within Commission guidelines, he had imposed a new professional code, partly based on his long years with newspapers. It was marked by a distinct dislike for over-reliance on the Government and a more rigid concept of 'impartiality'. These met with
Commission approval. In fact, his standing could not have been higher. It came as a great shock therefore to Boyer and the Commission when, after television began in Australia in 1956, Hamilton became a tough and uncompromising opponent of their policy on TV news. Led by Boyer, the Commission decreed that there should be minimal illustration of the news on television, in order to preserve what they saw as essential news values. Hamilton and his TV news staff on the other hand saw this as an unwarranted slur on their professionalism and an impediment to their use of the facilities of the new medium to their best advantage.

The conflict lasted into the early 'sixties and proved a substantial barrier to the acquisition of new techniques of news reporting and production. Eventually the Commission had to tacitly admit that it had gone too far and that implementation of the programme based on its policy of minimal illustration was impossible. In this chapter, there will be an examination of the reasons for the eventual failure of this, the third major news policy initiative of the Commission since 1942 - the others being the newspaper agreements of 1943 and 1946 and the news policy Directive of 1946 - and also an evaluation of the influence of Hamilton.

The Attitude of the Liberal-Country Party Coalition

Although the Commission had satisfied itself that Hamilton was the outstanding candidate for the position of Editor-in-Chief and had further convinced itself of his suitability by discreet enquiries, there was still some nervousness about his capacity for meeting the challenge of his new position. As controversy had clung to the previous heads of

1. Oakley says "a 'leak' from the top was that my appointment [as Assistant Editor-in-Chief] was made as a 'steadying' influence in case too much change was attempted too soon". Letter from Oakley to the writer, 20 July 1976.
news like a shroud, its nervousness was perhaps understandable. Although news seemed to be far less a matter of contention with the Government than it had been, a new nervousness had developed with the ever-increasing possibility of a Labor defeat in the December election and the return of the Liberal-Country Party coalition under Menzies.

The Commission was uneasy about this prospect because it was unsure about the effect of its independent service on the Opposition parties. Since 1945 Boyer had embarked upon a policy designed to rid the news service of the suspicion that it was merely a mouthpiece of the Government, and therefore to avoid the possibility of a backlash from the conservative parties when they returned to power. He had fought a tough but successful campaign to wrest control of his News Department away from the Dixon-Hanlon-Amour group and enforce survivalist principles of 'impartiality'. He had survived the close scrutiny of the Labor Government while doing this which became finally convinced of his basic attachment to the principles of 'straight' independent news-gathering. But the attitude of the Opposition parties remained something of a mystery.

They had criticised the establishment of the independent service in 1946 for either the unwarranted cost or the fact that it would continue to be a tool of the Labor Party. Rumblings continued to be heard but rather infrequently from Opposition benches. In 1949 uncertainty continued about their attitude. On 10 February, Menzies's comment on the release of the Fitzgerald Committee report was negative but not hostile. He said: "I have yet to be convinced that the independent news service is anything but a duplication of existing news services". On 13 October, however, the Liberal member Howard Beale

2. A quotation from a news conference by Menzies 10 February 1949 contained in a telegram Commins to Moses of the same date. SP613, Box 3, 1/8/1.
made a savage attack alleging that the ABC news was not sufficiently 'objective, 'detached' and 'impartial'. Ministers' names occurred too frequently, he claimed, and "we have all noticed from time to time, this subtle influence in the broadcasts of news and other items, which give (sic) quite a Government slant". Beale said he did not blame the ABC, but the Labor Party "who are trying to destroy the impartiality of that organisation". This did not herald any Opposition campaign to disband the independent service and neither the ABC nor its news were issues during the election campaign. Instead, what little was said about broadcasting on hustings which were overwhelmingly dominated by the issue of communism, was related to the new Control Board. The Liberal-Country Parties would curb its powers.

If the Commission was uncertain about the future of its news service under Menzies, some of its news staff were very worried. Harris noted this. He reported: "In a number of cases, efficient journalists have expressed doubt to me as to the security of their positions, particularly if political changes took place". He consequently urged that state News Editors should be able to join the permanent staff so that they would be spared the worry of possible sacking. The Commission however was consistent in its refusal to do this and they, like all working journalists in the ABC, remained members of the temporary staff.

4. Ibid.
According to Dixon, the defeat of Labor "was a blow to all members of the news staff, who felt the new government might abolish the independent service". But the real threat to news had in reality arisen many months before the Liberal-Country Parties were voted into power, and it came not from politicians but from P.W. Nette, one of the two senior civil servants who were now sitting on the Commission as a result of the Broadcasting Act of 1948. Both Nette and Vanthoff attended their first Commission meeting in March 1949, a month after the Fitzgerald Committee Report had been tabled in the House. Boyer was concerned about the emphasis being given in the press to the adverse comments made about the news service, and the relative lack of space given to the Committee's favourable findings. The press had concentrated on the criticism when details of the report were leaked in March and April 1948. Now they did so once again. The Age commented in an editorial:

In Britain, the BBC does not find it necessary to employ large staffs of news gatherers, but makes use of established agencies. If the ABC were to work on similar lines, it could make large savings even if a sufficient number of competent people were retained to ensure that news lending itself to over-emphasis and distortion, from the political standpoint was fairly presented. The original mistake was the attempt to establish an organisation all over Australia, involving costs often grossly disproportionate to the value of the service to the Commission.

Boyer sought to put the record straight by prevailing on Cameron to release the ABC's comments on the Fitzgerald Report sent to him in March 1948. Cameron decided not to do so but the soothing remarks he made in explanation are a good indication of the lack of any real concern on the Government's part about the news service. He wrote:

7. See Chapter 3, p.292.
it seems to me that to re-open the matter at the present
time would be inopportune, since remarks of a contentious
nature might be invited and complaints levelled against the
Commission, which although not justified as a general rule,
would involve a good deal of time and effort in rebutting.¹⁰

Nette, the representative of the Treasury, was not so willing to
put aside the findings of the Committee. Armed with a copy of its
criticisms of the regional news in particular, he raised the question of
costs of the service at his first Commission meeting. He wanted a
complete week's bulletins to study to see if the service was worth the
money being spent on it. It was the beginning of a concentrated
campaign he was to wage over the next twelve months. Nette added a new
divisive element to the Commission at a time when it was struggling to
implement the reorganisation proposals of the Harris Report. According
to Boyer, he was never able to reconcile his duties towards the
Commission with his Treasury responsibilities. The Commission which
had now become so attached to the idea of regional news, and had
carefully ensured that it was not investigated by Harris, now found the
whole question reopened.

Because of Nette's insistence that regional news should be
justified, a draft questionnaire was drawn up for sending to country
listeners asking them what value they attached to the service. Nette
also asked for a breakdown of the costs of the regional service and for
details of the number of country-originated news items being used. On
the production of these statistics, which showed the heavy use being
made of country material, and also letters from a number of organisations
and people in appreciation of regional news, Nette agreed to have the new
Editor-in-Chief, Hamilton examine the question critically and suggest
improvements. He was to visit all regional stations concerned and make
his report as a matter of urgency. The idea of a listener survey was
dropped.

¹⁰ Cameron to Boyer, 11 March 1949, SP613, Box 3, 1/8/1.
This was the first major task to be undertaken by Hamilton and a great deal depended on it. To Boyer, regional news was perhaps the most valuable product of the ABC and epitomised his ideal of community service. To provide a country news service from sources other than those of the ABC would be to break down the principle of the Commission accepting responsibility for all the news it broadcast. To go to country newspapers once again for regional news would introduce the possibility of political dissatisfaction with reliance on press sources, as happened prior to 1946. Failure to put up a convincing case might find the Treasury demanding some kind of political action to curtail news activities. Nette's intervention raised all of these disquieting possibilities. Hamilton had to find the answers to prove himself worthy of the Commission's trust.

Hamilton was still compiling his report when the Chifley Government fell. This increased the pressure on him, because Nette was convinced that the Menzies Government was greatly concerned about ABC news. He had told Dixon: "If by any mischance there is a change of government, there will be a very close enquiry into the news service. I think we are heading for political trouble."11

Hamilton was a romantic. But behind the florid language of the many substantial reports he wrote during his career was a mind that could assemble facts and arguments precisely and convincingly. Oakley says: "I would say Hamilton's general mastery of detail, his ability to organise, impressed the Commission".12 The Commission had never seen reports like those of Hamilton. They were rhetorical, emotive, often moving into the world of fancy and over-exaggeration. They were frequently pompous. Yet their argument was almost invariably totally persuasive. His report on regional news was just what the Commission needed.

He had visited regional stations in New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania, where he had spoken to farmers, local officials, businessmen and newspapermen. He reported:

We are inclined to regard the regional news we give them as little news. In the larger scheme of things, as we see it, that is natural. But to them it is just news. The adjective has no place ... Little news. No! It is not little to them. I knew that, I hope, in theory. But I am grateful for being so completely reminded of the elementary truths of my business ... So, if we give our listeners to so-called little news of councils and crops, deaths and dances, we must recognise that is the news they want. That is their news. Disasters and plagues are generally remote from their daily lives. They live with their animals, their crops, their small shops, their roads and their schools.13

Hamilton argued that only the ABC was providing them with this service of news. The metropolitan press ignored country news by and large. The quality of country newspapers was variable and they frequently did not endeavour to a coverage beyond the town in which they were printed. Only the bigger towns could support a daily paper. Those who did subscribe to country papers outside the town frequently had to wait days for them to arrive because of infrequent mail services.

The ABC's regional news, on the other hand, helped defeat the isolation of country life, gave country people a vital place in the larger scheme of things outside their immediate boundaries. It broadened their interests, helped them draw comparisons with developments in surrounding country areas, gave them vital information on floods or fires. It had brought goodwill to the ABC because it had demonstrated its concern for country listeners. Hamilton believed that a truly national bulletin must include as much news from the country as possible. The only way such a flow could be generated was through the system of regional news which gave constant work to country correspondents.

13. Hamilton to Finlay, 25 January 1950, R32/2. Emphases are Hamilton's.
We would not have as we do have, the best country cover of any news organisation in Australia [if there were no regional bulletins] ... Without the regional bulletins it would quickly disintegrate. We would soon be in the same position as the metropolitan papers, many of whose correspondents see so little for their labor (sic) that they are simply not bothering.

Hamilton, in conclusion urged that the time for regional news be extended by one minute and that permission be given to appoint additional correspondents. Attached were pages of summaries of favourable remarks on the service given to him during his tour.

The Commission the following month considered this report together with a recommendation that two additional regional journalists be appointed and two journalists for Perth. Moses strongly supported Hamilton and Finlay. It is clear that something of a crisis occurred at this meeting, triggered by the request for more news staff. The Commission approved this, over the strong objections of Nette, whose dissent is officially recorded in the minutes. This was a rare occurrence since Commission resolutions were invariably unanimous during Boyer's period as Chairman. The Commission then recorded a remarkable second resolution in which it appeared to be bowing to pressure to reconsider the whole future of its independent news. It read:

That with regard to the general question of the independent news service, as at present required by Statutory obligation, the Commission is of the opinion that its essential independence in news must be retained at all costs, but that if this question is raised by the Government, the Commission is prepared to indicate that it considers its present Statutory obligations to be too rigid and that it would recommend the restoration of the original section of the Act which permitted the Commission to secure its Australian news as it thought fit, without the obligation to obtain such news in all cases through its own staff.

14. Ibid.
15. Boyer noted in a letter to his son that Commission meetings usually resulted in 'a consensus' being reached. He said:"We very seldom take a vote on the Commission, and a record of dissent is even more rare". Quoted in Bolton, _Boyer_, p.140.
We have seen how convinced Boyer had become since 1946, that complete separation from newspaper interests was the only way to avoid constant political interference and help re-establish public confidence in ABC news. He had grown more and more disenchanted with newspaper standards which he felt were debasing public tastes. He had championed independent gathering of regional news, originally against the wishes of his own News Department. We have noted how important independent news had become in carrying out what Boyer felt to be the essential function of the ABC - the fostering of national unity by providing the basic material for independent judgment. News had helped build up popular regard for the ABC. What then brought about this extraordinary change of attitude, which appeared to open the door once again to the possibility of taking news from the press?

The answer must be that it is not clear. The resolution was not the result of any official communication from the Government. Nor was it subsequently relayed to the Government officially. If the Commission had been at all desirous of ridding itself of some of its news responsibilities this surely would have been done. It appears obvious that it was the result of some threat of Government action initiated by Nette. We have seen that Nette believed the new Government would act against the news service. It is possible that he thought he would get Treasury, and subsequently ministerial backing, for action to change the nature of ABC news.

Another strange aspect of the resolution is that no follow-up action is specified, as a result of which the Commission could examine much more closely the implications of such a vitally important decision. Normally, this would have been done. As soon as the meeting was over, however, Finlay and Hamilton were instructed by Moses to prepare most urgently a report which would irrefutably argue the case for an independent service and against newspaper sources.
The task fell largely on Hamilton's shoulders. The report was written in two parts. The first dealt with the Commission's regional and overseas news arrangements and possible alternatives, and the second with State and national news and the possibilities of agreements with the press. Despite Hamilton's recent press origins, it is apparent that by this time he had absorbed the strong anti-newspaper ethos which had long been a driving force behind the News Department and which had become official Commission news philosophy. 17 They are couched very much in the terms used by Dixon, Hanlon and the AJA before the PSCB hearings. Because the ABC news had now become a serious rival of the press:

some sections of the press would very much like to see our service curtailed to the extent where we would become a mouthpiece of one or other of the press organisations or, at best, be powerless to compete with up-to-the minute important news. 18

In some respects the reports dangerously oversimplified newspaper attitudes as they had been expressed before the Parliamentary Committees and would, in this respect, have hardly stood up to outside scrutiny. Dumas was quoted at length, for example, from his evidence of 1942, in which he denied the ABC right to supplement. This ignored the fact that the press had agreed to unlimited ABC rights to supplement in 1946. Doubts were raised as to whether the press would provide a service, in view of the fact that they provided their own commercial stations with basic news, which competed directly with the ABC. This also ignored the fact that newspapers had raised no objections to the ABC selecting what they wanted from their offices in 1946, when commercial news services were already well established. One of the most

17. This had been accentuated by the ABC/press clashes of 1947-48 which are described in Chapter 5.
18. Finlay to Moses, 6 April 1950, R32/2.
effective arguments against press agreements, however, was a new one. ANPA had split into two competing organisations. It now consisted of the Sydney Morning Herald, The Sun, The Argus, The Age, the Brisbane Telegraph, and Western Australian papers. The breakaway group had reformed the ANC and comprised the Daily Telegraph, and the Keith Murdoch papers in Melbourne, Adelaide, and Brisbane. It was convincingly argued therefore by Finlay that

We could obviously not enter into any agreements with one of these organisations and not the other, if we desire to keep any vestige of impartiality and accuracy and so we would have to deal with two groups of newspapers, each demanding its own payment.19

All this was conjecture. No-one approached the newspapers to see what their attitude would be, or what kind of service they might propose. So Finlay and Hamilton were able to rule out the possibility of any reductions in staff because they based their arguments on the formula worked out by Boyer in 1945 under which the ABC would place news selectors in newspaper offices. This proposal had always been unworkable. There were, as we have pointed out earlier, other ways in which news might have been made available.20

But the very nature of the news service was at stake. The advantages of the independent service were that its legislative 'protection' from the press and its new 'objective' standards allayed suspicions that undue influence was being exerted from outside. With the imposition of properly 'impartial' standards by the Commission itself, the news service was no longer the political football that it had once been. Its image was now a beneficial one for the Commission. Hamilton and Finlay put it strongly that 'impartiality', 'objectivity', and 'independence' would be lost if a basic news service was taken from

19. Ibid.
the press. The ABC could no longer vouch for the accuracy of its news. It would not be as up-to-date, because newspaper output was geared to edition times.

Finally they could point to the generally favourable reaction now to the service from consensual interests and from the public.

Criticisms and complaints in regard to our news bulletins, particularly over the last few months, are not practically non-existent. On the other hand, we have received an increasing amount of praise from all sections of the community, including members of the Government and the Opposition and important public authorities and organisations representing a wide variety of interests. Moreover recent surveys disclose that the listening audience to our news bulletins has been maintained and in many instances greatly increased. 21

Finlay concluded:

I consider that no good purpose could be served by purchasing a basic service from any of the Press organisations. We would lose in control, and consequently in efficiency, and I cannot anticipate any appreciable saving if the standard of the service is to be maintained. 22

The Commission meeting of April considered once again the still anonymous suggestion that expenditure on news might be reduced by buying news from the press. Moses once again backed the views of Finlay and Hamilton. This time Boyer was simply asked to prepare a statement, to be approved by the Commission, for submission to the new Postmaster-General, Anthony. This letter of 10 May reveals that Anthony had requested this information, apparently not by letter but by word of mouth. Presumably the Treasury had requested some form of action, at Nette's behest, and between the February and April Commission meetings this had been referred to Anthony as the responsible minister. It is significant that Boyer did not mention or even hint at the Commission's resolution of February. He was totally opposed to any arrangements with the press. He repeated what he had come to strongly believe - that the Commission's security was inextricably bound up

22. Finlay to Moses, 12 April 1950, R32/2.
with the avoidance of any dependence on the press. He told Anthony:

"[the Commission has been] insistent that news of an objective, reliable, non-sensational character, befitting the National Service, was a necessary and unavoidable aim. Further it believes that the confidence of the public in the complete reliability and non-partisanship of the ABC news, demands not only an adequate and qualified staff to check and re-check for truth, but also complete access to all the news of the day."

Minor savings which might result from press agreements, Boyer said, would be so minute that they would be outweighed by these more important considerations.

This letter is so categorical in its confirmation of Boyer's position on news that it makes the February Commission resolution even more inexplicable. What kind of pressure Nette brought to bear is not known. If there was any Government anxiety about the news service it is not borne out by ABC records. Although there is no reply by Anthony on file, he obviously did not disagree with Boyer's arguments, for there was no further discussion of the issue in the Commission. From this point on, Nette was far less adamant about the news service. He had obviously found that he did not have sufficient support in Canberra.

So satisfied did the new Government become that on 5 December Anthony wrote to Boyer suggesting that all the ABC's regional stations should broadcast their own local bulletins of news of special interest. Following this, the Commission agreed to set up a regional news service in Darwin, and to find out at which other centres regional journalists could be based. At the February 1951 Commission meeting it was agreed that regional journalists should be appointed to Port Pirie, in South Australia, and at Longreach, Maryborough and Cairns in Queensland. The regional news had obviously come to stay.

23. Boyer to Anthony, 10 May 1950, R32/2.
The assembly of vital information and argument by Hamilton had been extremely valuable to the Commission in its confrontation with Nette. Towards the end of 1950 Finlay told Moses: "I cannot speak too highly of Mr Hamilton's work. He has shown initiative, loyalty, and over-all ability which makes him one of our most valuable officers". 24

There was, however, one more occasion on which the cost of the news service was questioned. In July 1952, Vanthoff wrote to Boyer on Anthony's behalf to ask him to make a particular effort to review expenditure for the current year closely and critically. In particular, Boyer was asked to provide details and justification for the amounts being spent on news and on engaging overseas artists. It is obvious that there were still some voices in Cabinet who were sceptical about the value of the news service. Hamilton again drew up an analysis of the cost and organisation of the department. A study of this document shows that the threat posed to news at this time was not considered to be a serious one. Compared to the voluminous reports of 1950 it is limited to a basic recital of staff figures, locations and duties. Expenditure on the news service was estimated to cost £305,921 for 1952-53, an increase of £25,800 over the previous year. Staff had been kept to the basic minimum recommended by Harris, except for the engagement of additional men for the expansion of regional coverage and for Radio Australia. 25 Total staff was now 130 journalists and 15 cadets. Agency payments to Reuters, BUP, and the Exchange Telegraph amounted to £16,310, only just over £2,000 more than had been paid in 1947-48. Boyer concluded the report by pointing out:

24. Finlay to Moses, 10 November 1950. ABC Staff files, "W.S. Hamilton".

25. Radio Australia had been returned to the ABC's control by the Menzies Government in 1950.
that the service has steadily increased in public esteem and our present method of collecting and preparing material for our news bulletins has made it possible to maintain the impartiality and objectivity laid down in the Commission's directive. No other system would give the ABC the control so essential to maintain this standard ... I am very doubtful whether any appreciable saving could be made if we were to purchase a basic service in Australia from agency sources and most certainly we could not provide a comparable service.26

The covering letter was terse and brief and the matter was not the subject of any resolution by the Commission.

The positive and self-confident way in which Boyer and Hamilton disposed of this last challenge to justify independent news collecting speaks volumes for the new authority possessed by the news service. It had arrived at a formula for presentation and organisation which had progressively disarmed political criticism, and which had enabled it to be removed from the political arena.27 Bolton remarks that there was less pressure generally on the ABC during Menzies's period as Prime Minister, probably because the ABC had "at last managed to establish its credentials as an impartial organisation".28 As far as news was concerned that process, as we have seen, became virtually complete before Menzies came into power. The Departmental re-organisation, the appointment of Hamilton as the one man in total control of the Department, the decline of Dixon and Amour, and the death of Hanlon, all occurring in the latter half of 1949, had at last presented the Commission with the opportunity of reaching total rapport with its department over the policy of 1946 which it wanted pursued, with 'factuality', and total 'objectivity' made more rigid and obligatory because of the Commission's experiences during the industrial disputes

26. Boyer to Anthony, 6 August 1952, SP724, Box 39, 15/1/17.

27. Moses says he never received any complaint from Menzies as Prime Minister about ABC news.

of 1948-49. The nature of the service had not only become politically unobjectionable, there was now a big audience for ABC news with a corresponding dwindling in the number of complaints. There was less inclination to regard the ABC as the mouthpiece of the Government. By 1952, news had become "one of the most potent attractions for the general public to the national stations". Moses considers that by this time the news service was the only one which was believable and was recognised by the public as such because of its uncoloured, 'objective' nature. He adds: "it had a high reputation among the listeners ... There was no question about it Twenty-five to thirty per cent of people tuned into the ABC for their news". And he confirms that internal confidence in its unassailability was manifest before the advent of Menzies as Prime Minister. He recalls:

I never thought towards the end of the Labor Government, that there was any likelihood [of the independent service being taken away]. No, I think it had built its reputation. I think there would have been such a reaction amongst the people of Australia, taking away this one completely independent news service, that no government would have stood up against the public reaction".

Because the news service was no longer politically contentious, and had growing public support, it was much better able to withstand Nette's attacks which were based purely on cost. The cost of the service was only a dangerous argument when it was used as a weapon or lever by those who considered that ABC news was weighted politically - those on the conservative side who initially saw it as a propaganda weapon in Labor's hands and those such as Amour on the Labor benches who believed Boyer had no real intention of keeping it out of press hands. In Smith's terminology, the ABC had arrived at a view of the audience for news and

30. Interview with Sir Charles Moses, 8 February 1976.
31. Ibid.
its needs which coincided with those of its journalists. Up until this time, there had been conflict between the Commission and its news staff over this concept of audience. That divergence occurred because the News Department of the early nineteen-forties related itself very closely to the wartime Labor Government's attitudes and expectations. The Commission, sensing the dangers to its existence because of the 'official' nature of its news, tried to reassert control and failed because of political protection of the service. The press agreements, though they broke new ground in including 'observer' broadcasting and then unlimited supplementation, still provided for a basic service from the newspapers. In Labor's eyes therefore ABC news would still include some press news which would be slanted against the Party. Also Labor did not like the concept of backgrounding news because this smacked of 'colouring' the facts according to personal opinion. Labor's view of the news was always one in which its statements could reach the public unaltered. The audience was always essentially one which had a right to hear the facts of Government performance unfiltered by the press.

The 1946 legislation, designed both to end forever the possibility of ABC news audiences being fed press news, and to enshrine the principle of unrestricted radio access to the national by the Government, provided the means by which the Commission could still develop and assert an audience view of its own. The answer was to move its journalists away from their Government-centred approach to an establishment-oriented policy, which served all politicians equally. With its demonstrated heavy emphasis on fact, unadorned and uncoloured, and on accuracy and sobriety, of language, Labor suspicions of residual press influence gradually disappeared. The difficulties caused by hard-core attachment by some journalists and politicians to the old idea that only Governments were newsworthy were gradually overcome. As Government and
Opposition both realised that they could still reach their public, though on equal terms, and therefore began to leave ABC more to its own devices in news, the Commission found it had more freedom to widen its coverage. More news from overseas, interstate, and the country meant a more diversified, comprehensive news cover which Boyer believed was serving the audience in a much more responsible way than previously. The swing away from official Canberra news was recognised and opposed by Dixon, Hanlon and Amour but could not be prevented, only hindered. Boyer also came to recognise that news was the best vehicle for 'strengthening' democratic institutions by means of giving the audience the facts relating to divisive issues, such as communism, and allowing them to make up their own minds. The limited, rigidly controlled confines of the news bulletin was the ideal national forum for presenting controversy without arousing the dangerous political passions that might result from longer presentations.

By 1949 the dedicated adherence by the ABC and its news to recognised social and community values and institutions had been recognised, particularly as a result of its handling of the 1948-49 strikes. It had, to paraphrase Cotton, become dull but responsible. Boyer's idea of news as the essential medium for strengthening national unity could not be quarrelled with by either party. Nor could the writing or presentation, being the faithful reproduction of events as they occurred, be criticised. The Commission guaranteed the accuracy and prudently refrained from adding supplementary information. The audience needed facts, the ABC said, and nothing more. With the end of divided journalistic loyalties between Canberra and the Commission, news staff could appreciate the commonsense reasoning behind Boyer's news aims and the way in which they guaranteed the survival of the service, if successfully maintained, by winning both political and audience support. It was clearly recognised by both staff and
management that problems in news provided the opportunity for the more overt political intervention and control being exercised over the ABC. A safe News Department was the best guarantee of a secure ABC. Journalists recognised that the Commission's security was intertwined with the survival of the independent news service. The news service thus became the product of an institutional obstacle course, through which the Commission had picked its way over the years. It represented, through its bulletins, the beliefs and attachments which the Commission knew were linked with its chances of continued existence. In Smith's words, it had found a way of reaching a bargain of style and content with the civil power, which guaranteed survival. Yet, as Smith also indicates, the struggle between audience concepts within broadcasting institutions is a continuing one.

The struggle between these two forces - the view of the audience as it appears to the broadcaster and that view of the audience and the society in the name of which the organisation has been constructed - goes on inside the minds of the broadcasters.  

Although views of audience identity and needs and institutional requirements were shared by both Commission and Department, there was no guarantee that this mutuality of interests would be permanent. As we shall see, it began to break down when the Department's strength and standing reached their peak and when it felt it had to challenge the Commission viewpoint in order to reach, and build its reputation with, its TV audience.

In February 1953 Hamilton felt that he had steered news successfully into safer and calmer waters and therefore could be allowed a degree of complacency. He wrote to Finlay:

32. Smith, Shadow, p.67.
I think I can say truly that [my] reputation has been enhanced and has perhaps spread strongly to places where I was little known before ... I do know that I have given a lot of myself to the work I have been doing. I feel it has been a worthwhile service to the people of Australia and one that has given me a genuine personal satisfaction. On the professional level, it has been equally satisfying to me personally, to see the service working efficiently and to see its prestige and influence increase and to hear from people qualified to make some sort of judgment the tributes to its high standing in the Australian scene.33

The Commission felt this to be true and decided that he should be appointed to the permanent staff. Approval had to be sought from Anthony under Section 17(9) of the Broadcasting Act which makes it obligatory to obtain Government permission for permanent appointments of the top-ranking group of senior officers. In his letter to Anthony, Boyer could hardly have been more effusive.

Mr Hamilton has now been with us for some years, and after close observation of his work, the Commission is convinced that he has proved to be an excellent choice. The standard of his work is high, he has shown very sound judgment, and he has been most effective in guiding and directing the news staff, with a view to maintaining the standards the Commission has set for this section of its activities.34

Hamilton became a permanent staff member from 8 May and the Commission had no hesitation about leaving news largely in his hands.

Hamilton's Influence on News Policy

We have remarked that from 1951 to 1956, news virtually dropped from Commission agendas. So confident was the Commission about Hamilton and so closely did bulletins mirror Commission policy and attitudes that he was left very much to himself. Within the broad guidelines of the Commission's directives Hamilton was free to introduce ideas of his own. As he took up duties however, Boyer had occasion to stress more firmly than ever before what had now become a cardinal rule - that news items would be confined to bare recitation of events. He had been stung into

33. Hamilton to Finlay, 5 February 1952. Staff files - Hamilton.
making this positive statement publicly, by some remarks contained in Bernard Minogue's *Candid Commentary* column in *Smith's Weekly*. Minogue was critical of the news service for failing to convey meaning in its reports. He talked of its 'bald statements masquerading as 'factual'" and "the abstract and brief chronicle of flatulent events" carried in ABC bulletins.  

35 Boyer, in his reply, provided evidence that he did not understand how the news could be presented in any other way, without undermining its credibility. He assumed that Minogue was suggesting that the ABC should offer its own opinions on the news as it was presented. He rejected this, claiming that all the public needed was simple fact in order to make independent and informed judgments. He argued:

> we do a far greater service by attempting to give a balanced and factual review of events as the raw material of honest opinion-forming than by injecting any judgment of our own.

Clearly, there were only the alternatives of fact and opinion as far as he was concerned. It had to be one or the other, and opinion meant passing judgment. This ignored the possibility, envisaged by Minogue, of news providing something more than simple fact, but stopping far short of editorialising, in order that listeners could arrive at a more intelligent appraisal of situations, and become, as Nordenstreng says, intellectually activated. The provision of background, additional facts relevant to a news situation, so that 'raw news' can be related to wider context was recognised by the BBC and American networks as one of the roles of the voice reporter, but Boyer steadfastly resisted this technique in news, as possibly damaging to the essential values he was trying to preserve. We shall examine this attitude and its effects at greater length in the next chapter. The ABC did broadcast news


commentaries twice a day. However they continued to be controlled by the Talks Department and although topical, were not necessarily related to the news of the day and only rarely to the news contained in the news bulletins they preceded. They were also almost entirely restricted to international affairs. Their value therefore in aiding the understanding of news items was limited. They were contributed by a panel of outside speakers, not by staff and their presentation and supervision was rigidly separated from that of news. As far as Boyer was concerned there could be no overlap of the two, believing as he did that comment meant the injection of personal opinion. Nordenstreng however, in arguing for the linking of comment and news, as a means of aiding understanding, does not agree that commentary need have this characteristic at all. He says:

the commentary will explain the general concepts occurring in the raw news ... so that their content becomes familiar and will provide general background. Commentary does not mean commitment to a particular point of view or side in an issue. Such commitment implies support for particular norms, which is not the function of background news commentary. 37

Although Cotton had sought more interpretive material, it is apparent that this went beyond Boyer's intentions and his remarks were a salutary remainder to Hamilton of the course that he wanted followed. One method of examining Hamilton's influence is to compare the lengthy directives to journalists which were issued under his name, with the original policy statement by the Commission of 1946. Stress is placed in a number of new areas. Hamilton veered away even further from the old doctrine of Dixon and Denning that only news was wanted and not views. He also disagreed with its corollary that Governments were newsworthy and Oppositions much less so. In this he continued the new trend begun by Cotton and extended it. The difference in emphasis is obvious in

the following instruction with its insistence on the active quest for critical statements from the Opposition - quite the opposite of the case argued by Dixon and Denning in 1946.

It is well to bear in mind that, by the very nature of things, the hard news of politics will flow mainly from the government of the day. Because of this, you should look for opportunities to present news from the opposition of the day. In particular, remember that the essential function of an opposition is a critical function. Therefore criticism of government policy is legitimate news. 38

On another occasion he wrote, "We must give a lot of official news, but don't let our bulletins sound like a Government gazette". 39

And under the heading 'balance': "On a controversial subject we want both sides to give their views. We don't want a story slanted for the union or the employer, the Government or the Opposition. We seek and get opposing views on every controversy". 40 He thus more strongly defined 'impartiality' than ever before. He continued Cotton's practice of attacking over-dependence on handouts. "Too often these days", he advised, "a reporter takes the handout, the prepared statement, puts it in his pocket and walks off, his job completed. That's the tragic error. His job has merely started, not ended. For it should be recognised that handouts and prepared statements are not necessarily designed to give information. Frequently they are not so intended, but have been written deliberately so as to obscure the truth rather than reveal it". 41 This also was a stronger line on a problem which had bedevilled ABC news since it began.

40. W.S. Hamilton, ABC News Service Style Notes, No.6, p.6, undated. Emphasis is Hamilton's.
41. Ibid., p.4.
We know, from R.H. Morrison's recollections, that even in the early years of news, anything 'sordid' was not broadcast. In the 1946 Directive, the Commission warned against giving priority to news items which were 'startling' and 'sensational' but had no other inherent news value. In Chapter 2, we have pointed out that the terms 'inherent news value' and 'news of intrinsic importance' seemed to mean news which provided the raw factual material for individual judgment. Individual judgment was necessary for 'good citizenship'. News which could best do this was that which was selected according to the criterion of news of 'beneficence' being superior to 'disturbing' news which was 'sensationalist'. 'Disturbing' news could destroy moral values built around family life and influence, which lay at the core of our society. Also we know that Boyer's 'consensualism' included the strong belief that conflict or 'agitation' threatened by emerging social issues could be avoided by public debate on parliamentary lines in which the ABC, through its microphones, would play a crucial role. 'Disturbing' news therefore also included reference to 'violent' tactics outside this behavioural norm. His own beliefs and outside consensual pressures could not allow this news to be given the same 'impartiality' of treatment as that given contending forces within the democratic framework. The Directive also urged that a dignity of expression be observed. As an example, it said: "it is not necessary to quote verbatim statements in Parliament or elsewhere which in themselves, are in bad taste".

42. R.H. Morrison, ABC Archives recording, 30 September 1968.

43. Directives, News and Spoken Transmissions, 1946.
Hamilton attempted to further codify these beliefs. He wanted to avoid giving the least offence to any listener. He reasoned:

the ABC news is heard in the home and all the news must be expressed in such a way that it can be heard in the home without giving offence, or causing embarrassment to a right-thinking person.44

He did not attempt to define the latter phrase, but he defined 'taste' on another occasion as:

good manners in news. It excludes horror film, unpleasant and gory detail in accident stories, it shuns ridicule or extravagance. It avoids the exploitation in word or film of mental or physical handicaps. It doesn't giggle about things, it doesn't smirk. It doesn't invade privacy unnecessarily.45

This also meant an avoidance of crime, divorce and scandal stories. Only a small percentage of murder cases were to be reported, the criterion being their 'social value'. Divorce cases were banned, but could be mentioned if the judge said something of general social interest. Crime was to be reported only if there were "wholesome public interest".46 Only a minimum of detail could be given even then. One therefore would never have gathered any impression of the incidence of crime from ABC bulletins. The more important factor, to Hamilton's mind, was to avoid any distress by the mention of the seamier side of life. This was a more marked reaction against newspaper standards than previously and it also helped to reinforce the heavy leaning of the news service towards the side of such social values as 'law and order'. To give crime only the most cursory treatment is to suggest that the disruptive elements in society are far less a factor than they are in reality. It suggests that the forces of law and order are more in control of a situation than is really the case. 'National unity', to

use Boyer's phrase, is well served by such guidelines. In fact, Hamilton's ideas of 'good taste' matched Boyer's philosophy of community service. Boyer had asked journalists in 1946, as their first principle, to determine news values by asking the question "Is it a service to inform the community of this event?" Hamilton told his staff far more precisely the circumstances in which the answer would be in the negative. He reduced journalistic uncertainties by spelling it out. Hamilton superimposed his own moral values on those of Boyer to produce a vision of an audience that was highly sensitive, easily shocked, and which had to be protected from the harsher aspects of real life. He could therefore write: "[The ABC] accepts the responsibility to decide what is best for the community, soberly and thoughtfully". It was this paternalistic idea of audience which the Department accepted as the one expected of it, and which governed its selection of news. This results in the unconscious bias in the form of '"self censorship' of the journalist as he systematically attempts to fit events into a particular world view whose basic premises he sees as embodying a faithful portrayal of society".

47. Directives, News and Spoken Transmissions, 1946.
49. The Commission was not so squeamish about reporting crime before the influence of Boyer and Hamilton began to assert itself. Note the different emphasis in a letter from Moses to a complaining listener in 1940. "You may be assured that the Commission fully sympathises with your abhorrence of 'horrors' in the news ... Special care is taken to eliminate the grisly details and descriptions of accidents and crimes so often indulged in by the Press. Obviously, however, the Commission cannot prevent such happenings, and when they do occur, they are generally accepted as legitimate 'news'. I am afraid that the National broadcasts would lose much of their authenticity if the Commission were to omit genuine news items simply because some listeners, or even the Commission itself, found them unpalatable." Moses to Symington, 1 March 1940, SP286, Box 2, S11, "News Comments and Enquiries".
Definitions of 'bad taste' by Hamilton and what should be excluded under this heading, neatly dovetailed into a broader concept of concentration on the 'positive' news of society which was always one of Boyer's favourite news themes and one about which he became more enthusiastic in the final decade of his Chairmanship. It was taken up and enthusiastically endorsed by Hamilton, once again revealing the similarity of the thinking of the two men. Boyer, after the less palatable truths about newspapers had been revealed to him in 1945-46 had become increasingly unhappy about press standards. In an address to the Australian Institute of Political Science Summer School in 1955 he alleged that the freedom possessed by the press was being misused. They were catering only for the baser public tastes as a means of making money instead of developing higher instincts by providing more uplifting news items. We have noted earlier how convinced Boyer was of the power of the media to influence and shape minds, and this conviction was at the heart of his attack. In his view, man was weak and could be easily misled.

However noble our ambitions, it is astonishing how ready we are to wallow in sensation, in the character-assassination of our fellows and in the detail of the seamy side of life. The beast in us is the most easily captured market for all the means of mass communication.51

Boyer believed that by feeding the public this kind of news, the press was not reflecting public taste but actually creating it. Conversely, the public would benefit if a different type of news was put before it. He therefore suggested "that the community generally would be grateful if its better instincts and higher aspirations, rather than its lower tastes, were made the chief target".52 Boyer therefore saw the task of ABC news in this light because "The positive dynamic creation of

community's tastes and standards through its mass media is daily becoming more obvious and more unavoidable".  

This viewpoint was taken up and embellished by Hamilton and became one of the most significant influences on ABC news. Hamilton wrote subsequently:

It is our duty to take proper notice of the positively social side of our community life, inasmuch as concentration on its anti-social aspects can present an entirely false picture.  

ABC news was to "seek the progressive news of society, rather than the ephemeral, sensational news of the day". The policy owed much to strong influence of Reith on Boyer. Reith spoke constantly of using radio to influence the public for good. He told the Crawford Committee "The preservation of a high moral tone is obviously of paramount importance. Everything definitely vulgar or hurtful must of course be avoided". If the level of programmes was pitched higher than warranted by public taste, then it could be expected that appreciation would rise accordingly. The BBC had to lead and not follow.

So the responsibility as at the outset conceived ... was to carry into the greatest number of homes everything that was best in every department of human knowledge, endeavour and achievement; and to avoid whatever was, or might be, hurtful. In earliest years accused of setting out to give the public not what it wanted but what the BBC thought it should have, the answer was that few knew what they wanted, fewer what they needed.

53. Ibid.
55. Hamilton, Directive, p.3. Emphasis is Hamilton's. Some of Hamilton's most ornate prose was on this subject. For example, "The News that will stay with you is the news that shines with its own light, the presentation of an emotion or a deed which shows just once in a while that man isn't completely a material creature - that he will go out of his way to make a sacrifice for the well-being of another". Directive, p.9.
Reith was quite open in his attachment to the values of the establishment, and the Boyer-Hamilton variations were expressive of their support for similar values in Australian society. As Hood points out the institutional fostering of these consensual values means that impartiality is a policy applied only to activities that remain within the consensus. Hamilton embraced and helped develop the institutional ethos of support for the status quo. He defined more rigidly the news criteria based on it.

Hamilton did however attempt to widen the scope of news beyond the rigid principles of Boyer, but with only mixed success. His only difference of opinion with the Commission up until 1956 was over the question of colourful language and attempts to enliven bulletins by the injection of stories relating to people rather than to events. Hamilton brought from The Sun a strong belief in the wisdom of relating anonymous news to people. He wrote:

> keep in mind the people for whom your produce is designed ... Failure to remember about people ... people who walk and run, sleep and eat, laugh and cry - this is one of the great dangers of our profession. When it happens, the people, in their turn, forget you.58

His early attempts at introducing these 'human interest' stories however, led to trouble. M.W. O'Donnell, the Treasury official who had replaced Nette on the Commission in 1952, complained about the over-dramatic language being used in some news items at the Commission meeting of April 1954. The phrase objected to was "the wild sea" in a story about an accident in which troops on exercise were involved. This led to a discussion of Hamilton's 'human interest' stories about which Boyer expressed his concern because they "appear sometimes to be used mainly because of their emotional appeal".59 He felt that "the news service has built up a reputation for the calm and objective presentation of factual


material [and therefore] particular care should be taken in the use of human interest stories and in the wording of news items about individuals that have an emotional appeal". 60

Although the Commission did not rule out 'human interest' stories entirely, it resolved that Boyer should issue a directive on the subject for Hamilton's guidance. Subsequently, it was thought better for Boyer to discuss the matter with Hamilton personally. This was the second time the brake had been applied by the Commission to attempts to lift some news items beyond the routine dedication to unembossed factuality by interspersing material in which reporters had used imagination and colourful writing. The first in 1948, had related to the coverage of the Queensland railway strike and any injection of the reporter's personality in those circumstances, alarmed the Commission. By 1954, however, it is clear that there was a blanket ban on prose which was likely to excite the senses in any way. 61 The story in question had no political connotations whatever.

In these circumstances the role of the reporter can be an extremely frustrating one, as he is deprived of the opportunity of expressing himself fully. Hamilton was aware of the limitations placed on his reporting staff by the severe confines of ABC news policy and he attempted to ensure that some trace of their personality and style remained after sub-editors had assessed, altered and abbreviated stories. He ruled that

broadly speaking, the service believes in a reporter writing the story as he sees it. Interference by sub-editors and Chiefs-of-Staff, however well intentioned, should be kept to a minimum. 62

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60. Ibid.
61. For example. Finlay enjoined the news staff as follows at the News Editors' Conference of 1952: "If we are to maintain and improve our service, a firm rein will have to be kept on sub-editors and reporters". News Editors' Conference, 5-6 May 1952, p.1. ABC File 15/1/16, Pt.II, "News Editors' Conferences"
Beyond this, Hamilton gave reporters a slight degree of extra freedom in the extent to which they could add interpretative statements of their own. We have noted earlier Commission concern about unattributed material and Boyer's belief that anything but fact amounted to unacceptable interpolation of opinion. Hamilton, with great circumspection, made this policy more flexible. The extent to which reporters were permitted to comment was severely restricted, but the fact that it was allowed at all marks a small but significant advance towards adding meaning and perspective to the ABC news bulletins. The examples given in Hamilton's instructions on this matter are illustrative of the simple form they took:

It is probably true ... that the annual show of a country town 'was a success'. But the ABC cannot say it. If there is nobody we can quote, but our correspondent is quite positive the show was a success, we allow him to say it. 'The ABC correspondent says the show was a success.' The same with stories by staff reporters. There are things which a reporter, having closely investigated, knows to be correct. He may be allowed to give his opinion. 'The ABC's political reporter says the Government is unlikely to bring the bill down this session.'

Hamilton also in this context allowed unattributable statements from union leaders, as well as politicians, to be used, although permitting this freedom to very experienced reporters only, who would be expected to use care and discretion. As union leaders in the news are usually involved in some form of controversy, this appears to be a definite easing of the policy enunciated by the Commission in 1947, which has been described in the previous chapter. The Commission does not appear to have taken issue with either of these initiatives by Hamilton, which is a measure of the degree of trust they had in him, and also perhaps, of the fact that the Commission felt it less necessary to scrutinise bulletin content as they had in the past.

64. See Chapter 3, pp.373-77.
The Complaints of Dr Evatt

While neither Government nor Opposition saw any threat posed to them from the ABC's news service after 1949, resulting in fewer incidents of overt political pressure, Evatt, Labor's leader from 1951, never forgot that the ABC's news service was fostered and given independence in order to retain an uncoloured channel through which the Party's statements could reach the voters. He always retained the old wartime image of the ABC's news as one which faithfully reproduced statements which were issued by the Party. When, under Hamilton, the service became more selective about the use of Canberra originated material, Evatt felt personally aggrieved when any statement from his office was not reported in the bulletins, and had several clashes over the years with the ABC over the use of his material.

Through Burton, he had been one of the most constant critics of ABC news in the years 1946-49 while Labor was still in power. He did not, as we have noted, appreciate the new 'impartial' approach adopted, nor Cotton's efforts to move away from reliance on handouts, and to avoid the approaches by Evatt's External Affairs Department to 'advise' journalists. The Commission was as firm as it was prudent to be, on these occasions. It admitted some errors, denied others, but treated him respectfully and warily.

When Evatt kept up his pressure on the News Department in Opposition, the Commission took a much firmer line. It asked him to refrain from approaching the staff direct, and instead direct any complaints to the Chairman or the General Manager. Evatt, however, felt he was more likely to achieve results if he telephoned the newsroom direct, and he continued to do so. But these tactics did not appear to be successful because the complaint was often simply referred to the Commission, or in some cases strongly resisted at Departmental level. In fact, Evatt's telephone calls seemed to have aroused a strong level
of resentment within the Department, which at that time, was very conscious of the need for 'impartiality'. Denning was at the ABC end of the telephone when Evatt protested about omissions of his statements on two occasions in 1951 and 1952. The Labor Party had had no reason to complain about the treatment given to it over the years by Denning, who had been responsible for reporting its statements far more faithfully than the newspapers. Yet he felt that Evatt's manner was threatening to him personally and asked the Commission to take action to protect him from similar calls.

He seems to have produced a similar response with other who spoke to him. Fraser recalls:

Evatt was the sort of man who would monitor a news bulletin - and this has happened to me when I've been working out there [at Gord Hill] - and ring up and tell you you were sacked, in no uncertain terms. He kept up a sustained pressure on ABC news bulletins. Moses remembers him as one who was continually demanding equal time or more time. You could never have given Evatt enough time. He would feel that if he had three-quarters of the bulletin, and perhaps Menzies shouldn't have had a quarter.

In 1952, Hamilton was telephoned at his home by Evatt and asked who was responsible for the omission of a statement he had made on the Government's airline policy. Hamilton refused to say and told him he had no right to ask. When the matter was investigated, Hamilton upheld the decision of his sub-editors. His report gives some idea of the extent of the move away from reporting all handouts produced in Canberra:

It has been our policy that measures before the House should be debated in the House, not in the ABC news bulletins by statements made outside the House, except insofar as any statement may contain important hard news which it is our duty to report.

65. Interview with Keith Fraser, 28 November 1975.
66. Interview with Sir Charles Moses, 8 February 1976.
67. Hamilton to Acting General Manager, 27 October 1952, SP613, Box 44, 15/17/13.
When Evatt spoke in the House on the Airlines Bill his views would be fully reported. His arguments against the bill had been well publicised already and his statement contained nothing new. "In this case, the statement was omitted entirely on its merits, in line with decisions made from time to time about Ministerial statements as well."68

Hamilton further raised the question of the backlash that can occur when there is such persistent suggestions of mistreatment. He referred to Evatt's manner as 'intimidatory' and his whole approach as being 'bullying pressure'. He then pointed out that

such personal intervention by a political leader inevitably creates an emotional atmosphere which makes objective decisions difficult ... if errors of judgment are made against him - I hope they will not - Dr Evatt will have only himself to blame.69

Hamilton throughout his career saw greater dangers arising from resentment against pressure, than he did from the pressure itself. In 1970 he told an audience that pressure from politicians from both sides could be resisted. However,

More insidious and less known or talked about is the inverse risk - of reacting too violently against pressure and making a wrong judgment simply as a personal reaction to the pressure. I still remember vividly making a wrong decision because of that.70

He did not specify the instance.

It is possible to suggest that Evatt's complaints had two results. They would, as he surely hoped, have caused journalists to be extremely careful in the handling of his statements and speeches, knowing that he would create trouble if they were dropped. But Departmental resentment might well have meant that he received less sympathetic treatment at times than he deserved. Statements can be run, but at varying lengths,

68. Ibid.
69. Ibid.
and with varying emphasis, depending on the 'judgment' of the subeditors. This would seem to cancel out some of the apparent advantages of applying pressure constantly.

The Commission considered four complaints by Evatt in the period 1950-61.71 In all cases, he made representations on his own behalf and not on behalf of the Party. In the same period, there were no other complaints considered at Commission level by any other member of the Party. There is thus no evidence of Party dissatisfaction. Nor does Evatt appear to have believed that the ABC news service was necessarily biased against him.72 He rang Moses on the eve of one election to thank

71. They were as follows:
   (1) Commission meeting 6-7 February 1951. Evatt was dissatisfied with coverage given to a statement he had made.
   (2) Commission meeting 7-8 April 1952. Evatt protested against the exclusion of a statement on the reported sale by the Government of Commonwealth ships.
   (3) Commission meeting 14-15 July 1955. Evatt complained about the absence of any story on statements he had made on the recent privilege case in Parliament. Hamilton conceded that one statement should have been used.
   (4) Commission meeting 22 July 1958. Evatt said a statement he had made on the forthcoming Federal election should have been included.

72. Evatt did make a statement critical of news in Parliament in 1958. He told the House "the commission, on a whole, does very important and useful work. But I think it is open to criticism in relation to both television and broadcasting, because of its selection of news and its commentaries, for instance, on international affairs". CPD, 23 April 1958, p.1177. The whole of this speech, however, consisted of an attack on the Commission for the selection of its news commentators, in which he made specific reference to the decision by the Commission to refuse to allow the broadcast by Rohan Rivett on the Suez invasion in 1956. He did not cite any shortcomings in ABC news, nor did he mention news in any context again in this debate.
him for the fair treatment he had been given. It appears very likely that he kept up his campaign of harassment in the belief that unless he did so, the Government would, in the normal course of events, get vastly predominant treatment. It had been so during the war years. The Department, in its turn, objected to the inference that it was not doing its best to be 'impartial'.

It would be easy to dismiss the Commission's firm handling of Evatt in news matters as a logical flow-on from the fact that he was only Opposition Leader, and lacked the capacity or authority, while in that position, to threaten its position. However, this would be simplistic reasoning. The Commission had throughout its history, as we have noted before, been very conscious that it had to find formulae which would enable it to survive transitions of power from one party to another. It was possible that Evatt could be voted into power at any election. The Commission realised therefore that it was dealing with a man who could cause real trouble in the future. In these circumstances, the way in which it dealt with Evatt showed an increasing self-confidence and firm backing for the judgment of its news staff. These developments showed how far the Commission had moved in creating a News Department in which it could rely to preserve institutional values related to its survival. It believed its own news service to be 'impartial' and able to withstand any scrutiny on that score. Evatt's representations were recognised for what they were - attempts to influence news selection rather than indicators of a basic dissatisfaction.

Boyer's Policy for TV News

Boyer had investigated overseas television developments during a trip to Britain and the United States in 1950. He came back convinced that the new medium would have even greater influence on the public mind than radio. Its social implications on the rising generation were much
greater and so was its capacity to be used for good or evil. Because people tended to believe what they saw it would create a climate of values which people would accept. In a report he prepared in 1951, he outlined his beliefs in the necessity for the 'strictest supervision' of the material used in TV broadcasts. This is because:

One of the conclusions which can be drawn not only from the experience of television but from the history of radio to date, is the inevitable tendency of a community to come to accept after a time the material of mass media which at first it deplored and reprobated ... The entry of television is a critical turning point in the life of any community adopting it. Its potency for influencing the moral, cultural and intellectual climate of a people, and particularly of its children, is greater than that of other contemporary media.

These beliefs governed his approach to news on television. In Britain, he had seen the BBC make no effort to televise the news. Instead the radio news was simply read from the television studio over a slide of the Houses of Parliament. BBC executives had opposed American ideas of trying to illustrate the day’s events. Ivan Chapman says of this period:

[The BBC] were nudged by the fact that the Americans got into television news instantly after the war and there was a definite holding out against it. There were people who were actually saying that news cannot be televised. In radio news at the BBC at that time, in some of the high positions, there was a definite and very perceptible rigidity of thinking. These men were getting on towards sixty and they couldn't accept it in their minds that this new-fangled thing was eventually going to hit the nation.

In the United States Boyer had seen quite the opposite approach. The news was presented by an announcer, who moved about the studio frequently to maps and graphics in an attempt to explain the news. He introduced film clips and spoke at some length on the more important stories. He had noted also the method of reading news items from a

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73. R.J.F. Boyer, The Implications of Television as a Public Medium, 26 November 1951, p.34. Stencilled copy in Rl7/4, Box 2 (no title).
74. Interview with Ivan Chapman, 9 October 1976.
scroll rolling alongside the TV cameras - a type of prompting machine. These American methods appalled Boyer, who believed that they distorted news values. The BBC approach was by far the one he preferred. He felt that in televising the news, the temptation would always be to give first choice to those items which could be illustrated and to place out of perspective, those which could not. Film and illustration could best be reserved for quite a separate programme, such as the BBC did in their Newsreel. This was a fifteen minute programme, based on the cinema newsreels, which was not made by news staff but by film producers, and which dealt with the more timeless story. It was, according to Chapman, made at a very leisurely pace, and usually packaged a week before going to air. Boyer saw that film would have to be an adjunct of news, but could not, in his opinion, form part of the bulletin. He wrote:

It is not too much to say that if news bulletins are televised, the public service in the dissemination of balanced, reliable and objective news will have disappeared altogether ... There can be no doubt of the importance of this issue, and I am impressed with the degree to which the BBC ... is courageous enough to present its viewers with an indeterminate 'still'. It is precisely this sort of restraint which distinguishes a responsible service from an irresponsible one.75

By 1953, Boyer felt confident that the reputation of the ABC had reached such a high point, based on its 'impartiality' and responsibility in news and talks presentation, that it would be given control of the national television service under the same conditions as applied to its radio service. The Commission's Annual Report for 1953 noted that:

There seems to have developed a general appreciation of the fact that the difficult balance between opposing points of view in delicate areas of social, religious and political opinion has been maintained. This has been evidenced in comments regarding discussions on current affairs and the manner and presentation of news.76

The Commission had to argue its case however before the Royal Commission on Television set up in February of the same year to investigate the standards and conditions which should apply to television and the best means for introducing it into Australia. 77 Boyer claimed that the Commission had, throughout its history, been involved in differences of opinion with the various Governments of the day over its control of political and controversial broadcasts. It had constantly met, and resisted, attitudes of mind in Canberra which objected to criticism of the Government being carried on national stations.

The Commission for its part felt that its function was to act for the community as a whole. It regarded the opinions of His Majesty's Opposition as being of equal importance to those of His Majesty's Governments, and the Commission resisted the attitude which each succeeding Government was inclined to adopt that because it operated under Commonwealth Statute and was financed by funds authorised by the Commonwealth, it was in effect an instrument of the Commonwealth Government. 78

He detailed the history of broadcasting legislation to show how the inherent conflict between the Minister's powers to direct the Commission to broadcast or refrain from broadcasting material and the powers given to the Commission over political and controversial broadcasts, had finally in his opinion, been resolved in the 1948 Broadcasting Act. Boyer pointed out that with the increased impact of television, it was even more desirable to vest such controls in the ABC rather than run the risk of political misuse of the medium.

The swing of a camera may have political implications quite as potent as, for example, the choice of a news item or the subject of a commentary. If our experience in Australia to date can be taken as any guide, it is obvious that similar political and controversial safeguards should be attached to a national television service as has been developed under a radio service. 79

77. The Royal Commission was set up under the terms of the Television Act, 1953. Clause 5 of that Act made it an open question whether national television was to be run by the ABC or a specially authorised authority. Commercial stations were also to be established. See CPD, 17 February 1953, p. 33.

78. R.J.F. Boyer, Evidence submitted to the Royal Commission on Television, 8 June 1953, p. 5, R17/4, Box 2.

79. Ibid., p. 6.
Boyer also argued that he already had a proven, reliable staff, well versed in handling matters with taste and balance, who could run the television service in the same way. The differences between the two were not great.

The spectacular techniques of sound and sight 'mixing' are apt to overshadow the fact that the work is still 'broadcasting' which needs to build and draw from the proven and hard won structure of radio... The main reason why TV has become the child of existing radio organisations abroad, is that it needed the varied resources and experience of sound broadcasting in every aspect of its work... The social consequences of TV are such that it is much more important to build on the right foundations than to seek spectacular results for their own sake.80

As far as news was concerned he envisaged a 'simulcast' approach, in which the radio news would simply be read over a still of a clock face. Discernible here is Boyer's developing fear that TV news, unless rigidly controlled, would pass into the hands of technicians, producers or cameramen, who would seek to entertain beyond all else. These would be men who had no understanding of the institutional attitudes governing the approach to news selection and priorities and would destroy the delicate structure based on 'impartiality' and 'objectivity' which was now receiving public recognition for its qualities of truth and sobriety. The standards and control of radio news must apply to television as well.

The Royal Commission found that "The provision of the programmes on the national television service should be the responsibility of the ABC".81 In the Bill to give effect to its recommendations,82 the Government not only endorsed Boyer's reasoning that the ABC's organisation was competent to handle television as well as radio, but it also, as he had wanted, said that its existing statutory rights and obligations would

80. Ibid., pp.17-18.
82. The Broadcasting and Television Bill, 1956.
apply to both media. The Postmaster-General, Charles Davidson, specifically underlined that the Government had approved the Commission being given control over the transmission of political and controversial matter in the same way as had been done with radio, in 1948. Additionally, the end was announced of the practice of appointing Treasury and Postmaster-General's Department representatives to the Commission, and the ABC was given control of its TV technical facilities. The system of financing, however, remained unchanged. Thus the Commission won a substantial vote of confidence from the Government. The blameless 'objectivity' of ABC news and its attachment to core consensual values no doubt played its part in influencing this decision. Certainly financial and radio technical control remained and the freedom won was only relative, but in the circumstances it was all that Boyer could have hoped for. As Belton says:

The 1956 Act seemed to justify Boyer's patience and tenacity and to answer criticisms that he and the Commission had been too passive in the face of successive government encroachment on their powers.

Davidson had warned in introducing the Bill that television would be introduced only gradually, and future development and expansion would depend on the way in which broadcasting organisations responded to the challenge. He said:

There will be problems to face, arising mainly from the social impact of television, but these all revolve around, and depend for their solution on, the overriding question of the establishment and maintenance of satisfactory programme standards ... it can confer very great benefits on the people of the Commonwealth if we take prudent steps to avoid the misuse of this powerful medium of communication.

83. The previous year, Boyer had had to argue strongly with Anthony (who was replaced as Postmaster-General by Davidson in December 1955) over the principle of the Commission being made up of laymen and not specialists. Anthony thought that the additional technical and artistic demands of television might require more qualified people as members. The Government did not press the idea. See Bolton, Boyer, pp.208-210. Also ABC, 22nd Annual Report (Commonwealth Government Printer, Canberra, 1954), p.4.

84. Bolton, Boyer, p.212.

85. CPD, 19 April 1956, pp.1533-34.
As the date for the beginning of television neared, Boyer felt more and more the weight of the responsibility that had been put on the Commission's shoulders. On its decisions about the standard of material transmitted, depended the moral well-being of hundreds of thousands of Australians who had placed their trust in the ABC. Could the ABC maintain its standard of 'impartial' news coverage on TV? If it failed, it ran a higher risk than ever before of political intervention, given the enhanced power of television to effect the public's opinion. Could TV news, given the attraction of visual illustration, provide the coverage of the positive news of society, and thus enhance democratic values, or was it more likely to cover the unpleasant, anti-social activities which could prove disruptive to national unity? Boyer was determined that his rigid code of news conduct should prevail. It had ensured and enhanced the Commission's chances of political survival. Boyer was convinced that the progress in winning back Government confidence between the years of 1946 and 1956 were indissolubly linked to the growing reputation of the news service for truth and accuracy. 'Impartiality' must govern the conduct of TV news or the Commission could lose control of national television. The Commission warned against interference when it said:

Television, without doubt, will prove even more powerful in influencing community attitudes and beliefs than the sound medium and it is of first importance that a service which is operated for and financed by the whole community should represent both majority and minority opinions of the community and not be subject to sectional pressures.86

86. ABC, 24th Annual Report, year ending 30 June 1956, p.5.
Overseas, developments in Britain had disappointed Boyer. There, the Television Act of 1954, which set up the Independent Television Authority: "introduced competition for the BBC, which had always attached great importance to its monopoly". Independent Television News Limited [ITN] was established in 1955 to supply a news service to the independent programme companies. Faced with the prospect of the commercial stations having a TV bulletin, the BBC had to bow to the inevitable and contemplate one for themselves. Tahu Hole, their New Zealand born news editor, was sent to the United States to evaluate the techniques being used there. Hole is remembered by many BBC newsmen as the man who imposed such a rigid control over the BBC newsroom that "the search for truth was destroyed by the demand for accuracy. Under him ... an obsession for political 'balance' made a mockery of proper journalism". Hole appeared to regard the idea of news on television with contempt, and when he returned he instituted a system in which the newsreader was forbidden to appear on camera. "His thinking was that even the slightest raising of an eyebrow would be suggestive and perhaps undermine the credibility of BBC news." TV news bulletins began on the BBC in 1954, using this technique, but after a year, it was changed to enable the announcer to appear. New production ideas were introduced which enabled more film to be used and more reports from correspondents. These changes came about because of strong criticism of Hole's news style. Chapman says:

There was almost a revolt in the news service itself against the editor because we realised with great alarm that we weren't putting on a proper news service say for the first year of it at all ... The newspapers took up this cry and there were loud accusing headlines in the national newspapers that the BBC was running a lantern slide service and this wasn't proper news.

88. Dimbleby, Dimbleby, p.270.
89. Interview with Ivan Chapman, 9 October 1976.
90. Ibid.
The certainty that ITN would present a lively bulletin using all available techniques was another factor which elicited the altered stance. By 1956, the BBC had six reporters working exclusively for television, presenting their reports from the studio live, with film 'overlay' or illustration. Many of them were radio news personalities whose names were well known to the British audience.

Hamilton had been sent overseas in May 1956 to report on TV news and newsreel activities. At the time of his departure, no decisions had been made about the way straight news would be handled, but a newsreel was certainly planned. On his return, he explained that changes had taken place in the BBC's approach. He argued strongly that ABC should attempt a TV news bulletin from the outset, and that no credence could be placed any more in the argument that news had no place on television. He reported:

Television is using the methods which belong to television. In doing so, it can and does communicate news ... a film, the camera's record of an event, has as much right to the term 'news', as a reporter's version printed on paper. Often, of course, the communication of an event, television-wise, must have far greater impact than a version in words only.91

These were bold words, knowing Boyer's views on the illustration of news. In more recent years, Hamilton confirmed that Boyer had opposed a TV news bulletin as such right up to 1956. He recollected that:

in 1956, when the ABC was preparing for television, I had quite a tussle with Sir Richard Boyer, ... who said to me in amazement: 'But surely you weren't thinking of putting the ABC news on television'?92

But Hamilton went even further. He urged the full use of all available expertise, raising the point that worried Boyer most - the loss of control to technicians. Hamilton said:

91. Hamilton to Finlay, 20 June 1956, ABC File 11/1/1, "TV News".
we cannot afford not to give news on television ... What is our responsibility, as always, is to see that our standards in selection and presentation are maintained at a high level. It is just as much our responsibility also, to see that our technical standards and professional attainments match our standards of responsibility. The advantages offered by twentieth century engineering skills are just as much for us as for the purveyors of trash. Just let us use them better.93

Hamilton went on to point out that Newsreel, because of its total reliance on film, could not cover the essential events of the day, but would have to rely on film available. It would be more of a 'magazine'. Instead he wanted the ABC to follow overseas practice and present 'live news' which uses announcer, film of the day, and film related to the day's events. There could be 'live' inserts from outside locations, maps, still photographs, reporters on camera and interviewing people in the news, and 'back projections' behind the announcer. He had seen all of these techniques in Britain and on American networks and he felt they could be developed with practice in the ABC. He recommended a five minute news bulletin to begin with, a ten minute Newsreel three times a week, and a longer 30 minute weekend magazine, once a week. Hamilton's report had concentrated heavily on the exciting and challenging news presentation methods in use overseas, which had impressed him considerably. He had little to say about the dangers of attempting to illustrate the news, which were so evident to Boyer. He had however thought it politic to add:

no matter how skilled we become in handling the medium, we should aim definitely to avoid the temptation of becoming too good in technique, being wrapped up in the trappings of the medium rather than in watching always for the maximum effect on the viewer. For this is a point at which dazzling technique, as in newspaper or radio news, can tend to defeat the primary object - giving the news.94

93. Hamilton to Finlay, 20 June 1956, 11/1/1.
94. Ibid.
This was not enough to reassure Boyer. He was worried about the implications of Hamilton's enthusiasm for the trappings of overseas television news. He expressed his concern about the report to Moses:

It ... does in general confirm my worst fears on the position which may face us in respect of our news service to the Australian community ... our news service has not only been a piece of acceptable radio programme but a most vital contribution not only to honest reportage, but to the health of our democracy. Indeed, it may well be, in future history, that our news service will bulk large in the formative influence of our nation ... I would regard it as a tragedy of the first order if the change in the medium were in any way to alter the type and quality of service we are already offering in this field.  

Boyer continued in similar despondent vein. He felt that the danger lay in TV news technique having an adverse effect on the moral and mental climate of the people. The effect of the commercial stations would be bad, as it had been in Britain, where:

the BBC has felt itself compelled to conform to the ITA pressure for televised news to a degree that its own convictions would have rejected.  

If the ABC news allowed itself to surrender to the public appetite for visual illustration instead of 'straight' and 'balanced' news, it would be a major defeat.

Mr Hamilton's instincts are all on the side of the angels, but he, like all of us, is caught up in this new dilemma ... uttering the proven principles which have been our guide so far, but turning the technical and intimate achievement of them over to the production boys in the TV studios whose interest must of necessity be that of visual showmanship.

Visual illustration, said Boyer, must take second place to balance and essential news priorities. He was, quite rightly, as it turned out, becoming aware of the distinct possibility of a dispute arising over different conceptions of audience. The audience which had to be protected from the bad effects of the medium but instead be morally uplifted by the repetition of radio news, with minimum illustration, was hardly likely to

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95. Boyer to Moses, 22 July 1956. ABC Archives, "Boyer's Correspondence".
96. Ibid.
97. Ibid.
appeal to journalists who saw that visuals could enhance the meaning of news items.

Hamilton hastened to place his mind at rest. The News Department, he told Boyer, would not be betrayed by the bright lights of television. 'Objectivity' and 'responsibility' would continue to be the guiding stars. He had noticed the tendency overseas for cameramen and producers to be given semi-editorial responsibility but he would not allow it in Australia. He would make sure that his journalists knew enough about television that they would not have to rely in this way on the technical staff.

The Commission had a long discussion with Hamilton about his plans at its meeting in September 1956. He affirmed his intention to stick rigorously to the standards of radio news in television, but argued that it was necessary to illustrate the news to allow viewers to gain greater understanding of the significance of the items used. The Commission agreed that TV news would begin and that it would be five minutes initially, but with weather forecast and a newsreel, would take up a total segment of fifteen minutes. It urged that the bulletin be extended to fifteen minutes as soon as possible, so that the bulletin would match the radio news in content and length. It then ruled:

that the selection of news for inclusion in television news bulletins should be based on the standards now applied in sound broadcasting and should not be influenced by the availability of illustrations. The Commission considers that in television the objective of the news staff should be to present all the important news, whether it can be illustrated or not.98

Here was the origin of a conflict between the Commission and its Editor-in-Chief and TV news staff which continued until the death of Boyer in 1961. The Commission had survived and prospered with news written to an essentially safe but credible formula. The selection and emphasis given

to items were in accordance with the Commission's sense of community values and the necessity to win confidence within the political environment. New criteria for selection could threaten the relationship the Commission had established with the institutions which represented power and influence. It is noteworthy that in Hamilton's period, unspecified elites are usually cited as expressing approval for the news service in Annual Reports. In 1951, increasing appreciation had come not only from individual listeners but from "responsible public bodies". 99 In 1953, there was evidence of support from "important public and commercial organisations, welfare bodies and cultural movements". 100 The importance of such gestures of approval and acceptance to the Commission is obvious. Television could not be allowed to interfere with the Commission's standing within the establishment.

The Conflict over Illustration

ABC television went on air in Sydney for the first time on 5 November 1956. There were news bulletins six nights a week, Sunday being excluded and newsreels on four nights. Hamilton reported that in the first few nights of operation, the ABC had badly beaten TCN on two occasions in getting news agency film to air. The TV news staff had accumulated a pool of film for its newsreel which ranged from the assimilation of Aborigines to experiments with fruit fly. According to Chapman, who had been re-engaged by the ABC to help start the television service, "There was a tremendous excitement about it all and

100. ABC, 21st Annual Report, p.17.
101. One of the two commercial stations which began transmission in Sydney in 1956. The other was ATN.
they worked terribly hard and there was magnificent team spirit". 102

Unlike the BBC, there were no traumas about putting an announcer in front of camera to read the news. The ABC did this from the beginning. But given the Commission directive about relating the content to radio news, there were no attempts to copy the BBC approach of employing full-time television reporters who appeared on camera to give their reports. There was no thought given to putting reporters' pieces or interviews on air live, as the BBC were doing.

The ABC felt that every phase of the operation had to be disciplined and be in our control, and by doing it ... on film it becomes a package, you time it and you know exactly what's going to happen. 103

The newsreel being dubbed and prepared from film which was in hand the previous day, did not contain any coverage of the day's events on which it was programmed. A compulsion was therefore felt, by journalists who had been newly trained in film direction and writing techniques, to obtain coverage of the day's news and use it in the bulletin. Once it was decided to film some event, the edited end-product frequently ran to one or two minutes longer than the time allotted to the tightly edited radio bulletin version of the same story. Sometimes, a report was included in TV news, of an event which was not considered newsworthy by radio news. From these obvious differences in approach emerged a noticeable hardening in the Commission's attitude.

On 26 April 1957, Hamilton was summoned before the Commission. At this meeting, Boyer seriously considered adopting the old BBC format of news without any visuals at all. The Commission and Hamilton argued over the relative merits of having the announcer in vision reading the radio news without alteration, having the announcer's voice behind some indeterminate still picture, or having some pictures included. Boyer had returned to the concept of TV news he had admired on the BBC in 1950.

102. Interview with Ivan Chapman, 9 October 1976.
103. Ibid.
Finally the Commission decided in favour of illustration but with such strict rules attached that chances of including any meaningful film were minimised. The items used on TV were to be word for word the same as on radio. The lead story had to be the same, but some variation in order was allowed, a concession that was not related to the availability of film, but was to cater for the metropolitan audience for television, as distinct from the national audience for radio. The time allocated for each story had to be the same in both media and there was to be a reduction in the number of stills being used, which were now restricted to personalities who had not previously been featured in the news. Photos of well-known personalities were not to be used. This meant that if there was some illustrative film of a story which radio news had judged worthy of inclusion in its bulletins, it could be used, as long as it did not exceed the time given to it on radio. The fact that a story had been filmed gave it absolutely no priority over stories which had not received this treatment. Finally, the Commission urged that fifteen minute bulletins be started as soon as possible so that all radio news items could be repeated on television.

The impact of this directive on the TV news staff was immediate and obvious. It was decided to resist it at every opportunity. Keith Fraser, who had been appointed Assistant to the Editor-in-Chief (Television) and put in charge of the operation at Gore Hill, had been sent overseas for eighteen months to study TV news presentation in Britain, the United States, Canada and France. He returned in 1956, shortly before the ABC transmissions began only to find his newly acquired professional knowledge was not to be used to the full, and that, although he was one of the more senior and experienced newsmen, his judgments were being constantly questioned and he was under the closest supervision. He expresses his feelings about this situation by saying:
I'd worked like a slave and I knew what I was about and I was one of the founding working journalists of the ABC news service, impregnated up to my bloody ears in the need for an honest factual news service, and I find myself being supervised down to the greatest detail on the basis that I was going to sell the damn place down the river and turn it into a Mutt and Jeff cartoon.

He decided to oppose the Commission's viewpoint in two ways. He would argue as strongly as he could in writing or in person, while at the same time he would bend and break the rules. Hamilton and Moses supported him. In his words:

I pointed out that I couldn't carry out that instruction, that I had to integrate film and graphics, all sorts of weird, and interesting and novel and beautiful elements into this television news bulletin because it wasn't a radio bulletin and I could not make it radio with pictures, that I would write a story differently and treat it differently and some stories I wouldn't want at all from radio, because I could do better with film.

Those writing scripts for film found themselves inhibited and not able to venture from the factual emotionless style that was set down for radio. According to Chapman:

[the Commission] didn't like any imaginative film writing because of the fear that this could twist the meaning, over-emphasise a point ... In other words, it never quite got through to them that a picture is a visual thing and could be enhanced with the proper restrained well-written commentary.

The Commission, for its part, could once again point to BBC example. In the first few months of BBC television news in 1954, radio news decided the order of items, on the instruction of Hole. Chapman however recalls that they were less dogmatic about it and the rule was relaxed very soon. A.G. Lowndes, who strongly backed Boyer's news policy as a Commissioner, and who took a keen interest in news matters, defends these early directives on the grounds that some film found

104. Interview with Keith Fraser, 25 September 1975. Fraser had been News Editor in Queensland from 1949 to 1955.

105. Ibid.

106. Interview with Ivan Chapman, 9 October 1976.
its way into news bulletins which had no news value, and was included simply because it was available. He remembers:

a famous example, which we joked about for years. A hen laid the biggest egg that had been seen for a long time and we had a camera team and God knows what go out to some remote suburb of Sydney to take photographs of the lady whose hen had produced this egg, and the egg ... and we reckoned there'd been several things in the news that day that could have been very well covered ... significant things. 107

Many times Fraser was called upon to explain why the new directive was not being rigidly followed. Hamilton had to analyse bulletins and report to the Commission. Fraser himself was frequently interviewed by Boyer or the Commission. At its meeting in July the Commission decided that Hamilton and Fraser should be informed officially of the concern of members that the directive was not being observed. Boyer reported that stills were being used unnecessarily. The picture of the Chairman of the Milk Board had been held in vision for the entire length of an item. Also, a film showing Beale, the Minister for Supply inspecting a munitions factory had been shown. This, in Boyer's opinion, should never have qualified for inclusion in the news. There had been some film dealing with the auctioning of a car seized by Customs, which had lasted for two minutes, whereas the same item on radio lasted only a few seconds. This according to Boyer meant that it was given more prominence than was justified. This and a film dealing with the finish of the Ampol car trial had taken up nearly half of the time of the complete bulletin. The Commission had no objection to such films going into Newsreel, but TV news was definitely not the place.

Hamilton now became very angry. He resented personal criticism of any kind, and in Moses's view was hypersensitive. Because of the Commission's high regard for him and his judgment up to this point, he

had been largely left alone to run the News Department. He wrote to Moses:

In my eight years as Editor-in-Chief the Commission has never felt it necessary to give me a directive in sound news. I appreciate their trust and it would be a poor commentary on my intelligence and my ethical standards to suggest that I would now deliberately betray that trust. 108

He defended his staff claiming that the Commission rebuke had seriously affected morale. When they heard, "They were like whipped children, hurt and bewildered. It is my job now to build up again their morale and enthusiasm". 109 Fraser, he claimed, had been stricter in his enforcement of standards than any censor. Hamilton then once more pointed out what had been explained before - that film coverage, particularly with sound on film, takes longer than a straight radio story read by an announcer. He instanced the difficulties involved in trying to match the television and radio cover in such a story as the presentation of a model of the Opera House, by the designer Joern Utzon, to the N.S.W. Premier. Worth only a few lines on radio, the film story ran for a minute to allow the model to be properly examined. What about a recent speech by the American Ambassador, he asked, in which he spoke very slowly and which was filmed with sound? To cut this film back to the length of the radio coverage would have made it useless. It had been run for three minutes to allow the man to say anything at all. In asking for "guidance" in such instances, Hamilton was in fact, ridiculing the whole Commission approach. Something of the nature of the paucity of any film coverage in the bulletins of the time can be gauged from the fact that on several evenings there had been no illustration at all. Just fifteen minutes of the announcer reading. Finally, Hamilton called into question the

109. Ibid.
restrictions on the use of stills. He asked how was one to know whether a person had never been in the news before, and if this was the case, he doubted whether anyone would have stills available.

Fraser and Hamilton were becoming very frustrated at their inability to explain their point of view as professional newsmen, to the laymen on the Commission. Fraser feels that the Commissioners should never have let themselves become so involved in the matters concerning professional skills, which they did not understand. Lowndes however is of the opinion that frequent discussion of points of programme detail helped the Commission identify areas which needed large-scale decision making. If the same point cropped up several times, then it was worth examining to see whether some broad policy directive was called for. Out of minor points frequently arose major decisions.

Hamilton was now instructed to institute the strictest control of TV news to ensure the Commission's wishes were followed. Chapman remembers the famous phone call about five o'clock every afternoon from [Hamilton] to our operation at Gore Hill and if radio news decided that you'd lead on a certain story, well my goodness me, no matter what pictures you had or how dramatic they were, you led with the dull thing chosen by radio, which was a very bad, shackling thing we all felt ... we were being fettered by the older minds of radio who didn't want to see this thing spread its wings and fly.110

The number of journalists working with Fraser at Gore Hill had grown to seven by mid-1957, with three film editors and one script assistant. Three cine-cameramen were working full-time for news. The following year, in September 1958, the Commission approved the appointment of three additional journalists in order to increase the number of newsreels a week from four to five and to introduce a bulletin on Sunday evenings. The decision was also to allow for the

110. Interview with Ivan Chapman, 9 October 1976.
expansion of existing technical facilities, so that more film reporting and filmed interviews could be done. Similar expansion was approved for Melbourne and permission in principle was obtained for extra positions when the second bulletin at 10 p.m. was begun.

Thus the capacity for filming was increased, particularly with the ordering of more sound cameras, while the restrictions on the use of same-day, up-to-the-minute material were maintained. At the same meeting of the Commission, approval was refused for the separation of the newsreel from the main TV bulletin at 6.45 p.m. and the programming of it at 10 p.m. Boyer realised that if the newsreel followed immediately upon the bulletin, it alleviated somewhat the stark nature of the news. A repeat of newsreel was permitted at 10 p.m.

The late 10 p.m. bulletin was introduced in early 1959 but still the Commission remained adamant that both editions of TV news should be restricted to the reading of the main radio news items of the day with minimum of illustration. It found it necessary to confirm this policy in December 1958 and again in February 1959. In between Commission resolutions, Boyer, Lowndes, Moses, Hamilton and Fraser were engaged in frequent meetings, often acrimonious, about the role of film and stills in news bulletins. Fraser says:

I appeared before that Commission more often than the minutes secretary, I think ... but in all these vicissitudes, oddly enough, the Chief Executive of the ABC [Moses] was one hundred per cent behind me. He took the attitude, and I heard him say this on a number of occasions, well we've got the man there. Why the devil don't we let him go and judge his bulletins on what we think a television bulletin should be. But no ...\footnote{Interview with Keith Fraser, 25 September 1975.}
The Commission had shown such a sensitivity about TV news that they had felt it necessary to intervene on many other relatively minor matters, in addition to the question of illustration. This increased the frustration of the TV news staff. They twice questioned the suitability of the set being used and caused changes to be made. In March 1959, the Commission discussed the use of music in bulletins and in newsreel and came to the conclusion that the practice must cease. It was only prepared to allow it in special circumstances where there might be a particularly long film sequence in newsreel with no spoken commentary. It felt that:

Apart from diverting attention, the use of background music can introduce an emotional element. This is, of course, particularly undesirable in the case of news bulletins. We require our news readers not to show any emotional reaction to the content of the bulletins and we must be careful to maintain this attitude in other aspects of TV presentation.  

Nothing illustrates better the dilemma confronting Boyer than this directive, which tried to carry on the policy tradition, emanating from the coverage of the Queensland railway strike, that all emotion should be squeezed from news. In the writing of news for radio, particularly if voice reports and actualities are excluded, such a policy can achieve its aim. In television, where any film is likely to carry emotional overtones, the extent of which depends on the story being covered, it is impossible to make a product which does not affect the viewer in one way or another. Boyer always failed to appreciate the argument that illustration could assist in understanding. Illustration, to him, meant influencing the viewer in some way in the judgments they made on the essential news items of the day. This brings us to the basic fallacy in Boyer's perennial justification for the importance that he attached to news. If news was "to inform listeners on the matters essential to an understanding and appreciation of the

112. Moses to Acting Editor-in-Chief, 16 March 1959, 11/1/1.
problems of a modern democratic way of life" in order that the public's attachment to democratic ways and institutions be strengthened, much would seem to depend on the degree of understanding by the audience of the issues reported. Boyer felt that news could serve democracy by giving the public the bare essentials on which they could make decisions on matters of controversy, but he was never prepared to go beyond this and actively promote understanding by allowing the addition of supplementary information. It is extremely doubtful that the spartan, heavily-subbed product of news at this time aided public understanding at all. It is a further instance of symbolic reassurance. Boyer frequently proclaimed the virtues of the news service - its truth, its credibility - and the fact that it was promoting democracy and national unity, by providing the means for greater comprehension of social issues, when it fact it failed to take the necessary steps to do so. We have quoted Edelman before on this phenomenon. His thesis is that the public respond to such gestures or ritualistic assertions that goals have been reached, are reassured and therefore acquiescent. Although failing to assist in audience understanding, Boyer's precepts were however successful in preserving public confidence in the institutions around which the country's life was ordered. Nordenstreng point out that popularity and belief in the reliability of a news service frequently conceal the basic failure to communicate information. Little is remembered of the content. Instead it becomes a daily ritual.

In such a situation news programs do not fulfill their function, which is the transmission of information; they begin to serve a completely different purpose, whereby the following of news broadcasts becomes a ritual, a custom serving to maintain a feeling of security.

Such a feeling serves to maintain confidence in those in positions of power.


Music in news bulletins has always been regarded as doubtful news practice, by journalists working in the medium, and Fraser did not contest this point. But he was not so sanguine about its absence from newsreel and he was particularly vehement in arguing for its retention before Boyer and Lowndes. Newsreel was produced in a studio, with music and sound effects being mixed with the announcer's voice in much the same way as the cinema newsreels. To remove the music, in the opinion of the TV news staff, would have taken away much of its appeal. Fraser's plan of campaign, to show up the Commission's lack of appreciation of the finer points of film work, consisted of running newsreel for several nights with only the announcer's voice being heard. Although the Commission did not specify that sound effects be also removed, Fraser did so. There were long interludes of silence between the sections of narration. The effect was so bad that Fraser had no doubts about the outcome. He says

I was never told to put the music back, but I put it back and no-one objected ... and that was the way I operated there. I used to get these directives not to do a thing, I'd scream blue murder, eventually obey the directive and then sneak disobedience in, either piecemeal, or the best way I could.115

Faced with this hostile climate of resistance to its policies, the Commission decided in March 1960, that it could no longer leave any discretion about the inclusion of film to either Hamilton or Fraser. It ordered that for a trial period of one month, no more than two minutes of film could be included in a fifteen minute bulletin. Local film was to be moved almost entirely into newsreel, which could be extended for that purpose. Hamilton was irate.

I cannot pretend [he said], that I am at all happy about the Commission's direction ... I will of course carry out the Commission's direction as instructed but I am bound to say, since I was not consulted, that the decision taken and to be pursued is contrary to my best professional advice. The idea of a rigid mathematical formula replacing editorial responsibility and judgement is foreign to all my thinking.116

115. Interview with Keith Fraser, 28 November 1975.
Hamilton pointed out the procedural problems which this would involve. Technical and staffing difficulties made it impossible to include any same day film in the newsreel which was 'pre-packaged' before local material became available. Additional local film would have to be added to the newsreel, when the bulletin was actually being produced but the effect would be clumsy, because it would not be 'dubbed', with sound mixed, as the newsreel was. The arbitrary separation of the news of the day from the film of the same events, was also seen as introducing obvious repetition. The Commission was unmoved by these arguments. The policy was confirmed and made permanent at its meeting in May. The two minutes could however be averaged over a week, with a maximum of two and a half in any one night.

The issue this time almost cost Hamilton his job. According to Moses, Hamilton strongly resented the implications by the Commission that the TV news was not being presented with sufficient attention to its instructions. He had lost his temper at one meeting at which this was discussed, and two months later, when it was going to be brought up again, Moses felt his behaviour, if repeated, might put his position at some risk. In his words:

I knew he was going to be asked a few questions and I sent Betty Cook [Moses's Executive Assistant] out to have a talk with him first and tell him for goodness sake, not to allow himself to lose his temper or anything and I wanted him to be very calm ... and he was calm at that one interview ... he was inclined to fly off the handle. That's why I had to protect him. He, I think, would have sacked himself that time in Perth if he'd just let himself go.

Lowndes remembers this and other confrontations with Hamilton:

117. The two meetings of the Commission involved were those in Adelaide, 11-14 March 1960 and in Perth on 5-7 May 1960.

118. Interview with Sir Charles Moses, 8 February 1976.
There were many times when we had Wally Hamilton in and when I can remember the atmosphere and my mental picture of him, where his face would go red, where his voice was raised, where he'd get terribly dignified and almost pompous, almost speaking like an Archbishop ... laying down the law to the Commission and saying that this was a matter of principle. 119

Hamilton could only advise his TV journalists to make the best of a bad situation. There was nothing to prevent more illustration in bulletins by the use of other methods such as graphics. Film could be better planned and better shot so that the two minutes is made as effective as possible. Fraser had to time each film used and report to Hamilton with details and his reasons for using it. Frequently he exceeded the time allowed and this was reported to Boyer. Fraser would then be called to Boyer's office. After about six months of this "impossible situation", as Fraser calls it, he suddenly perceived that the arrival and more widespread use of sound cameras could help undermine the Commission's position. In his words

I got hold of a brilliant idea, as I thought. By that time, we were getting sound cameras, so we were doing interviews, and one day ... I said to myself, now if I put a man up there interviewing him, or getting him to make a statement, that's not film, that's words. So I did this. And then I reported back, seven minutes of film ... but only two and a half minutes of real film. 120

For three or four days Boyer, Lowndes, Moses and Hamilton argued about the definition of film as a result of Fraser's challenge. Eventually he was told that his definition was accepted. A sound on film interview or speech was not to be included in the two minutes allowed. It was a development that marked the end of the restrictions on the use of film in news. The floodgates were opened. Fraser say that after the sound on film ruling "we cheated like hell every single day, because I would say that that ban's severity lasted no longer than six months ... we started to just jam the stuff through on our own assessment". 121

120. Interview with Keith Fraser, 25 September 1975.
121. Ibid.
Another factor in the lessened interest in the subject of film in news was undoubtedly the long illness and death of Boyer on 5 June 1961. We have dwelt at length on his obsession with the importance of 'pure' and factual news values being essential to the Commission's survival and standing in Australian society and with news being the vanguard of the Commission's efforts to carve for itself a unique and safer place in the hierarchy of values by promoting solid support for the Australian democratic way of life. Chairmen after Boyer were less concerned with the supposed dangers of a more flexible approach to the selection of news on television, than they were about the arrival on the scene of current affairs television which appeared to contradict and challenge every principle previously applied to the presentation of controversy on the ABC. 'Four Corners', the first of these programmes went to air for the first time on 19 August 1961. Lowndes records that Commission meetings chaired by Boyer's successor, Dr Ralph Darling, had quite a different emphasis. In his view, the Commission's preoccupation with news in Boyer's time "reflected the character of the Chairman, the Chairman's interests and the Chairman's personality". 122

After a period of five years during which the Commission's directive on the allowable amount of news film was largely ignored, it decided to regularise the situation by rescinding the relevant minutes and instead officially recording that it was more desirable to allow flexibility in the choice of film material. 123 Instead of the old idea of extending Newsreel to reduce the film usage in news, the bulletin could now be extended at the expense of the time devoted to newsreel. The place of film in bulletin was at last sanctioned. Nevertheless, film could only be used if it was newsworthy and up to standard and not simply because of its

availability. The links with radio news were also subsequently weakened but retained. Currently the rule still stands that the six main radio stories must be found a place in the TV bulletin.

Lowndes does not now feel that the successful challenge to Boyer's policy by the TV news section amounted to a defeat for the Commission. His assessment is that the senior staff of the Commission, such as Fraser and Hamilton, had to understand that they could not simply indulge their professional whims without taking into account their responsibility to the audience, and he regarded himself as representative of the audience. Lowndes feels that the mere fact that the Commission can demand explanations and justifications is in itself useful because it forces the staff to take Commission viewpoints into account in their work. Even if there is no follow-up action, as in the case of the restriction of news film to two minutes, the Commission is assured that the officer concerned will exercise responsibility, within the degree of freedom allowed him, because he knows that what he does is under close scrutiny. He sums up the episode by saying:

[I] thought it was worth having the argument. I think it had some impact. It might have appeared to have been completely discarded but it would have still been in the mind - there's someone looking over our shoulders ... I think that with the material that was available to us at that time, it wasn't bad that we took a stand. We didn't have the same sort of facilities to go out and get good film. To fill in, because it was television, they would put in rubbish. I think it's as simple as that. But I don't think there was any reluctance to relax the thing later on.124

In Lowndes's view the Commission had successfully fulfilled its role of insisting on accountability. It had successfully impressed its own institutional standpoint on the ABC's responsibility to its audience on its TV news staff to the extent that they had to take this into account in daily decision making. While conceding these points, it is

impossible to ignore the fact that the Commission was unable, over a period of six years, to impose the degree of control over TV news content that it desired and finally abandoned Boyer's standards. To this considerable extent, Commission policy was not implemented.

Summary

The Commission policy to curtail visual illustration in TV News was followed by resolutions, directives, and follow-up discussions in an attempt to enforce it. It was thus a goal which was followed by action geared to achievement, and can therefore be studied as an example of attempted implementation of a programme. As with the first two cases we have dealt with, participants in the programme at the various decision points were few, thus removing one of the major obstacles to implementation. The more participants, the greater the number of diverse perspectives that are encountered, and the greater the possibility therefore of varying delays to the programme. Fewer problems are met with fewer people involved and the greater are the chances of avoiding delays and maintaining high positive intensity. The 1956 TV News policy also had several other factors which would appear to have contributed further to its chances of fulfilment. Unlike our two previous examples, the Government was not an active participant, not did the two key participants in news, Hamilton and Fraser, have a history of opposition and antagonism towards the Commission such as Dixon possessed. On the contrary, the Commission felt supreme confidence in Hamilton, and his capacity to swing his staff behind its policies.

Pressman and Wildavsky say: "To assume reasonable prospects of programme implementation it is necessary to have a high probability of co-operation from every participant".125 The Commission may reasonably

125. Pressman and Wildavsky, Implementation, p.132.
have expected this, but it still persisted with its policy even when disagreements were obvious. Pressman and Wildavsky point out that when there is a conflict of goals, coercion, which might produce a superficial acquiescence, conceals real problems which can adversely affect implementation. Hamilton and Fraser agreed to follow Commission policy under duress, but still opposed it in reality and worked against it. Coercion therefore does not resolve the problems, but merely conceals them. If implementation is to be successful it must be as a result of the co-operation of the participants. Once Hamilton and Fraser tacitly opposed Commission policy, with, in Fraser's case, staff resources and following which backed him, the chances of implementation diminished rapidly. As both men were negative participants, blocking the programme in the hope of eventually winning concessions, delays occurred with a consequent reduction in intensity. Implementation was not possible because too little attention was paid by the Commission to ascertaining responses to its programme at the time the Boyer policy was initiated. While attempts were made to break down the resistance, they were not on the basis of reaching an accommodation or striking a bargain. There was no modification made to the original programme to win over the two negative participants. Ultimate agreement cannot be achieved in these circumstances. The original programme was rigidly adhered to, and even toughened to try to secure acceptance. So the programme eventually foundered because no attempt was made to find out the probability of carrying out of the 'routine' steps for its execution. This is the essential problem in implementation. There can be no certitude that once the programme has been set in motion, the steps necessary are routine and will look after themselves. The problems of implementation must be considered at the same time as the policy itself.
As the paternalistic policies of Boyer were being advocated in their purest form, the very similar policies which were the hallmark of Reith were crumbling at the BBC under the assault of the new forces released by television. The struggle within the BBC News Department against the conservative old guard, which we have already referred to, was one of the earliest challenges. Soon after came the advent of Panorama, chaired by Richard Dimbleby, a Talks Department production, which took the first tentative steps into the mud of the real world from which [the Corporation] had flinched for more than thirty years.\textsuperscript{126}

Topics were aired which had been taboo before. Its reporters were given a much greater degree of freedom than had ever been the case in the BBC before. "It was a new type of reporting, in which the interviewer assumed the right, and the duty, to inquire, investigate and cross-examine."\textsuperscript{127} Some of the reports on Panorama began to question aspects of Government policy, unthinkable under Reith. During the Suez crisis in 1956, the Governors decided to ask Labor to reply to the Government statement on the situation, much against the wishes of the Prime Minister Eden and his cabinet, who replied with dire threats against the Corporation. Reith railed against such indicators of the changed climate of thinking at the BBC but was no longer in a position to influence events. In 1963, the Director-General William Haley had told him that television had prevented a return by the BBC to Reithian values.\textsuperscript{128} By 1964, he was totally in opposition to everything Director-General Hugh Carleton-Greene was doing. He wrote:

\[\text{I lead; he follows the crowd in all its disgusting manifestations of the age ... Without any reservation he gives the crowd public what it wants; I would not, did not.}\]  

\textsuperscript{126} Dimbleby, Dimbleby, p.272. The programme had existed from 1953, but did not break new ground until Dimbleby was engaged as 'chairman' or 'anchorman'.
\textsuperscript{127} Dimbleby, Dimbleby, p.278.
\textsuperscript{128} See Charles Stuart (ed.), Reith Diaries, p.481.
\textsuperscript{129} Charles Stuart (ed.), Reith Diaries, p.510.
Burns has concluded that Reithism as an influence diminished because of the advent of television and because of the end of the BBC's monopoly of broadcasting which brought to a close its role of being the sole judge and arbiter on taste and morals for its audience. He notes that with television came a new type of employee, who did not share the old ethos and purpose, and in news and allied programmes, was concerned with audience building, and presentation techniques geared to new interviewing and reporting styles.

Burne and McQuail question whether Reithism could have existed in the changed social climate in Britain in the nineteen-fifties. McQuail goes on to define tendencies which he sees as replacing the paternalistic concept of audience. One of these is professionalism. It is based on a special skill but subject to ethical and institutional codes of behaviour. It is marked by a sense of calling, a growth of autonomy and a feeling that practitioners ought to be able to make their own decisions without external pressures from clients or others outside their professional groups.130

Another tendency is that of ritualism, in which well-tried formulas are maintained, particularly those with audience appeal, thus enabling anxieties about audiences to be allayed, at the expense of freedom and creativity. He notes that there is great difficulty in accurately perceiving the audience, there being little feedback. Audience research figures are not themselves a guide to the nature of the audience.

Many of these observations are equally applicable to the conflict in the ABC over TV news in the late nineteen-fifties. Reith might not have been in a position to resist the erosion of his principles due to the impact of television but Boyer was. Television could be a threat to the well-being of the Australian audience - to their moral standards and to cherished democratic values. Boyerism had brought the ABC's standing

to its highest point within the community by 1956. It had been 
accepted by the News Department and provided a paternalistic and 
protective view of the audience which reduced the necessity for any 
further evaluation. As Brown says: "affirmation of ideology replaces 
scientific measurement".\textsuperscript{131} Boyer saw television as posing a threat 
to 'factuality' and 'objectivity' in reporting. We have noted how 
narrowly he interpreted these qualities. They had been under attack as 
early as 1947 in the United States, for the purely passive role they 
gave the reporter. The US Commission on the Freedom of the Press in 
that year called upon the media to advance beyond 'objective' reporting 
which was, it said, not an aid but a menace to understanding. The 
supreme test of the media, it noted, was how well it provided for the 
integration of experience. In this connection, Carey remarks that 
'objective' reporting was designed to report a world in which there 
were broad consensual values, purposes and loyalties. Today no such 
system of interpretation exists. With political values and purposes 
the subject of considerable contention, 'objectivity' merely adds to 
confusion by conveying isolated fragments of information, devoid of any 
contextual aids to understanding.

As the BBC experience shows, the idea of presenting only facts to 
a news audience, came under increasing pressure in the nineteen-fifties. 
It was due both to a rapidly changing social climate, and to growing 
realisation that television could play an important part in the 
exploration of social issues. Reuven Frank, an NBC news executive 
comments: "The highest power of television journalism is not in the 
transmission of information, but in the transmission of experience".\textsuperscript{132} 
The implication is that the picture adds more than mere information. The

\textsuperscript{131} Roger L. Brown, "Some Aspects of Mass Media Ideologies", in Halmos (ed.), Communicators, p.162.

\textsuperscript{132} Reuven Frank, "Memorandum from a Television Newsman", Appendix II in A. William Bluem, Documentary in American Television (Hastings House, New York, 1965), p.268. He adds: "We have found a dimension of information which is not contained in words alone".
realisation of this within the BBC caused the wholesale questioning and the rapid erosion of Reithian principles. No longer could the BBC continue to protect its audiences from unwholesome and unpalatable realities. The TV cameras explored the problems of the slums and the factory floor. No such rapid transformation was possible in the ABC, with Boyer still very much in the saddle. But there were the beginnings of a similar professionalism, in TV news, which was linked both to the realisation that television could help audience comprehension, and also to a rather vague, but emerging idea that television was a medium for the masses, and it should therefore adopt a more down to earth approach to its coverage.

Burns has recently drawn attention to the professional ethos, or mystique, associated with the activities of professionals in broadcasting, with which "goes the disqualification of outsiders not only from the job, but effectively, from competence to evaluate performance". Fraser's fight against Boyer's directives shows the relevance of this to TV News, and the extent to which this kind of professionalism was emerging in the late nineteen-fifties. The language in which he still expresses the Departmental resentment of the time, is replete with references to the special knowledge of equipment and techniques possessed by his journalists, and the lack of such knowledge on the part of the Commission. TV newsmen did not accept Boyerism in the way in which their radio news colleagues did. To Fraser, the much greater amounts of money spent on television news, were in themselves a justification for producing a product that was popular. He says:

I saw no point, and I still see no point in putting it away on a top shelf and dragging it out for a small elitist minority within the community. I feel strongly that news is gathered in the hedgerow or the market place. It belongs down there in the dust of the roads. That's where it stems from and ... it should be thrown right back to the widest cross-section of the community that generates it.\textsuperscript{134}

\textsuperscript{133} Tom Burns, "Commitment and Career in the BBC", in McQuail (ed.), Mass Communications, p.298.

\textsuperscript{134} Interview with Keith Fraser, 25 September 1975.
He thus thought ratings for TV news were extremely important. Otherwise the expense could not be justified. This 'populist' theory did not accord with Boyer's ideas of the ABC's function in society. He had written:

If ... too great attention is given to the wooing of a maximum audience, there is the inevitable danger of neglecting the more specific tasks [of] national broadcasting which the community has a right to expect. 135

Divergence in attitudes to audience had been the genesis of the first disputes the Commission had had with its news department. Specifically, in the TV news dispute, the question had been whether the news should be illustrated, and so provide the audience with wider perspectives than bare facts on which to make their own judgment. The latter prospect, to Boyer, meant taking a far more active role in opinion forming that the Commission could allow. It was therefore a struggle between ABC standards of 'objectivity' and the transmission of experience, and between paternalism and professionalism. Boyer's dedication to the principles of Reith were doomed in the nineteen-fifties as television widened newsmen's horizons everywhere. 'Four Corners' was to begin within six months of his death. But Boyerism, like Reithism, did not die completely. It lived on in radio news for many years and the success of Hamilton and Fraser in questioning its over-rigid application to TV News did not mean that issues began to be reported in some depth in that Department's bulletins, or that reporters were allowed to present and explore issues as they were in the BBC. A great many of the Boyerist institutional precepts were still adhered to. Chapman recalls the distinct aversion of ABC news, for example, to the idea of interviewing people live on air, a well-

established BBC practice at this time. In his view, the ABC was much more fearful of the possibility of something being said which was offensive, or out of keeping with 'good taste'. He remembers also: "we were terribly pure. We were much purer than the BBC. Everything was very clean and good and godly and straight".136 The roots of conservatism in ABC news run deep.

In retrospect, it seems doubtful whether Hamilton, despite his fight over pictorialisation, ever had much comprehension or understanding of the degree to which TV news could aid understanding by the additional dimensions of perception which it uses. It is more likely that he chose to fight for two main reasons - the undermining of his editorial responsibility by Commission interference, and the fact that the credibility of TV news might have been severely affected if it had limited pictures to the extent proposed by the Commission. Although, as we have seen, he shared some of Boyer's consensual attitudes, particularly those of protecting society and social values from the unpleasant, the disturbing, the morally seductive in ABC programmes and news bulletins, as with Boyer there was a limit to the extent to which he was prepared to go to ensure that these principles were enforced. In 1948-49, Boyer had balked at the prospect of losing some degree of believability by too obviously excluding the Communist Party. Something of the same concern alerted Hamilton to the prospect that ABC TV news might come in for criticism and ridicule if it was too conservative in its approach - the fate that had befallen the BBC in its early TV news days.

136. Interview with Ivan Chapman, 9 October 1976.
In fact, an analysis of Hamilton's writing and correspondence at the time of the dispute and a decade later, reveal that he came to share some of Boyer's misgivings about TV news. In his mind, its problems and disadvantages became far more absorbing than its potential.

In 1956, he told the Commission that "illustrations would assist the viewers in understanding the significance of the news items concerned". He believed that "often, of course, the communication of an event, television-wise, must have far greater impact than a version in words only". After the Commission crackdown, he did not attempt to define further TV's advantages, but simply argued in terms of leaving editorial judgment in his Department's hands. His writing in his later years reveal that his earlier beliefs had not been firmly held. In 1968, newspapers had come to seem to him to be the most admirable form of disseminating news.

Only with a newspaper can you stop the unfolding of a story, hold it and read it again for better comprehension ... What they can offer in this age of instant, fragmented news is the chance to stop and read again, with background and interpretation, with which radio too seldom bothers at prime time, and which television too often confuses by merely dazzling and exciting.

Television news was 'uncertain', 'experimenting', 'astray with emphasis', and put 'technique before content'.

If he still chose occasionally to refer to its 'impact' and 'aid to understanding', he would immediately return at far greater length to its capacity for increasing misunderstanding, for distorting 'truth'. Two matters worried him most. The first was the apparent shift in news values in television, with pictures playing a major part in deciding the worth of the story. This was not 'truth', but subservience to

entertainment values. 'Truth' to Hamilton was the 'straight' presentation of news. It is extremely clear that 'straight' news was basically a one-way communication process between 'authority' and the people. 'Straight news', told 'soberly' and 'thoughtfully' would maintain trust between the people and their leaders. Thus, he wrote,

the mass media must share [the blame] for the growing gap between the people and authority in whatever form it be. We call it the credibility gap, the area of suspicion, disbelief, scorn and unconcern, the gap between the leaders and the masses ... the communicators cannot be guiltless. It is their failure to inform successfully, that has aggravated the gap. 40

Hamilton saw that TV news had plenty of opportunity for sapping public confidence in 'authority'. This was because it could show scenes of 'violence', of resistance to authority with much greater impact. Time after time he returned to the theme of 'lack of balance' shown in TV news in their depiction of riots, and clashes of demonstrators with police. The pictures were too 'selective' or 'out of balance' in concentrating to this degree on violence, because the vast majority of people were not protesting. Hamilton, as Boyer did, eventually saw TV news as a danger to the core consensual value of non-violent resolution of disputes. This was not serving 'truth'. He was particularly critical of many TV reporters, who got in the way of 'truth', by serving their own ego, instead of having "a dedication to serve society with the highest purpose". 141

Hamilton and Boyer believed TV news posed a threat to established social values because the pictures made it more 'believable'. As Tuchman says:

television news presentations lend themselves to acceptance of this everyday dictum, because a television presentation entails more dimensions of perception than either newspapers relegated to the written word, radio programs bound to spoken presentations, or magazine formats wedded to the written word and the still photograph. On television, the viewer can 'judge' most or all of these dimensions at the same time, with the added benefit of moving film. 142

141. Hamilton, Responsibility, p.11.
To Boyer and Hamilton, it was more 'believable' but it was not 'truth'.

'Truth' to Boyer and Hamilton lay in the news selection criteria employed by the radio newsmen. Words in brief copy form were far more manageable than film. Newsmen and editors worked to elementary 'objective' formulas, with the overview of 'community value' always uppermost, together with the other news policy restraints. Boyer and Hamilton came to realise that the decision to cover an event on television, even in the simple non-interpretive fashion of the early years, itself guaranteed a certain form, treatment, and duration which was independent of radio news values. Stories took longer on television, 'minor' stories took precedence over 'major' radio stories. Because of the different work pattern in television, with control of the workload vital, and consequent demands on cameramen and reporters to present stories in standard forms so that editors and other technical staff can handle them in time, all coverages assume a basic presentation pattern. Tuchman says: "the technological and organisational dictates of television news processing transform events by placing them in standard presentation forms".143 Events are transformed, reality reconstructed by the TV newsman's need to control his work. Thus the radio newsmen's assessments are not necessarily those of the television newsmen whose work patterns and view of reality have been affected by the standard forms which he must use.

When Boyer criticised TV news because it lacked 'balance' and 'objectivity' again he had radio news standards in mind. The simple pro and con 'objective formula', with the checking of ascertainable facts was much more easily policed and controlled in radio. He and

Hamilton were frightened at the opportunities for 'selectivity' that film editing offered. In this area too Tuchman has pointed out television cameramen perceive vision and space according to social definitions. 'Objective' camerawork is 'straight' because it keeps to conventional time-space rhythms, 'head-on' camera placement, and 'fixed-plane' perspective, in which the eye of the camera is not itself in motion. Through the adoption of these techniques, 'objectivity' is demonstrated, which adds to their 'believability', because the visual perceptions are those of everyday reality.

What Boyer and Hamilton failed to see is that there is more than one kind of 'objectivity'. They did not understand that the work patterns of radio news also reconstructed reality to fit rigid strategic rituals. That the control of work in the radio newsroom also involved 'routinization' which reconstituted the events of the everyday world, so that the 'unexpected' could be handled rapidly and 'objectively'. The need for work to be controlled transforms the perception of events and their importance. As work differs in radio and television, it can be seen that each can perceive an event in a different way, while still maintaining 'objectivity'. Radio 'objectivity' will be examined further in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 5

Brevity, Speed and Accuracy:
The Rejection of Interpretive Reporting

In previous chapters, emphasis has been given to the heavily edited, brief nature of ABC news reports, their confinement to the essential 'facts' and the exclusion of any elements of colour or drama. Recordings by reporters themselves, and the inclusion of any kind of actuality, were rare. Some of the factors responsible for this sober, highly formalised approach to news have already been examined. They included the competitive relationship with the newspapers, in which ABC roundsmen began to cover the same 'beats' as newspaper reporters, in order to gain access to news between newspaper edition times. Unlike broadcasting organisations abroad, the ABC did not have access to round-the-clock agency wire services, one factor which enabled reporters of the BBC for example, to selectively cover major events by the use of voice descriptions. Unlike the BBC, ABC reporters were not 'voice' men, but reporters who worked very much like their newspaper equivalents. When the Commission's officers, realising developments in news broadcasting overseas, began to urge changes in news presentation in 1942-43, they were frustrated because the News Department associated the move with a 'sellout' to newspaper interests, and the PSCB itself rejected the idea of Parliamentary reporting which went beyond 'facts'. Later, Boyer strongly endorsed this simple factual approach to news, adding his own rigid interpretation that anything which went beyond 'facts' was 'comment'. His insistence on the abandonment of 'colour' was similarly linked with his belief that only a safe, neutral service could ensure Commission survival in a dangerously uncertain political environment.
These are some of the explanations but they do not provide the complete answer. They do not sufficiently explain why the ABC, unlike major broadcasting organisations in America and Europe, continued to broadcast news according to the traditional formula well into the nineteen-sixties. When news bulletins abroad were replete with tapes of actuality, interview and voice-report, ABC news still consisted of pages of 'copy' read by an announcer. Such a contrast in styles which continued for such a long period implies deliberate rejection of overseas techniques not only by the Commission itself, but by the radio news staff also. By 1961, there had been no emergence in radio news of that sense of frustrated professionalism which had marked the relationship of the TV news staff with the Commission. Radio newsmen's horizons were still bounded by the notebook and pencil, despite the exciting developments in the use of tape machines which the Talks Department were demonstrating every day. News was not to be seduced by the siren calls of the broadcaster.

In this chapter, attention is drawn to some of the purely organisational factors which were responsible for the conservatism in news. The consequences of the anti-newspaper ethic of the news service are looked at more closely. The question is posed whether the news service itself became aware of the limitations of its approach to news-gathering? If it was, why did it decide that such a style was desirable?

**ABC News - The Alternative Newspaper**

(i) **The Beginnings of Press Hostility**

Frank Dixon had joined the ABC in 1936 with a strong dislike of newspaper monopolies and the influence they were wielding in Australian society. But he had respect for the professionalism of the staff they employed. He had no sooner taken up his position when he had a protracted argument with the Controller of Programmes, Keith Barry over
the suitability of using material from the press which was 'disturbing and unpleasant'. Barry had complained that on Christmas Day, 1936, the news had consisted of news of war preparations in Europe and Asia, details of accidents, and crime reports. He asked:

I was wondering whether we might not deliberately make up our minds to evade as much as possible the unpleasant things in the press and make a special point of looking, within reason, for the pleasant things.¹

Dixon argued that such a policy would mean that listeners would question the credibility of the service. He added:

I am convinced that we will serve our listeners well if we follow the standard of journalism set by the Sydney Morning Herald in New South Wales, The Times, the Manchester Guardian and the Daily Telegraph in London.²

As this correspondence continued, Dixon made his views plainer. "I don't think the press is as bad as it is painted"³, he told Barry on one occasion. And later he said, "I have precedent in the shape of well-conducted newspapers like the Sydney Morning Herald, Melbourne Argus etc. to guide me".⁴

Even when Denning was appointed to Canberra in 1939, Dixon took some time to become convinced that his reports should always be preferred to those of the press. Within days of taking up his post, Denning complained to Dixon that a report from the Sydney Sun had been preferred to material which he had sent. He wrote:

the point I do make is that the newspapers' political news is notoriously unreliable ... My own disposition would be to suggest that nothing should be used as coming from Canberra unless I have sent it, or unless it has been referred to me for confirmation.⁵

1. Barry to Dixon, 29 December 1936, SP286, Box 3, S2.
2. Dixon to Barry, 5 January 1937, SP286, Box 3, S2.
3. Dixon to Barry, 11 June 1937, SP286, Box 3, S2.
4. Dixon to Barry, 15 June 1937, SP286, Box 3, S2.
5. Denning to Dixon, 7 June 1939. Quoted in Dixon to Moses 7 June 1939, SP286, Box 1, S2, "GM Correspondence".
Dixon and his staff at this time were wedded to the belief that they should use items from the press which Denning might miss, and furthermore there was a feeling that the press might, on occasions be more reliable than Denning. Dixon reported to Moses:

I think it would be bad policy to exclude an item simply because we did not receive it from our own representative. Naturally Mr Denning does not wish to prejudice his relations with Ministers, and it may be that occasionally he deems it expedient to suppress a particular item because he feels that a Minister, or the Government, would wish him to do so.6

This, of course, is in marked contrast to Dixon's attitudes both to the Government and the press during the war. We have earlier pointed out that it was Cleary, not Dixon, who up to this time had become convinced of the unsuitability of press news for the ABC because of colouration resulting from editorial policy. When Dixon began to react against the press sources on which he relied, it was because he began gradually to realise that press reports contained too many 'factual' errors, which, when repeated in ABC bulletins, brought adverse reaction.7 In 1939, although Dixon joined with his Chairman and General Manager in railing against 'the bad faith' of the newspaper proprietors and connived with them in breaching the newspaper agreements whenever it was thought necessary,8 there was still no evidence to suggest that he had anything but admiration for the columns of the 'quality' press in Australia and the journalists who provided them.

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6. Dixon to Moses, 7 June 1939, SP286, Box 1, S2. By 1943, it had become ABC practice to use only the ABC’s own material from Canberra.

7. See Chapter 1, p.65.

The switch to an aggressively hostile attitude to the newspapers
dates partly from 1939, but more positively from 1942. 1939 saw the
newspapers' attack on Denning's appointment and the beginning of
deliberate attempts to impede him in his work. It was the beginning of
the newspaper campaign to prevent any further attempt to 'supplement'
the news by the ABC. 1942 was the year in which the Labor Government
and most Australian newspapers began to fall out over the rights of the
latter to criticise aspects of Government policy in wartime. By 1944,
there was continuous conflict between the two, and in these disputes, the
ABC News Department's sympathies lay, and were seen to lie, with the
Government. The bitterness this evoked was apparent not only at
executive level but also at that of the working journalist. It
continued well into the nineteen-forties and confirmed and reinforced
the strongly competitive nature of the ABC's relationship with the
press. This, in turn, influenced the style and content of ABC news.

Until Denning began to gather Government statements from the
same sources as other 'roundsmen' employed by the press, the handful
of sub-editors working at the ABC had little working contact with
their press colleagues. Arguments over the agreements with the
newspapers took place between senior executives in remote boardrooms.
When Denning, the ABC's first reporter, was subjected to a very cold
reception from newspaper reporters in Parliament House, the reaction
among Dixon's news staff must have been one of surprise and then anger.
In 1944, Denning gave details of the difficulties created for him by
other newspapermen in evidence before the PSCB.\(^9\) Other journalists
claimed he had no right to attend the Prime Minister's press
conferences and to use information given in answer to their questions.
As Keith Murdoch put it:

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There has always been a bit of difficulty about the Commission's Canberra roundsman. All the roundsmen go in as a body to interview the Prime Minister or some other Minister, and every hare which we raise is at once caught by the Commission's roundsman, and we are left with no hare at all.  

Canberra pressmen were successful for a period of six weeks in urging Menzies, in his first term as Prime Minister, to hold separate news conferences for them and for Denning - a device which Menzies found obliged to abandon because it took up too much of his time. Denning was eventually forced to compromise and agreed to withhold some stories at the request of newspapers which claimed they formed part of some 'campaign' in which they were currently involved. Denning had been engaged in parliamentary reporting for ten years before he joined the ABC but the professional friendships he had formed in the capital were of no account when other reporters saw him as a threat to the pre-eminence they had always enjoyed. It was the speed with which ABC radio could relay Denning's reports which worried them. We have already drawn attention to the preoccupation of the press at this time with the necessity of always being first with the news.

The obstinacy of the press on this point was strongly resented by both Dixon and Moses. As Denning's problems became known in Sydney, Dixon drew Moses's attention to a press report from Washington that radio reporters had, after a campaign lasting eight years, been given equal facilities with newspapermen for covering the affairs of Congress, been given access to White House press conferences and had been given a radio gallery of their own. By the end of 1939, Dixon was, for the first time, describing newspapers as being 'unsuitable' as sources of radio news, and there seems little question that Denning's unhappy experiences, and the subsequent newspaper adamancy that there

11. See Chapter 1, pp.69-70.
12. See The Journalist (June 1939).
could be no further extension of ABC news-gathering, were vital factors in his change of attitude.

There was a further deterioration in the relations between the ABC News Department and the press in the period of the Gibson Committee's hearings. The full extent of the bitterness and the disputation between press and Commission became revealed for the first time. Newspaper proprietors giving evidence claimed that the ABC could not collect its own news without them. Dixon and his staff became more self-confident as the list of their 'scoops' over the press from Canberra and from overseas grew. The advertising of ABC 'scoops' angered the press, which became more aware that ABC news was bent on competing to the extent that it was able, given the restrictions of the newspaper agreements. 13

As the Gibson Committee heard its evidence, there occurred the first indicators of the coming conflict. On 9 September 1941, Dixon reported to Bearup that the newspapers had refused to print a statement issued by the Minister for Munitions, Senator McBride, because it had been broadcast in the ABC news before they could publish it. The statement, dealing with the manufacture of small arms ammunition, had been released simultaneously to the press and the ABC. The Sun had told the minister's publicity secretary that they and other papers would treat all other statements first broadcast by the ABC in similar fashion.

Dixon commented:

In my opinion, this specific refusal of the papers to print a statement that had been previously been broadcast means they are attempting to coerce Ministers into withholding statements from broadcasting until they have appeared in print. 14

13. See Chapter 1, p.59.
A week later, ABC news prominently featured a statement by the Minister for the Navy, W.M. Hughes, which denied a front page story in the Sunday Sun reporting the shelling of Nauru by a German raider.\textsuperscript{15} The ABC news staff had spent most of the day checking the story with Government departments before obtaining the denial. Four days later The Telegraph accused the ABC of failing to officially verify a report which it had carried, claiming that the United States and Japan had come to an arrangement to guarantee peace in the Pacific.\textsuperscript{16} The newspaper said it had not received news of this from its own extensive sources and when it had checked with Government ministers, they had known nothing about it. The Mirror, then the renegade in the newspaper world, the same afternoon mocked The Telegraph for its sensitivity on the issue. Dixon directly linked The Telegraph's article with the denial of the Nauru shelling. "Of course, The Telegraph's article was a 'hit back' for our use on Sunday night, of Mr Hughes's statement that publication of the report about the attack on Nauru was 'mischievous and misleading'."\textsuperscript{17}

So far, the arguments had been pitched at the predictable level of trying to cast doubts on each other's authenticity. When the Labor Government took office however, in October 1941, it took on a new tone entirely. Labor's strong views about the press monopolies were well known. In the early months of the new administration, the press began to chafe at what it considered were onerous and unnecessary censorship restrictions, and at political "interference" with the censorship authorities...

\begin{enumerate}
\item[15.] In the Sunday Sun, 12 September 1941.
\item[16.] In the Daily Telegraph, 16 September 1941.
\item[17.] Dixon to Bearup, 16 September 1941, SP286, Bundle 6.
\end{enumerate}
At the conference called in Canberra on 10 February 1942 to discuss these issues, the conflict bubbled to the surface. Press representatives criticised the differing points of view held by the censorship authorities in the various States, the 'blanket' censorship of references to certain subjects, such as industrial disputes, and the ban on the publication of enemy claims of success until officially confirmed. The Government wanted some news withheld because of the possible effect on public morale, while the newspapers claimed that the withholding of news would have a more damaging effect. Curtin had a sharp exchange with Warwick Fairfax of the Sydney Morning Herald over the canvassing for support from overseas for the paper's editorial policies which were critical of the Government. Curtin said:

Whilst you have an entire right to influence the public of your own country, you have no right to use your organization for the purpose of trying to make it appear that what you say in this country is also the considered opinion of the great body of the public of another country.

Evatt revealed that the Government had considered prosecution, in one instance, under wartime regulations which made it an offence to interfere with the war effort. He added: "I do not think it fair that a newspaper which has strong opinions about the Government should canvass for supporting opinion in other parts of the world".

18. Curtin was referring to cables sent by one press organisation, apparently the Sydney Morning Herald, to other overseas press organisations, which, it was alleged, sought critical comment similar to that contained in a Sydney Morning Herald editorial. The editorial commented on dissension in Australian Advisory War Council meetings. The cables were apparently drawn to the Government's attention by the Chief Censor.


20. Ibid.
Nevertheless, the conference appeared to end amicably with newspaper agreement to limit their reporting of the affairs of the Advisory War Council to official statements in return for Government agreement to limit the use of 'blanket' censorship bans. Brian Penton of the Daily Telegraph warned that "'blanket' censorship opens the way to political censorship", a trend he already felt was apparent in the banning of news of strikes. Curtin assured delegates that:

the Government ... does not desire to have any restriction upon the expression of opinion or criticism of policy which responsible people in Australia think is demanded. We do not want views to be the subject of Government control.

The following month, however, the Prime Minister began to express his opinions in no uncertain terms about domestic criticism of the Government, carried in editorial columns. At an "off-the-record" news briefing in Canberra on 18 March 1942, he attacked the Sun News Pictorial (Melbourne) and the Daily Telegraph. According to the ABC's own confidential reports of these meetings, he described leader writers as "a bloody lot of nit-wits", threatened to ban all advertising of luxury goods and said he would "put the clamps on Brian Penton, Editor of the Telegraph and warned the Daily Telegraph representative that he should instruct his paper to take care of this warning".

As this undercurrent of hostility between the major newspapers and the Government grew stronger, it threw into relief the nature of the new ABC bulletins emanating from Canberra which largely contained Government statements. As we have noted earlier, they began on Government instructions in December 1941, and were increased in number the following month. From February, three of these bulletins were

22. Ibid., p.1.
relayed daily by all commercial stations. The press quickly became aware of the Government pressures being exerted on the ABC. A report of the discord at the Canberra conference of 7 January was carried in the Daily Telegraph of 8 February. Earlier the Sydney Morning Herald called attention to what it called "objectionable features" of the Canberra news. It concluded:

In effect, the Australian Broadcasting Commission is being made a political weapon in the service of the Government and the Government party - a state of affairs more in keeping with Fascism than the Democracy which the party professes.

Following the Ward-Spender-Fadden controversy, the press were even more convinced that ABC news was the plaything of politicians. Among the publications carrying editorials protesting against the "misuse" of ABC news were the Courier-Mail, the Brisbane Telegraph, The Mercury (Hobart), The Bulletin, and The Age. After questions were asked in the House about Government instructions relating to ABC news, the Sydney Morning Herald called attention to "new influences" at work in the bulletins. It said:

the Prime Minister cannot allow an influential national instrumentality, reaching hourly into the homes of hundreds and thousands of people throughout the Commonwealth and spreading into both friendly and enemy countries to drift any further.

25. See Chapter 1, pp.83-94 for the background to these developments.
27. Sydney Morning Herald, 30 January 1942.
28. 3 February 1942.
29. 2 February 1942.
30. 2 February 1942.
31. 11 February 1942.
32. 3 February 1942.
33. 9 March 1942.
Dixon, as we have seen, had welcomed the new and important role given to the news service by the Government, and had seen the opportunities it had presented for expansion of the service if it met with Government approval. From this time on the major newspapers and the ABC assumed their different roles in relation to the Canberra Government, one being the 'adversary' and the other 'good citizen'.

Positions hardened in 1943. As the year began, Postmaster-General Ashley produced in the House what he described as "Further evidence of the campaign that is being waged to disunite the Australian people and create a wrong impression in the British Empire and America". It consisted of a press message sent overseas by AAP, which quoted at length an editorial of the _Adelaide Advertiser_ critical of the Government's Militia Bill. Then came the shock to the press of the Government's rejection of the ABC agreement with the newspapers. Evidence given at the subsequent PSCB hearing showed the press clearly the division that had arisen between the Commission and the journalists it employed. The leaks to the Government by ABC news staff, and their feeding of information to the AJA, showed the press and their staff that they were confronting men with quite conflicting views on news coverage. The allegations by Pratt of the AJA of "distortion" and "suppression" by the newspaper monopolies, were followed by the corollary from James of the same union that: "the existence of an independent ABC service minimizes the degree of inaccuracy and distortion that appears in the newspapers; in other words it has a sort of policeman influence and exercises a check on the newspapers".

34. See Chapter 1, p.89.
The staff feels, he said, that the people want the truth, instead of speculation. It has been pointed out earlier that the views of Pratt and James at the hearing were, in fact, those of the ABC news staff. Ezra Norton supported James's view, maintaining the Commission's news service, "sets a certain standard and puts the newspapers, both the members of ANPA and ourselves, on our mettle". 38 This role-taking by ABC newsmen supported and justified the stance they had taken over the reporting of matters of government. They were to be more 'factual' and less prone to 'errors' than the newspapers. They were to be 'trusted' more. As Pratt pointed out, newspapers might be able to get away with 'errors', but they were more obvious in radio news. The news service had now taken on an identity of its own.

The newspapers had been inclined to blame the Government in 1942 for 'misusing' the ABC news. Now, it was apparent the Government had a willing team in ABC news who saw, as Dixon did, that it was their duty to 'balance' the press attacks on the Government. When, in 1944, the newspapers moved into a position of confrontation with the Government, the 'impartiality' of the news service in reporting these events, was seriously questioned.

(ii) The ABC's Role in Government - Press Clashes, 1944

On 18 February 1944, Sir Keith Murdoch wrote an article in the Melbourne Herald which was highly critical of the Australian-New Zealand Agreement which had been signed in January, largely due to the efforts of Evatt. The two countries agreed to work together in matters of common concern, particularly security and defence, civil aviation, post-war disposal of territories and bases and the welfare of all Pacific people. 39 Murdoch felt that it was insulting and unwise to exclude the United

38. Ezra Norton, Evidence, PSCB, 10 November 1943, p.44.
39. See Evatt's report to the House, CPD, 10 February 1944, pp.72-73.
States from such deliberations, and he urged that consideration be
given to handing over to that country the Pacific territories of New
Caledonia and New Britain after the war. On 25 February, Evatt told
the House that the Murdoch article contained "misleading statements"
and was "un-Australian in sympathy and outlook". The same afternoon
Denning was summoned by Information Minister Calwell to explain why
the midday news bulletins contained only part of Evatt's statement. Calwell insisted that the whole of the statement be carried. Cleary
and Boyer were contacted immediately but decided that the statement
merited no special treatment and was to be subject to the usual editorial discretion. Dixon chose to run it in full. Cleary had
noted that no précis of Murdoch's remarks had been included when
Evatt's edited statement was run and the Commission demanded an
explanation from Dixon. The News Department maintained that they had
carried the question from the Labor member Pollard which had elicited
Evatt's reply, and Pollard's four line summary of Murdoch's proposal
was all that was required. Pollard had phrased his question in the
most subjective way using words like 'subversive' and 'unpatriotic'.
It is very doubtful therefore whether such a 'summary' should have been
relied upon instead of making reference to the original. Dixon, in
his book, leaves no doubt where his sympathies lay:

40. Calwell had become Information Minister on 21 September 1943.
Professor Colin Keirnan who has Calwell's personal papers and has written
his biography (as yet unpublished), says: "He believed the press was the
agency used by capitalism to mislead the people ... it was
Arthur Calwell's intention to put an end to this alliance, to
harness the media to what he believed to be a national policy".
Colin Keirnan, "Arthur A. Calwell's Clashes with the
Australian Press, 1943-1945", Historical Journal, (University of
Murdoch did not supply us with copies of his stuff and we did not feel disposed to summarise them from his paper. He was a purely private controversialist, whereas Evatt, as Minister for External Affairs, was outlining Australia's foreign policy. 41

There is no clearer evidence of Dixon's strong inclination towards the favouring of those in authority. It was not only Murdoch's original statement that was not reported. His reply to Evatt was also ignored.

By April 1944 the newspapers were extremely concerned about what they regarded as an obvious political slant in the exercise of censorship. Some form of showdown seemed inevitable. It occurred finally over reports carried in the American press of a statement by Army Minister Forde that ninety thousand men were to be released from the Australian Army. Agencies had sent the report from Australia. Members of the U.S. Foreign Affairs Committee criticised the decision, believing that U.S. forces would have to shoulder a greater burden in the Pacific theatre. 42

Calwell seized his opportunity to defend censorship, saying that Forde's statement had been taken out of context. Although, he said, the Government was alleged to have failed to keep the American public informed of the Australian war effort, it was the metropolitan newspapers which must take most of the responsibility for any failures in this respect, because of the:

very mischievous messages to the United States [which] have been based on partisan and inaccurate editorials ... If it had not been for the commonsense restraint imposed by censorship, the volume of anti-Australian propaganda would have been many times as great ... The writers of some of these diatribes are little better than fifth columnists. 43

42. See Daily Telegraph, 11 and 12 April 1944.
43. Daily Telegraph, 13 April 1944.
The following day Henderson replied on behalf of ANPA.

Calwell's statement he said,

is another example of Mr Calwell's method of diverting public attention from his own failures by making baseless charges against other people. Because of censorship most correspondents of American papers have been withdrawn from Australia and for the same reason Australian correspondents have not been able to inform their papers of Australia's great effort.44

The same day Calwell accused Henderson of making inaccurate statements and the Australian press generally of distortion and suppression against the Labor Government and all preceding Governments.

Henderson this time prepared a reply which contained details of recent acts of the censor, thus intending to prove his point that his powers were being abused in the name of national security. The censor had prevented publication of news that tram and bus employees in Sydney had defied Curtin's order for them to return to work. Phrases critical of the Government had been removed from some stories. The censor had stopped some Reuters messages for overseas which had contained Australian newspaper extracts. A paragraph had been deleted from a report of a speech which had been critical of Calwell.

The latest statements by Calwell and Henderson were prepared for publication in the Daily Telegraph of 15 April. However, State Publicity Censor Horace Mansell refused to allow parts of Henderson's statement to be printed, including the examples given above, although he passed Calwell's comments in full. The Telegraph thereupon decided to ignore the censorship agreement which did not permit references to censorship and thus banned blank spaces to indicate the extent of censorship.45

44. Daily Telegraph, 14 April 1944.

45. The agreement was between the press and the Government's Press Censorship Advisory Committee. See Keirnan, "Calwell's Clashes", pp.85-86.
It published Henderson's statement with blank spaces. Henderson prepared another strong attack on Calwell for the *Sunday Telegraph* next day, claiming: "With this weapon of war-time regulations up his sleeve, Mr Calwell is free to make venomous personal attacks on individuals and then prevent them from giving the facts that would answer him". The censor this time ordered the entire statement to be deleted as well as an editorial on the same subject. The Editor refused to fill up the blanks, and Calwell ordered in Commonwealth police to seize the papers to prevent their being distributed. The four Sydney metropolitan newspapers, the *Adelaide News* and the *Melbourne Herald* were all banned the following day when they attempted to give details of Henderson's statement. The newspapers sought a High Court injunction restraining Mansell from preventing publication of the material and it was granted on 17 April.

From the outset, Cleary and Moses thought the ABC would be prudent to remain outside such an archetypal conflict as far as was possible. Moses personally ruled that Calwell's statement of 14 April was not to be used. Nothing was carried in bulletins relevant to the dispute until the seizure of the *Sunday Telegraph*. Calwell's statement of that day, 16 April, justifying his action, was sent to the News Department with a covering letter from Mansell asking that it be

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46. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 April 1944.

47. In his biography, Calwell claims that the information in Henderson's article would have endangered Australian prisoners-of-war. The full text of Henderson's statement published in both the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Daily Telegraph* after the injunction does not support this contention. See A.A. Calwell, *Be Just and Fear Not* (Lloyd O'Neill, Melbourne, 1972), pp.90-91. Pages 88-95 of the same book give the background to Calwell's intensely bitter feelings towards the newspaper proprietors, particularly Keith Murdoch.

48. The newspapers won the court case which followed, and the Government failed to have the decision reversed in the High Court. See Keirnan, *'Calwell's Clashes'* , pp.89-91.
broadcast in full. Although the statement was run at great length by the ABC, two sections - one alleging that censorship had been flagrantly defied and the other that the law had been defied - were deleted. No comment from Henderson was included.

The following day, ABC news staff ran into trouble with Mansell and with his superior, the Chief Publicity Censor, E.G. Bonney, over the extent to which the newspapers should be allowed to present their case. Mansell ordered the deletion of part of the news item in which the newspapers defended their action. He claimed that they could not make excuses for breaking the law. Later, however, he asked that the news item be submitted to Bonney. In the ABC report of the conversation which followed it is clear that very heavy pressure was put on the news staff to emphasise the Government's case and play down that of the press. Bonney told the ABC newsman that the ABC was supposed to be a Government organ, and he proceeded to virtually dictate the form the item should take. At Bonney's instructions were inserted sentences which said the newspapers had acted in defiance of a censorship instruction. He ordered the deletion of part of the newspaper case. And he finally ordered the inclusion of part of Calwell's statement of the night before. The news staff agreed to these changes on the spot without any references to the management or the Commission.

That evening Forde issued a statement in Canberra which the Commission instantly seized upon as indicating a way out of their dilemma. He said that, in his opinion, any comment on the censorship affair was sub judice and improper, as the issues had to go before the High Court. Menzies immediately attacked Forde's remarks alleging that they represented an ingenious attempt to muzzle public discussion. This was not used in any bulletin in accordance with Moses's instructions. A similar statement by Fadden was rejected the following day, 19 April.
Calwell was in Adelaide at the time, and on the morning of 19 April he picked up his copy of the Advertiser to see not only Menzies's statement of the previous day, but also photographs of Commonwealth Police with drawn pistols preventing the departure of newspaper delivery trucks. They were photographs which had appeared in the Sydney newspapers the previous day. Calwell was angered at their use which he felt created the wrong impression in the mind of the public. It is possible also, though it is not clear, that at about the same time he had heard of the statement issued that morning by the Commissioner of N.S.W. Police, W.J. MacKay, which assured the public that the photographs were not of his own police force. Calwell took strong exception to MacKay's action, which he regarded as being instigated by McKell, in order to win voter support at the forthcoming State election. Summoning an ABC reporter to his office, Calwell dictated a statement which was largely a personal attack on Menzies but which also praised the action of the Commonwealth Police. There were hurried consultations among Commissioners and Moses when this story reached Sydney, and it was finally decided to broadcast the comments on the police and leave out his reference to Menzies.

It seems apparent that the Commission was under some pressure at this time to justify its exclusion of newspaper and opposition comment on the controversy, the relatively skimpy cover given to the Government's views, and also its apparent lack of interest in an issue which had triggered widespread concern and interest. On 20 April Denning, apparently under Commission instructions, sought an interview with the Acting Prime Minister Forde to explain that the Commission had accepted his viewpoint

49. For the full text, see Daily Mirror, 19 April 1944.

50. Calwell and McKell openly feuded over the affair, alarming Acting Prime Minister Forde, because of the dissension it revealed in Labor ranks. He urged Calwell to refrain from commenting further. See Keirnan, "Calwell's Clashes", p.92.
on comment on the issue, and to ask for his support. Denning's report of that meeting contains the following significant passage:

Mr Forde replied that he entirely agreed with our view and promised to make it clear to Ministers, if the question arose, that I had seen him personally, discussed the problem with him and that he had endorsed our attitude.51

Clearly the Commission was after Forde's backing because it was only too aware that some ministers, particularly Calwell, would probably insist on more extensive coverage, and therefore endanger the 'hands off' policy it had adopted.

The Commission's fears were justified. On 25 April Calwell asked the Commission to allow him to make a broadcast to reply to comments by Henderson and Kennedy which had appeared in newspapers that morning.52 The Commission would not agree to this. When Calwell then asked for his full statement to be included in the news bulletins again he met with resistance. Moses told him on the telephone that any statement would be summarised for news purposes. Calwell then informed Moses that he would probably ask Ashley, as Postmaster-General, to instruct the Commission to run the statement in full under Section 23 of the Act.53 There is evidence once again at this point of lack of unanimity among the Labor Cabinet about the extent to which the Government

51. Transcript of telephoned report from Denning, 20 April 1944, SP286, Box 1, S13, "Newspaper Censorship Controversy".

52. Calwell had been successful with a similar request a few months before. On 16 December 1943 he was given time on ABC stations in Victoria to broadcast a reply to a statement by Eric Kennedy, then Acting President of ANPA. Calwell claimed his reply to Kennedy's attack on alleged use of censorship powers for political purposes had been suppressed by all Melbourne newspapers, although published in Sydney. It was for this reason that he asked Moses for facilities to put his views to the Victorian public. See Moses to Commission, 17 December 1943, Attachment to Commission minute of meeting of 12-14 January 1944.

53. Moses to Commission, 25 April 1944, Attachment to Commission minute of meeting of 5-10 May 1944.
should interfere with the ABC's news service. This has already been referred to in Chapters 2 and 3. In his report to the Commission Moses recorded the difference of opinion between Postmaster-General Ashley and Calwell:

After speaking to Mr Calwell I got in touch with the Postmaster-General and informed him of the situation. Senator Ashley said that he considered the Commission had given Mr Calwell very fair treatment and that we had his full support in refusing to broadcast Mr Calwell's statement.\(^{54}\)

Moses decided that if Calwell's statement was to be run, it would have to be broadcast side by side with the statements by Henderson and Kennedy to which it was replying. A considerable proportion of the news that night was devoted to the three statements, Henderson and Kennedy getting 17 lines and Calwell 21. It must have seemed rather unreal to many listeners, seeing that the ABC had hardly referred to the subject since the days on which the newspapers were seized. Predictably, it was not good enough for Calwell. He telephoned Moses to complain that the announcer had read the remarks by Henderson and Kennedy clearly and effectively, but had read his comment without expression and with several mispronunciations.

While on this issue there is no evidence that the News Department staff deliberately chose to emphasise the Government's point of view, as they had done with the Murdoch-Evatt dispute earlier, the Commission's timidity, and strong pressure from Calwell and the censors had once again thrown into question the 'objectivity' of the news service. Although the Commission had resisted the more excessive demands of Calwell, it had not found the strength to give equal coverage to the disputants, except in the bulletin of 25 April. It looked for an excuse to avoid the issue as far as possible and found one in adopting Forde's attitude. But the result of this 'freezing' of the news coverage, was

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54. Ibid.
to leave the Government side well ahead in terms of lineage, because it had had an overwhelming share of bulletins prior to Forde's statement. Also, the immediate result of adopting Forde's policy was to deny the Opposition any coverage at all. The newspapers realised they had not been given equal time or prominence for their point of view and the affair confirmed in their minds that the news service was very largely controlled by the Government and therefore hostile to their point of view. They were shortly to get confirmation of this.

On 7 October 1944, printers at The Sun in Sydney stopped work to demand a forty hour week and four weeks annual leave. The strike soon spread. The following day there were no papers. Other unions had joined in when the proprietors had attempted to print composite editions. On 9 October, the newspapers managed to put out a composite paper of a few pages under the names of the four Sydney dailies. The following day, the AJA combined with the Labor weekly The Standard to bring out a four page daily in competition. The dispute went before the N.S.W. Industrial Commission, with the final settlement occurring on 20 October.

From the earliest days of the dispute, the newspaper proprietors complained about the nature of the ABC news coverage. On 13 October, Henderson himself complained in the composite newspaper of the "unbalanced and untrue version of the dispute which was contained in news broadcasts over national stations". At the end of the strike he wrote that he believed that the Government had conspired with the strikers to allow their "illegal" newspaper to be printed. Ministers, he said, had also connived in the breaking of the law by allowing the strikers' paper to take some of its news from ABC broadcasts. The ABC coverage itself had showed disgraceful partiality in its reporting of the strike. These are very ominous systems. All law is weakened when Governments and their agencies become partisans or abettors of industrial law-breakers, declared so by the Court. 55

55. Composite newspaper, 20 October 1944.
Dixon's news staff were upset at Henderson's allegations and demanded a retraction. Dixon himself drafted a letter of protest to Henderson which Moses would not send. A detailed analysis which the writer has made of sixty-five bulletins containing news of the strike between 7 and 17 October shows that at least in terms of space - not accepted nowadays as the sole criterion by most researchers, and not accepted at all by some - there is substance to Henderson's complaints. There were 283 lines devoted to statements by unions involved in the strike or sympathetic to the strikers. The newspaper proprietors received only 152. The imbalance is accentuated considerably when the 52 lines given over to statements from Federal Government ministers in support of the strikers are taken into account. There was no comment used from politicians supporting the newspapers. In the report asked for by the Commission, Dixon gives another example of the application of his 'news not views' philosophy:

On the whole we probably gave more space to the men's case than to the proprietors, simply because the men were holding meetings and passing resolutions, whereas the proprietors, in the composite paper, were merely repeating the history of the dispute, which we gave at least three times on the first day of the trouble.56

Correspondence and a study of bulletin content show that Dixon acceded to union requests to direct attention to the time and place of union meetings in connection with the stoppage.

Despite the heavy emphasis given to the strikers' viewpoints, the Commission still ran into trouble with Calwell over the space it gave Henderson. With the Commission becoming uneasy over the news coverage in its bulletins, Dixon was instructed by McCall to offer Henderson the chance to reply to Calwell, when the Minister issued a strong statement on 10 October. Henderson's statement was received just as the bulletin

56. Dixon to Bearup, 24 October 1944, SP314, Box 3, S1, "Press Agreements".
was about to go to air and was run uncut. Calwell noted that Henderson had been given 21 lines to his 14, and was what he called "a personal, unwarranted attack". The Commission felt obliged to give Calwell another 18 lines in which to attack Henderson the following night. This time Henderson was given no opportunity to reply. The Commission was at this time striking considerable trouble with Calwell in a number of areas, and was annoyed that the running of Henderson's statement at length had given the Minister the opportunity to interfere once more. It told Dixon it was dissatisfied with his handling of the Calwell/Henderson statements.

The dispute is additionally interesting because it marked the first time that the News Department had ever been thrown completely on its own resources for the gathering of Australian news. The Commission had ruled that Dixon was not to use material from the composite paper published by the proprietors, and he was given additional short-term staff to enable him to collect all his own news. He was also given additional bulletin time. He reported: "throughout the dispute many of our sessions gave a wider and better coverage of Australian news than we had ever been able to give by relying on the papers". In the PSCB hearings of 1946, Dixon was able to point to this episode as evidence of the News Department's capability of 'going it alone'.

(iii) ABC 'Objectivity' and 'News Judgment'

There is evidence during the wartime years of the inexperience of ABC reporters as compared with their newspaper colleagues. Some of the ABC's biggest 'scoops' resulted in fact from failure to keep to standard verification procedures. The story of the sinking of the Prince of Wales

57. Record of telephone conversation between Moses and Calwell, 11 October 1944, Attachment to minute of Commission meeting of 18-20 October 1944.

58. Dixon to Bearup, 24 October 1944, SP286, Bundle 6.
and the Repulse for example, was based on a highly dubious Japanese broadcast. Although, to the News Department's relief it turned out to be true, it is obvious that other news organisations, such as the BBC, would not have given it such prominence until it had been confirmed. In August 1945, there was a similar case when the ABC obtained an exclusive story that Evatt had demanded that the Japanese Emperor Hirohito be brought to trial as a war criminal. Evatt's secretary, Allan Dalziel, has since recounted the story of this incident. Evatt had prepared a speech for delivery in Melbourne in which he had stressed the necessity for trying Hirohito. Just before the speech was given, he changed his mind about this section and deleted it. Copies of the speech given to reporters present after he finished were altered. The ABC reporter however had had to leave early, before Evatt had finished, and had received an unedited version from Dalziel. When it was soon realised that the unedited copy had left the hall, attempts were made to locate the reporter, whose organisation was not known, but failed. The ABC broadcast the expurgated section much to Evatt's dismay. The ABC reporter had failed to have the speech checked against delivery, a standard journalistic procedure. The newspapers thought that Evatt had deliberately given the ABC an exclusive story.

In her analysis of what newsmen mean by the term 'objectivity' Gaye Tuchman draws attention to the nature of the journalist's task, which, with its immediacy, and necessity for speedy processing of the product, leaves little time for reflection on the 'validity' or

59. See Chapter 1, p.83. The following day the Japanese announced the sinking of the battleship 'King George'. This was a fallacious claim, which Dixon this time fortunately rejected on 'a hunch' See Dixon, ABC, pp.59-60.

'reliability' or 'truth' of the material he is handling. By working instead to a certain routine which establishes the 'objectivity' of his material in the eyes of his bosses and the public, he lessens the risks of reaction from 'concerned' consumers. One of the 'strategies' employed to demonstrate 'objectivity' is to ensure that 'facts' are those which have been observed or which are verifiable. Clearly, in the two cases cited above, not even this first elementary step towards establishing 'objectivity' has been followed. Even when 'facts' have been verified, Tuchman points out that the appropriate structuring of those 'facts' to make a news story is an important way of denoting 'objectivity'. This involves 'news judgment' [which] is the ability to choose 'objectively' between and among competing 'facts' to decide which 'facts' are more 'important' or 'interesting'\textsuperscript{60}. But, she stresses, the reporter's assessment of the importance of these facts may differ from his editor's and from that contained in another newspaper. Yet all claim to be 'objective'. Obviously 'news judgment' also means making decisions about what facts are to be reported, as well as deciding the order of those which are eventually chosen. The 'news judgment' of ABC reporters frequently differed from that of their newspaper counterparts.

The best example of this, which eventually further strained relations which the press was the news coverage of the dispute between Calwell and General Thomas Blamey in January 1945. Fadden had criticised Calwell's Department of Information for its failure to keep the public informed about the actions involving Australian servicemen in the Pacific islands. On 16 January Calwell held a news conference at which he denied his department was responsible for the lack of news of the war. An ABC reporter present saw that he could get the

story into the midday news bulletins if he filed quickly. His story began: "The Minister for Information, Mr Calwell, said today that the Army Public Relations section was solely to blame for the black-out of news of Australian fighting forces during the past three months". The item went on to indirectly criticise the Army for failing to accredit a correspondent from the Information Department, so that better information could be obtained from the front line. As soon as this broadcast was heard in Canberra it caused a stir in the Labor Government. Other ministers objected to Calwell's attack, particularly the Acting Prime Minister, Frank Forde, and the Acting Army Minister, Senator Fraser. The same afternoon Calwell claimed the ABC had misreported him, and he issued an 'authorised' version of his press conference, in which his remarks were considerably toned down. There was no reference to blaming the Army, not to the Army's failure to accredit an Information Department correspondent. It mildly rebuked the Army with the statement: "The sole responsibility for not advising the public of developments over the last three months in New Britain, and the Solomons, and northern New Guinea rested with Army Public Relations". Even this however aroused the anger of Calwell's colleagues and in the evening he issued 'an amplification' of this remark which added the words "which doubtless had good reason for the action it took in withholding premature announcement of the fighting in these areas".

62. The transcript is in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 January 1945.
63. Ibid. The *Sun*, 16 January 1945 carried the 'authorised' version only.
64. Ibid.
Blamey, having heard of the ABC's broadcast version of Calwell's news conference, the following day replied on strong terms. He emphasised that all information about the Army's activities was controlled by General MacArthur. As the past weeks had seen great numbers of men move through dangerous areas of the Pacific, subject to submarine and aircraft attack, it was necessary to maintain secrecy. He added:

> It is incredible that these facts and considerations are not known to the Minister for Information. I regret the necessity for a public statement on the matter, especially where proper action had been taken to secure the safety of our gallant lads and their American comrades in their passage of perilous waters. 65

The ABC, accepting that it had misreported Calwell the previous day, carried part of Blamey's statement but did not touch the section quoted above. It dropped also Blamey's further reference to the allegation that the attack "from high places" had been "a direct lie".

The newspapers had a field day over the affair. They reported both the text of the ABC broadcast and the 'authorised' version of Calwell's remarks, and they carried Blamey's attack in full. Henderson, as President of ANPA, took the opportunity to praise the army and criticise the attitude of Calwell's Department as being "consistently obstructionist and hostile". 66 Noticing the ABC's reluctance to annoy Calwell any further by reporting Blamey's more contentious remarks, Wynne of AAP wrote to Moses to point out what his News Department had done, quoting the deleted lines. Dixon refers to the action of the reporter as 'a blunder'. He says: "We used what Blamey had to say except his personal

attack on Calwell, because Calwell hadn't really attacked Army Public Relations, although we had said he did". 67 It is characteristic of Dixon that he immediately accepted Calwell's word, instead of that of his reporter. What seems far more likely, given the positive nature of the ABC news story, and its strong ring of authenticity, is that Calwell did say what the ABC man attributed to him, but did not intend his remarks to be reported in that form. The ABC's records of the incident are skimpy, but it seems likely that with Calwell's fiery nature and his unconventional vocabulary, there was some widely accepted principle that his remarks frequently required transposition by parliamentary reporters into a form which was 'acceptable' and 'authorised'. No doubt a check could be made later by reporters if they were uncertain about what to report. Experienced reporters however would be aware of the convention and would avoid the pitfalls of having their story denied by the Minister. 68

Tuchman's remarks on 'news sense' are very relevant to this incident. She points out that the judgment on which journalists rely for their 'objectivity' is related to their experience with inter-organization relationships.

Institutions and organizations have procedures designed to protect both the institution and the people who come into contact with it. The significance of either a statement or a 'no comment' must be assessed according to the newsman's knowledge of institutional procedures. 69


68. When reporting for the ABC in South-east Asia, 1961-65, the writer was made aware of a similar convention in reporting the remarks of the Malayan Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman. The Tunku was renowned for his 'indiscreet' remarks about other politicians, the Chinese, and neighbouring countries, and journalists generally agreed that he had to be 'protected' from himself, by leaving such comments unreported.

69. Tuchman, "Objectivity", p.672.
It seems probable that the ABC reporter was not aware of the normal procedure for reporting Calwell's off-the-cuff remarks, and was therefore lacking in 'news judgment'. Or perhaps the necessity for speed in reporting, to beat the press, was a factor which swayed his judgment. Radio cannot use one of the other devices for ensuring 'objectivity' - that of using quotation marks. If printed, in that form, it would have been much harder for Calwell to deny.

If we assume that the initial report of Calwell's remarks had been correct, Tuchman's views on 'objectivity' appear to be substantiated. The 'objective' report of Calwell's remarks expected by the ABC, and presumably by the newspapers as well, was not the actual record, but a structured version of them which had been subjected to the procedure of becoming 'authorised'. 'Objectivity' which is the product of this kind of 'news judgment' is not objectivity at all but only a device of self-protection for the journalists involved. Having made the 'blunder' of running the Minister's unauthorised remarks, the ABC News Department then made the situation worse by using only part of Blarney's reply in order that Calwell would not be further incensed. This was the degree of 'objectivity' thought desirable by the ABC so as not to draw attention to the 'blunder' of the first report which it had carried. The 'objectivity' of the newspapers on this occasion was much more self-evident. Because the ABC had broadcast the 'unauthorised' report, it was able to use that and the 'authorised' version, side by side, and allow the public to make up its mind. Having done this, it was able to 'balance' this with the full text of Blamey's statement. The overall effect of the newspaper 'objectivity' was therefore far stronger than the 'objectivity' of the ABC. The newspapers had been far more diligent in subjecting their 'facts' to the necessary procedures which ensure the appearance of 'objectivity'. The newspapers on this occasion and others were therefore able to point to the greater degree of 'objectivity'
which they possessed when compared to the ABC. It seems clear that the newspapers would not in normal circumstances have published the 'unauthorised' statements in the way the ABC did. To have done so would not have accorded with their professional judgment. But once the ABC broadcast had been made, the same 'news judgment' told them that in using both versions, they were being 'objective', while at the same time undermining the position of Calwell, whom they disliked intensely, and their rival, the ABC News Department. In this sense, the newspaper staff probably possessed better 'news judgment' than their more inexperienced opposite numbers in the ABC. The bitter feelings of ABC journalists towards the press, and their strong links with the Government were too often made obvious in their news reports. 'Objectivity' is the result of subjecting 'facts' to a certain pattern so that criticism is nullified. The newspapers were no more genuinely 'objective' than the ABC but at times were more successful in this period in giving the appearance of being so. Conversely, the ABC frequently failed to demonstrate its 'objectivity' particularly in matters affecting the press, and this helped undermine confidence in the service, and increase the uneasiness of the Commission.

The same kind of analysis can be applied to an affair which occurred almost simultaneously with the Calwell/Blamey controversy. On 17 January, the Sydney Morning Herald reported that it had been requested by the Milk Zone Dairymen's Council to appoint an independent accountant to investigate the price-fixing methods used by Professor Copland in an enquiry he had conducted into the industry. Copland's report had resulted in prices being fixed which had brought about a strike by dairymen in protest. Once the Sydney Morning Herald had agreed to the request, the dairymen agreed to go back to work. The same day, the Federal Government announced that it would pay a special subsidy on milk if the producers went back to work. The reaction of
Dixon and his newsmen to these developments was undoubtedly affected by the embarrassment and anger they felt at their treatment by the press over the Calwell/Blamey statements. Dixon comments:

Our news staff regarded the Herald's move as a publicity stunt and made no mention of it ... I told Moses the Herald's enquiry was ... unworthy of attention by the ABC. The Government had said it would take no notice of the inquiry.70

On 20 January, the Sydney Morning Herald carried a long statement from F.J. Sedgwick, the Secretary of the Milk Zone Dairymen's Council protesting at the "distorted broadcasts of the ABC regarding the settlement of the recent milk dispute". Sedgwick claimed the only reason for the return to work was the Sydney Morning Herald's promise to hold the enquiry. This had forced the Government to agree to arbitration. Because of the ABC news broadcasts: "The public were misled and a belief created that it was wholly due to Government action that the milk service was restored". The ABC promised to hold an enquiry and on 10 February, the Sydney Morning Herald published a letter from Bearup to Sedgwick which denied political bias but raised the possibility that "an error of judgment" had occurred. In making no mention at all of the Sydney Morning Herald's moves, Dixon's staff had failed to take one of the elementary steps necessary to produce the impression of 'objectivity'. They failed to present both sides of the story, and instead gave all credit to the Government. Tuchman points out that even when these 'balanced' and verified 'facts' have been obtained, they are then subjected to structuring in appropriate sequence according to 'news sense'. 'News sense' in this context would be very subject to editorial influence, as the Sydney Morning Herald had taken a public stance in support of the milk producers and against the Government. The stories that resulted emphasised the Sydney Morning Herald's contribution to the ending of the dispute, and downplayed that of the Government. Both sides were however given. We are not talking about either side - ABC or the Sydney Morning Herald.

Herald - achieving genuine 'objectivity', but the degree of success of each in laying claim to objectivity, or making use of 'objective' procedures which are discernible to the consumer. The Sydney Morning Herald once again managed this better than the ABC News Department.

By mid 1945, as Boyer and the Commission were once again engaged in discussion with the newspaper proprietors over new agreements which would meet the objections of the Government, feelings against the newspapers were running very high in the ABC News Department. Deamer's article in the Daily Telegraph had evoked a strong reaction. Dixon wrote to Bearup:

Apparently Deamer works on the same principle as Henderson - the bigger the lie the more likely it is to be believed ... Members of the news staff here feel that unless something is done to challenge Henderson's statements, they will have to ask the AJA to move in the matter. Every journalist on our staff feels that the repetition of such serious mis-statements had a damaging effect on his or her professional status.

Dixon was referring to alleged statements by Henderson that the greater part of the national news was taken from the newspapers.

To the newspapers, ABC news had now become a very pliant tool of the Government, running statements without question whenever required. Occasionally there were lapses which showed a strong element of Labor orientation and sympathy - lapses which again indicated that too few pains were taken to ensure 'objectivity'. The best known case was legendary among the newspapers, but unfortunately no record of the

72. Dixon to Bearup, 3 May 1945, SP286, Bundle 6.
73. He did not specify the source of these statements.
particular news item, or any correspondence concerning it, exists. It was a quotation from an official in the Department of External Affairs, praising his minister, Dr Evatt.74

Another example which does exist, although not so extreme, shows naivety. On 27 July 1945 the following item was read:

Mrs H.V. Evatt, who has just returned from America with Dr Evatt, will give her impressions of America to members of the Henry Lawson Labor College at 8 o'clock tonight. The public is invited to hear her description of educational facilities in the United States.75

It seems very likely that the newspapers complained about the simple propagandist nature of this piece. McCall rang Dixon to ask him to stop all such 'advertisements' in the future. It was, he emphasised, a Commission instruction. Dixon wrote a memo to his staff giving the Commission viewpoint, but clearly implying it was not his own. A member of his staff then leaked the memo to the Labor weekly, The Standard, which attacked the Commission under the heading "ABC's Vicious Sniping at Mrs Evatt". It can be assumed therefore that the viewpoint given in the article represented the views of some of Dixon's staff, and perhaps that of Dixon himself. The Department obviously felt suspicious of the Commission, felt beleagured, and had therefore fostered good contacts with the pro-Labor anti-monopoly newspapers. The Standard wrote "The 'guilty' men of Broadcast House have stepped up their war of nerves against News Department journalists who dared to oppose the treacherous sellout of ABC news services to the Murdoch-Fairfax monopoly".76 It called McCall's instruction 'insolent', and

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74. Opinions differ slightly about the exact wording of the story. However, in his Daily Telegraph article of 14 May 1945 Deamer recalled that it had gone something like this: "High officials of the Department of External Affairs stated today that the statement made in the House of Representatives by the Minister for External Affairs [Dr Evatt] was, in their opinion, one of the most statesmanlike expositions of Australia's viewpoint ever given in this country".

75. The text is contained in The Standard, 3 August 1945.

76. Ibid.
said the suggestion that the item was an advertisement could only exist "in the minds of morons, or brains filled with prejudice".\footnote{Ibid.} Thus the News Department defended the item and their 'news judgment' which must again be seen as very questionable and leaving the Department open to attack.

We remarked earlier on Dixon's obsessive preoccupation with the speed with which radio could break news.\footnote{See Chapter 2, p.189.} He recognised very early that this was radio's basic advantage over the press, particularly in wartime, and as the element of competition between press and ABC increased, he placed more and more emphasis on the speed with which statements, usually from the Government, could be put on air.\footnote{See also the examples in Chapter 2 at pp.150-51, and pp.209-10.}

When many of the commercial stations decided to end the arrangement to relay the ABC's major bulletins in May 1945, and began taking their news from newspaper offices, the emphasis on speed became even more apparent. A radio competitor was harder to 'beat' than a newspaper. The months that followed the start of the commercial services were largely devoted to speed comparisons on important stories. At times the ABC was ahead, such as the announcement that Forde and Chifley were both to stand for the leadership of the Labor Party.\footnote{See Chapter 2, p.209.} At other times, such as the election of Chifley to the leadership, the commercial stations, in this case 2UE and 2SM, were ahead by some minutes in getting a 'flash' on air. The latter case was symptomatic of consistent troubles the News Department were to have in subsequent years in getting 'flashes' on air. The commercials had fewer programmes which were on national relay
and difficult to break into, and fewer programmes of 'serious' music or drama which were thought difficult to interrupt.

In the latter half of 1945, the press accused the ABC of taking material from the newspapers which was copyright and using it without acknowledgment. Under the terms of the "gentlemen's agreement" with the newspapers, items used in the news would be acknowledged to their source. In April 1943, the newspapers agreed that there need not be any acknowledgment of press items used in the national news. Nearly all the Australian items in this bulletin were provided by the ABC's Canberra staff anyway. Press news used in State bulletins was still to be attributed. In August 1945, Claude McKay, managing editor of Smith's Weekly complained to Boyer that an exclusive story from his paper had been 'stolen' and used in the ABC news. Smith's Weekly was not a party to the ABC agreement with ANPA. The story revealed that Jimmy Carlton, the champion sprinter who had become a priest, was leaving the ministry to be married. The morning it appeared in Smith's Weekly, the ABC broadcast a similar story. McKay wrote:

It took us seven weeks with one man continually on the job to verify this piece of news. That item so light-heartedly thieved cost over £100 to obtain. This is no new breach of a recognised code on the part of the ABC. We have in the past noticed the unauthorised rifling of our columns, and I am sure from knowledge of you that you would not be a party to such practices.

It transpired that a sub-editor in the ABC had known Carlton had resigned but had been asked not to run the story. Seeing the details in Smith's Weekly, however, he believed he was no longer bound to remain silent.

81. McKay to Boyer, 20 August 1945, SP286, Bundle 6.

82. Dixon is wrong in claiming that its appearance in Smith's Weekly on the same morning as its broadcast in ABC news was a coincidence. See Dixon, ABC, p.143.
In November, Henderson complained that a story on the enquiry into the actions of General Gordon Bennett and another on Einstein's views on the atomic bomb were taken from the *Sydney Morning Herald* without acknowledgment. He referred to these two cases the following year in his evidence to the PSCB.

We are constantly getting cases of that kind and from time to time I protest to the Commission. The Commission investigates but these incidents continue to happen ... That is something which a national organisation does not do. But it is done ... I know that the Commission is not a party to such practice but I am suggesting that the staff of the Commission in their keenness overlook ownership in news and every now and again literally take things to which they are not entitled.  

Dixon claimed that in the Bennett story, the item had been correctly acknowledged in the State news and that the Einstein story had been received from the ABC's London office.

We have earlier mentioned that the ABC was at times responsible for putting news on air without adequately verifying the essential 'facts' of the story. This was a charge which Dixon was also fond of making of the newspapers. Much of his evidence given to the PSCB in 1946 was devoted to illustrating his point. He was disturbed mostly about 'facts' which had been carelessly misreported. Two instances of what he regarded as classic misreporting by the press are both about the arrangements for important meetings. In December 1945 he reported to Moses that a story taken from the *Daily Telegraph* had proved to be incorrect. The *Daily Telegraph* had reported the Ironworkers Union application for reregistration would be heard before the Industrial Commission on Wednesday of the following week. An ACTU executive member had telephoned to say this was incorrect and the newsroom, on checking with the President of the Commission found that no date had been set. The *Telegraph* repeated the error on the following two days and Dixon remarked: "The blunder

on the part of the Telegraph is one of the most serious and persistent in my recollection" 84 Before the PSCB he related a very similar instance in which the ABC news service had run a story from an unnamed Sydney newspaper that the Prime Minister would meet union officials about the coal crisis the same evening. The Prime Minister denied this.

Dixon also made the charge before the PSCB that the ABC news service could prompt an adverse reaction among listeners if it repeated some of the more sensational and baseless newspaper stories. He instanced the newspaper coverage of recent floods at Port Fairy in Victoria. An ABC reporter sent to the scene had found hostility among local residents because of 'exaggerated' newspaper reports. He estimated that a quarter of the newspaper stories filed: "were the product of unsubstantiated reports or unwarranted speculation" 85 This again is evidence of a very different 'news sense' or 'news judgment' being applied. The newspapers involved would no doubt have claimed that their stories were 'objective' and the facts had been verified. The ABC reporter, having been sent from Melbourne to ascertain the real 'facts' because the ABC was dubious about the press stories, was undoubtedly under strong pressure to bring back a 'different' story, which was more 'objective'. Both would have presented supporting evidence. Both would have been a collection of 'facts' assessed and structured by the newsmen. As Tuchman says, one form of supporting evidence which demonstrates 'objectivity' is the quotation of other people's opinions. "Adding more names and quotations, the reporter may remove his opinions from the story by getting others to say what he himself thinks." 86 From Dixon's account it is obvious that his reporter quoted sources which denied that there had been much damage. Newspaper reports carried quotations which said the opposite.

84. Dixon to Moses, 17 December 1945, SP286, Bundle 6.
86. Tuchman, "Objectivity", p.668.
By 1946, it is clear that the 'news judgment' of newspaper and ABC reporters were frequently at variance in their assembling of information in appropriate sequence. Their identification of material facts differed. What was 'news sense' to one, was not to the other. In the PSCB hearing Henderson tried to show that it was unfair to accuse the newspapers of suppression and distortion. It was more appropriate to examine the political 'colouring' of ABC news bulletins by ABC reporters. Henderson complained bitterly about the numerous occasions when charges have been made against a newspaper, either in Parliament or elsewhere and the reply of the newspaper has never been put over the air.  

He instanced the milk strike affair, mentioned earlier, and gave the latest example - the Yoizuki incident. On 6 March 1946, the former Japanese destroyer Yoizuki took aboard 1,005 Formosan men, women and children for repatriation. The vessel was very overcrowded, and many of the Formosans had to be forcibly put on board in Sydney. Newspaper pictures taken at the wharf caused concern. The Opposition raised the subject in Parliament the same day, and the newspapers clamoured for action to be taken to recall the vessel to avoid unnecessary suffering. 

The debate in the House over the issue saw the Government on the defensive in trying to explain why the vessel was not brought back to an Australian port. 88 The vessel was ordered to put into Rabaul where an investigation was held but newsmen were banned from visiting the port to see for themselves. On 13 March Menzies produced in the House a

87. Henderson, Evidence, PSCB, 1 July 1946, p.375.
statement by General Macarthur denying that he was responsible for the orders to load the vessel, a claim which Army Minister Forde had made to the House a week earlier. A Government-appointed committee of enquiry eventually reported that the passengers had arrived 'in good condition'. Calwell claimed that "This has been a Sydney Morning Herald stunt from beginning to end". 89

Henderson told the PSCB that Chifley had alleged the Sydney Morning Herald had taken some material about the affair out of context in an article. The newspaper published a reply. The ABC news had carried Chifley's complaint but not the Herald's rejoinder. Once again Dixon has provided evidence of the editorial policy pursued within his News Department which was responsible for this one-sided reporting. In Inside the ABC he says "I thought the newspapers were hysterical and to some extent irresponsible in the way they demanded that the government recall the ship which was taking a large number of Formosans home". 90 This view was obviously reflected in the reporting of the incident.

As pointed out, it is very difficult to establish an appearance of 'objectivity' if one of the basic steps - the reporting of both sides in a dispute - is not taken. The lack of 'objectivity' by the ABC News Department in the reporting of disputes between the press and the Government was not only apparent to the newspapers. It was also apparent to the Commission. Henderson gave evidence that "Whenever I have gone to the Commission with a complaint ... I have invariably had satisfaction; it has been as concerned about these incidents as I have". 91 When Boyer drew up his News Directive in 1946, 92 his aim

89. CPD, 13 March 1946, p.221.
90. Dixon, ABC, p.152.
91. Henderson, Evidence, PSCB, 1 July 1946, p.375.
therefore was not only to curb the heavily pro-Government nature of the reporting, but also to put an end to the obvious taking of sides against the major newspapers. He had realised that the 'news judgment' of newspapers was not the standard required for the ABC news service because he believed it was based on circulation-building, through 'sensationalism'. He recognised that many people, including the Labor Government believed newspaper news was supplied and edited according to its 'policy'. He knew too, although the ABC News Department escaped any censure at all on this point from the PSCB that ABC bulletins also lacked 'objectivity' because they were subject to Departmental policy over which the Commission had not yet established control. Hence Boyer in his directive called for a degree of 'objectivity' which surpassed that of the newspapers. 'Speed' as a prerequisite for the national news service was endorsed by the PSCB in its report. The Commission's new independent news service was therefore required to be faster, more 'objective' than the press and also to use different 'news judgment' in selecting news, which would not be based on 'sensationalism'. Boyer had therefore endorsed the competitive nature of his news service and also its search for different news values. He had not endorsed its hostility to the press. The Commission's relationship with the press was at this time friendly.

(iv) Press Attempts at Sabotage

With the passing of the Broadcasting Act of 1946, and the ending of any chance of an agreement between the press and the ABC, the press began to take a much tougher stance towards ABC news. Even before the Act was passed, Dixon and his staff began to be aware of press attempts to deny them information through official channels. These were invariably at State level, as the ABC's channels
had been well secured at Federal level for many years. But when ABC reporters began to move for the first time on a regular basis on 'beats' covered by newspaper roundsmen in State capitals, they quickly discovered that these men and their papers resented their presence and acted to preserve their interests. In March 1946 Dixon wrote in quick succession to C.N. Neale, the Commissioner for Road Transport, and T.J. Hartigan, the Commissioner for Railways, complaining that stories had been withheld from the ABC reporters. Marjorie Plunkett, the ABC's pioneer state Parliamentary roundsman reported to Dixon in July, that reporters from the Sydney Morning Herald, the Telegraph and AUP were refusing to cooperate with her.

Secretaries of some State ministers had shown a bias towards the morning press. The Sydney Morning Herald's man had deliberately failed to give her a news release which he had been asked to deliver. She concluded her report with this remarkable statement:

I have told the Ministers of these difficulties and Mr Baddeley [Deputy Premier and Chief Secretary] promised to talk to the Premier [W.J. McKell] about it. However, he informed me yesterday that the Government had come to an agreement with the papers that the Government would receive a 'better deal' from the papers if it gave the papers the news first. He was sorry but he had no choice in the matter.

The ABC does not appear to have taken any official action as a result of this allegation. Cotton, having confirmed that the press was attempting to exclude ABC reporters from press talks with Ministers, told Dixon he would appoint another roundsman to help Plunkett. Dixon approved this step, telling Moses

It is a serious matter indeed when Ministers of the Crown join with a section of the press to deprive the national broadcasting service of an even break with the news. That is all we have ever asked for; and I am determined that we shall get nothing less.

93. Plunkett to Dixon, 4 July 1946, SP286, Bundle 6.
Members of the ABC staff decided that at this stage they would make their own moves to help their Parliamentary reporters. They leaked the details of Plunkett's experiences to *Truth*, which was strongly pro-Labor and anti-ANPA. The newspaper published them and added:

>This effort by the disgruntled daily newspapers to create a further monopoly in news is distinctly naive. It is difficult to imagine any but the most politically biased Minister falling for such a scheme. Certainly not Labor Ministers.95

This revelation might well have had some effect. There is no further record in ABC files of any similar difficulties in securing news from the State Government. There is evidence that by 1948, the Labor Government in N.S.W. had discovered the value of adequate coverage on ABC radio. If Plunkett's allegations are true, the Government had by then changed its mind. In that year the Premier James McGirr apologised to Moses because a news release had failed to be communicated to the ABC. A press officer had thought the news office would be closed after midnight. He wrote:

> The fact that the news was not released to the ABC on this occasion, as desired, is very much regretted. The ABC Representative, Miss Plunkett, is at all times keen and most anxious to secure the release of news on the same basis as other representatives, and action has been taken to ensure that this will obtain in the Future.96

Many major newspapers throughout Australia saw the ABC news service as basically hostile to them, because of its record in covering disputes between the press and the Government. To them it was also pro-Government and devoted to practices and employing news standards which were damaging to journalism and to the press generally. The


newspapers therefore reacted in kind. They exerted their influence wherever possible to deny the ABC news. In Perth for example, the ABC appointed a shipping roundsman, only to find that he could not join the newspaper reporters in boarding vessels as soon as they arrived, because the Commonwealth Health Officer had received mysterious instructions that no more inoculations were to be issued to reporters for this purpose. The West Australian and the Daily News were able to send their men aboard while the ABC man had to wait on the wharf. Dixon complained of this 'unfair discrimination' and asked his Canberra office to take the matter up with the Director-General of Health. After a delay of some weeks, the approval for the vaccinations was given.\(^{97}\)

In Brisbane, there was a complaint that the staff of Government House had deliberately withheld news of the appointment of the new Governor, Sir John Laverack, from the ABC. The News Editor in Queensland asked the State Manager to protest against what he regarded as the decision by the Lieutenant-Governor and his secretary to give the Courier-Mail the scoop.\(^{98}\)

It was in Queensland that the ABC news service struck its most serious snag with the press and one which, for a while, caused real difficulties in the supply of news from country centres. On 6 January 1947 the Courier-Mail had begun its own radio news service through stations 4BK, 4AK, 4BC, 4SB, 4BH and 4IP.\(^{99}\) The newspaper was

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97. See Dixon to Commins, 26 May 1947, SP286, Box 3, S3.
98. See Dixon to Cotton, 5 September 1946, SP286, Box 4, S2.
99. For details see the Courier-Mail, 4 January 1947.
supplied with country news by the Queensland Country Press Limited, a company comprising about 26 of the State's country newspapers. When, as in other States, the ABC began to approach journalists working within country newspapers to act as their correspondents, Country Press and the Courier-Mail heard about it, and put pressure on their newspaper suppliers to refuse to allow their staff to accept these appointments. In April, Colin Bednall of the Courier-Mail wrote to Moses expressing his alarm, "at growing evidence that the ABC News Department is lifting matter from the country newspapers of Queensland and making improper approaches to employees of country newspapers". Later the same month, the Acting Manager for Queensland reported that five country correspondents had ceased to act for the ABC under pressure from Country Press. The ABC's News Editor in Queensland, B. Wright, strongly denied there had been improper approaches to country journalists. He claimed that in every case the appointment was made with the approval of the paper's Editor. He reported that newspapers in Cairns, Mackay and Kingaroy had ignored Country Press and continued to let their staff work for the ABC. In nine smaller country centres, the owners of newspapers were acting as ABC correspondents. Dixon expressed his bewilderment at developments in Queensland. He told Moses

In N.S.W. ... country newspaper proprietors encourage members of their staff to act as correspondents for metropolitan papers ... the extra money thus earned by staff members helps to keep them contented and compensates for the lower scale of salaries in the country.101

100. Bednall to Moses, no date but received in early April 1947, SP286, Box 3, S1, "Queensland News Service".

101. Dixon to Moses, 11 April 1947, SP286, Box 3, S1.
On 29 April H.J. Manning, Chairman of Country Press wrote to Boyer and told him: "The ABC is now regarded as a competitor for news and the provincial press considers it is distinctly unfair of them to life news items from our papers for broadcasting purposes". 102 No reporter on any of the company's member papers would be permitted to work for the ABC. In his reply, Boyer said that only the individual papers on which ABC correspondents were employed could terminate any arrangements reached with its employees. The ABC would not act to do so. Urging Manning to reconsider his attitude Boyer added, "I am at a complete loss to understand in what way the broadcasting of news either regional or metropolitan by the national service can conflict with the interests of newspapers". 103

The extent of the problem caused by the refusal to co-operate by Country Press was evident to Denning who visited Queensland towards the end of 1947. He reported to Dixon:

It is most unfortunate that the one State where we have met with nothing but difficulty and obstruction on [country coverage] is the largest and most inaccessible State in Eastern Australia ... We have a large chain of country correspondents who in the main are not professional journalists, and this is precisely where we fall down ... In a few places we have managed to keep going with local newspaper men who have refused to truckle to the Queensland Country Press; the service we receive from these towns is the backbone of our country coverage ... There is a depressing and disheartening list of major provincial towns and cities where the ABC's news service scarcely exists. 104

Denning recommended either an approach to Country Press at the highest level to persuade them to change their attitude or the

102. Manning to Boyer, 29 April 1947, SP286, Box 3, Sl.

103. Boyer to Manning, 5 May 1947, SP286, Box 3, Sl.

104. Denning to Dixon, 1 October 1947, SP286, Box 3, Sl.
appointment of eight to ten additional staff journalists in country areas. Keith Fraser, then a sub-editor in the Brisbane newsroom visited regional centres later the same month. On his return he supported Denning's remarks.

Cairns, Bundaberg, Maryborough and Gympie are towns of some news importance and before the Country Press took action, journalists on the daily papers there acted as ABC correspondents. It is my opinion that so long as the ABC covers these places with part-time correspondents, a full coverage of news will not be sent from them.105

By the following year, 1949, the problem had become far less acute. First it became obvious that the Country Press ban would not be a totally concerted one. According to ABC's Chief of Staff appointed in that year, Don Speedy, the acute shortage of trained journalists in the years after the war made it difficult for Country Press to take action if its journalists defied the ban. He himself did so when working for a country newspaper before joining the ABC. He filed for both the ABC and his own newspaper.

Bednall was astute enough to notice that once when a big spot news story broke up my way, the story on the ABC and in the Courier-Mail bore a remarkable resemblance (I put a carbon in my typewriter). Bednall wrote me a cryptic note inquiring if his assumption was correct. I never had time to reply to his letter, or to his several follow-ups. He took no action. He couldn't afford to. Once again - it was a journalist's world.106

The second factor was that the ABC's correspondents began to be better trained and more reliable. The regional journalists to whom they worked, were instructed to give them more guidance and maintain close contact with them. Instruction sheets were sent to them, and regional journalists paid them frequent visits. The need

105. Fraser to Sholl, 20 October 1947, SP286, Box 3, S1.
for Country Press journalists, and those from other country newspapers, became far less pronounced. Speedy says,

Over the years we had numerous correspondents on Queensland Country Press affiliates but they rarely lasted long. Almost invariably they proved to be the least productive correspondents, for a variety of reasons - too busy and overworked because of inadequate staff; and the ABC's scale of payments hardly induced dedication. 107

By 1952, when the present Chief of Staff in Queensland, Vern Black transferred to that State, he "got a distinct impression that our network of correspondents was (and still is) far superior to the newspapers". 108 At that time ABC correspondents working for country newspapers numbered only four - in Ipswich, Emerald, Allora and Mt Isa.

1952 was also the year in which the ABC opened its new regional offices in Cairns, Maryborough and Longreach. This in turn meant the appointment of ABC staff journalists to these centres, and more effective guidance for correspondents working in other towns in those areas. It was in Cairns, on the occasion of the opening of the ABC office that Speedy encountered the only case in his experience of planned newspaper obstruction of the ABC. It may well also have been the last in Queensland. Speedy had gone to the town with the ABC's Queensland Manager E.K. Sholl for the occasion.

On arrival I learned that the Post editor had put on his staff notice board a directive forbidding any member of his staff to fraternise with - and most certainly not to co-operate with in news gathering - any ABC journalist. Also, he had ignored the ABC's invitation to the party after the opening ceremony. Against Sholl's better judgement, I called on the Editor; we visited a local pub; he and his wife attended the opening and the party; Sholl and I kept his glass filled; and later in the evening he eagerly sought me out to show me a message his office had hurried across to him - a ship had gone aground early that night on a reef off Cooktown. He was sure the ABC would be interested. We were. His directive was removed from his staff notice board. 109

107. ibid.


(v) The Deterioration in Commission-Press Relations

The Commission soon began to lose patience with the newspapers. It had been prepared to concede up to 1946, that ABC news had not demonstrated the necessary lack of bias needed for a national broadcasting service. But now that it was gradually but successfully exerting new control and demonstrating a previously unknown brand of 'objectivity', the Commission felt newspaper attacks on the service were quite unwarranted.

Soon after the independent service began, the news staff began noticing what they believed to be instances of newspapers pirating material from ABC news bulletins and printing it as their own. They backed their contention by comparing cables from the ABC's London office made up from overseas agency services, with items in the press. Phrases used by ABC sub-editors, and not contained in overseas cables, were repeated in several press stories. Moses complained officially to G.T. Chippindall, Acting Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs about this in October 1947.

From the moment the independent service began, the press were monitoring it closely for evidence of breaches of standard journalistic practice. Within the first few months they began to notice a certain carelessness about keeping rigidly to embargo times on overseas material. These times of release were sometimes crucial in the battle between the ABC and the press to be first with the news. A story embargoed 2300 or midnight GMT, in order to be available for the British morning newspapers, would be available for release in Australia at 9 a.m. or 10 a.m., allowing for the ten hours difference. This would make it too late for the ABC morning bulletins but just in time to catch the early editions of the afternoon Sydney papers, which would be on the street before the ABC midday bulletins. There was a temptation therefore, within the ABC News Department, to occasionally 'beat the gun' by an hour or so, and include embargoed stories in morning bulletins. On
18 June 1947 Frank Packer of the *Daily Telegraph* wrote to Moses to complain about one such occasion, when a story on Japanese trade, marked for release at 2300 GMT, was broadcast in the 7.45 a.m. bulletin. Moses, in a very terse peremptory reply admitted that a miscalculation had occurred. 110

The tone of Moses's letter, which appeared to dismiss the incident as of no consequence, could well have caused the press to stiffen its resolve to demonstrate the inadequacies of the costly new service and the impossibility of it becoming in any real sense, a competitor with long-established and experienced newspapers. The press noted two other breaches of embargoes in October, both dealing with British Cabinet changes. Unknown to the ABC, information about these incidents was given by Australian press offices in London to the originator of the messages - the Prime Minister's office at 10 Downing Street.

Then on 31 December 1947, the News Department presented the press with their golden opportunity. A sub-editor on duty when part of the New Year's Honours List was cabled by the ABC's London office misinterpreted the midnight GMT embargo, thinking it meant the beginning of the day instead of the end. There seems no reason to doubt his story, as such a glaring error was bound to be picked up and would not have been perpetrated deliberately. So the ABC broadcast the list of eight names, including that of McKell, then Governor-General, who had been made a Privy Councillor, twenty-four hours ahead of official release time. Frank Ashton, Editor of *The Sun* immediately rang Moses to complain. The newspapers through AAP were quick to relay this latest information to 10 Downing Street. Beraup, now London Representative of the ABC, was the astonished

110. See Moses to Packer, 24 June 1947, SP613, Box 44, 15/17/13.
receiver of a phone call from a member of Atlee's staff giving specific details of the ABC's breach of the embargo. He then also recited chapter and verse of the two previous incidents. The ABC was asked to ensure that appropriate steps be taken to avoid breaking embargoes again. As the cable from Bearup relaying this information reached Moses, so did a telegram from Wynne of AAP asking for "an assurance that adequate steps are being taken to atone for the breach of faith and to prevent recurrences". 111

Moses, with Dixon's strong support, decided the best defence was attack. In a telegram to Wynne 112 and in an interview with a Sun reporter 113 he counter-charged that The Sun had on 19 December broken an embargo set by Chifley on the release of a story about an aerial survey of Pacific Islands being undertaken for Australian defence forces by the American air force. 114 Eric Kennedy, Chief Executive of The Sun protested vigorously to Moses when he heard this allegation, saying the Americans had released the information in Tokyo, which automatically released the story everywhere. 115

Meanwhile the press had been busy elsewhere, both in publishing the story of the pre-release of the New Year's Honours, and in stressing the seriousness of the ABC's action to State Governments and vice-regal staff in the various States. In Victoria they had

111. Wynne to Moses 1 January 1948, SP286, Bundle 6.
112. Telegram Moses to Wynne, 31 December 1947. Only the draft is on file, though Dixon believes it was sent. SP286, Bundle 6.
113. Quoted by Kennedy in Kennedy to Moses, 1 January 1948, SP286, Bundle 6.
114. The article was in The Sun, 19 December 1947.
115. Kennedy to Moses, 1 January 1948, SP286, Bundle 6.
singular success in persuading the Premier Hollway to issue a
denunciation of the ABC news service. He urged the Federal
Government to inquire into the premature announcement and said that
if it did not, his own Government might do so. He warned that,
"if the ABC was not prepared to recognise fully the rules of propriety
it should be excluded from all privileges accorded the Press". 116
The Victorian Government was as good as its word. The State New
Year Honours list was deliberately withheld from the ABC by Government
House, the Governor's Official Secretary, Kinsman, confirming that the
action was related to the breach of the London embargo. According to
a report from the Victorian News Editor, the State Education Minister,
Wilfred Kent Hughes, subjected his roundsman to "some humiliation" at
an interview by questioning his right to be there. 117 Dixon urged Moses
to protest to Hollway, claiming, "The Victorian Premier and his Minister
have no doubt been inspired to discriminate against us by the local
newspapers". 118

In Western Australia, the ABC's State Manager Ewart Chapple
discovered that the Lieutenant-Governor had directed that their State
Honours List was to be made available only to the West Australian.
The Lieutenant-Governor's private secretary was, however, a little
more friendly to the ABC and personally delivered a copy to Chapple
himself. 119

Moses had cabled London instructing Bearup to assure Attlee that
the ABC deeply regretted the embarrassment it had caused and would make
certain no similar errors would occur. Bearup replied that 10 Downing

117. Telegram Taylor to Dixon, 2 January 1948, SP286, Bundle 6.
118. Dixon to Moses, 2 January 1948, SP286, Bundle 6.
119. In Chapple to Dixon, 2 January 1948, SP286, Bundle 6.
Street had accepted the apology. In his cable to Bearup, Moses added that he would also apologise to State Premiers and Governors. As Dixon points out, Moses was clearly under the impression that State honours had been involved in the embargo breach, whereas in fact McKell's was the only Australian name included in the ABC broadcast. According to Dixon, Moses was extremely angry when he heard of this, saying, "Here I have been crawling on my belly to all and sundry over nothing". On 6 January he wrote to Hollway, pointing out that no Victorian had been mentioned and also giving details of similar bad breaches which had been committed by the Press. He instanced a Sydney Morning Herald story on 20 December 1947 about Truman's American aid plan.

Moses had sought and received an assurance from Cotton that no embargo breaking would occur again. However the incident was tailor-made for another attack on Cotton by Dixon, who claimed it provided evidence of his lack of editorial experience. Although there were many recriminations, neither Dixon nor Cotton came up with any positive plan for reducing the possibility of further misinterpretations of embargo times. It was Moses himself who suggested that midnight embargos should never be given as such but instead expressed as one minute past midnight, thus making absolutely clear which day was referred to. This idea was adopted as standard practice for the ABC's London office.

Neither Moses nor Dixon were prepared to let the newspapers get away with such a massive attack on the integrity of the news service. In the weeks that followed Dixon prepared evidence of newspaper breaches of embargoes with which Moses could confront the newspapers. The Pacific Islands air survey still provided the most clearcut case,

120. Quoted by Dixon, ABC, p.176.
in Dixon's opinion, and the ABC's Canberra office was asked to confirm that The Sun had broken the Prime Minister's embargo. As soon as this was received, Moses wrote to Kennedy detailing the ABC charges. The following day, 20 January, he wrote to Wynne giving not only this case, but also alleging that the Argus had broken an embargo on the Air Force decorations list, scheduled for release on 1 January, and listing the release of the European aid story by the Sydney Morning Herald. Kennedy subsequently denied that any embargo had been attached to their copy of the air survey story, and Wynne curtly told Moses that there was no evidence to support his allegations.

The echoes of the affair of the New Year's Honours List reverberated for some time. When the Birthday Honours List was released on 10 June 1948, the ABC once again had trouble with Government House in Melbourne, the Governor's secretary, Major Maxwell, at first refusing to give the newsroom the list under embargo. The Victorian News Editor, Oakley, remonstrated with him, pointing out that the Melbourne Herald station 3DB had been given the list but had broken the embargo by some fourteen hours. Maxwell eventually agreed to co-operate. Oakley later reported "although there was much ado early in the year when the ABC broadcast prematurely some New Year Honours, there was absolute silence on the part of the press regarding the breach by 3DB".
the New Year's Honours List was issued for release on 1 January 1950, Wynne of AAP protested to Moses that the ABC had once again broken the embargo by broadcasting the names in the early morning news sessions. Moses this time was on firm ground, because the London embargo had been moved back ten hours to coincide with midnight Australian eastern time, thus allowing the Australian media to carry the lists from early morning 1 January. The AAP message had however still carried the midnight GMT embargo, apparently an error in their London office.

This sharp and noticeable decline in relations between the Commission and the press from 1946 onwards was reflected also in ABC touchiness about criticism in the pages of the newspapers. In April 1948 Granny's Column in the Sydney Morning Herald contained allegations that the ABC's independent news service was set up in order that the Government could secure for itself a vehicle for ministerial propaganda.127 ABC news staff protested to the Sydney Morning Herald about the item and Boyer himself backed their representations with a letter to the Editor. Again in September the same year, when the Daily Telegraph alleged the news service was loaded with official handouts, Boyer replied:

It is not only our duty, but also a point of honour for the Commission and all its staff to serve all sections of the community, of whatever shade of political opinion, with scrupulous fairness, and within the limits of human frailty this has been achieved.128

127. 'Granny's Column' was, at this time, written by Deamer.

We have noted how, prior to 1946, the ABC News Department had given preponderant treatment in their bulletins to Government replies to newspaper criticism. In July and August 1949 there was an excellent illustration of the growing self-confidence of the Department and the much sharper 'news sense' it possessed in relation to newspaper-Government disputes. On 22 July Calwell, now Minister for Immigration, issued a long statement in Canberra to refute allegations made in The Sun and the Daily Telegraph in Sydney that there had been considerable difficulties encountered aboard the migrant vessel "General Harry Taylor" on its way to Australia. The papers alleged there were fights between political factions on board, and that the vessel was unclean. Calwell's statement was not used by the ABC. On 26 July he complained about this to the Postmaster-General Cameron and asked him to investigate. Calwell had been told that it was not the ABC's policy to carry denials of stories which it had not broadcast. This was unquestionably a purely internal policy of the News Department at this time, because the Commission had not ruled on this question. It seems clear that it had evolved with the beginning of the independent service, because of the difficulties that had occurred in this area in previous years. Calwell instanced two examples earlier in the year when ABC news had carried ministerial denials of newspaper stories which he had issued. His arguments for running such statements are interesting in that they coincide with the views Dixon held for so long. In broadcasting them, the ABC would be acting "in the national interest". It should select its news with regard for what is "nationally desirable". The Commission should not allow itself to become a party to the undermining of "a vigorous and successful immigration programme". Finally he argued that it was:
unthinkable that a body such as the Commission, which has the best interests of our country at heart, should endorse a policy which would have the effect of allowing newspapers to tell lies about nationally important matters with impunity.129

Oakley pointed out to Boyer that in the first instance mentioned by Calwell the matter had been the subject of parliamentary debate and was reported as such. In the second, a mistake has been made by a sub-editor at a weekend. Oakley asked Boyer to give the policy his blessing. Boyer agreed, telling Cameron that the ABC could not be put in the position of setting a precedent for the broadcasting of corrections of press mis-statements or omissions.

We have believed that we should forfeit ... confidence and this service were our bulletins to be used for rebuttals of stories and statements carried by other press services ... such a policy, as suggested by the Minister, would involve us in commitments which would be not only embarrassing but quite impossible to handle and yet retain a semblance of an acceptable news service.130

The Commission endorsed Boyer's letter, resolving that "the Commission does not handle charges which it may suspect as frivolous, tendentious or malicious, or replies thereto".131 Nevertheless it thought it wise to instruct the News Department to regard each case on its merits, because a dispute involving the press and replies to its allegations could develop significant public interest. In such cases it could be dealt with by giving a fair report of both allegation and reply. "Any other course would forfeit all public confidence in the Commission's impartiality in its news service,"132 Cameron did not feel obliged to press for any further explanation from Boyer and the matter was dropped.

130. Boyer to Cameron, 12 August 1949. Attachment to minute of Commission meeting of 14-16 September 1949.
131. Minute of Commission meeting of 14-16 September 1949.
132. Ibid.
The changes in approach by both the Department and the Commission which had developed since 1946 are obvious. The Department now felt strong enough to drop a statement by Calwell and argue its case for doing so. The Commission, once anxious to avoid newspaper-Government controversies, now felt there were occasions when they were newsworthy and should be dealt with in the normal way - with strict 'impartiality'.

We have given additional evidence in Chapter 3 of the extent to which the ABC had gradually succeeded in winning widespread confidence in, and support for, its news service by 1949. There seem to be strong grounds for arguing that this confidence and the corresponding decline in the controversy surrounding the news service are directly linked to the success with which it achieved the appearance of 'objectivity' in contrast to the period before 1946, when, as has been shown, it too frequently failed to take the essential first steps in this direction. The acceptance of Boyer's policy of 'impartiality', reinforced by Cotton's strong views on the subject, meant that the Department consciously began to follow procedures to demonstrate its adherence to this doctrine of fairness. Boyer knew that the politicians, the public and the press all had to be reassured that the news service was worthwhile and neutral. It is clear that what Tuchman describes as the "strategies of newswork" began to figure large in the minds of ABC newsmen as they equated a demonstrated 'impartiality' with survival, in the very hostile environment in which they had to work in these years. The ABC reporter therefore verified facts, presented both sides of the story, and placed heavy emphasis on leaving the consumer to decide. With Commission and Department following the same policy guidelines, the structuring of a reporter's facts was more likely to be in accord with the views of his editors. The influx of experienced reporters hired from outside would have introduced a far greater element of what Tuchman calls newsmen's "common sense", meaning "what most newsmen
hold to be true or take for granted". Boyer's heavy emphasis on separating 'fact' from 'opinion' and his insistence on removing any element of 'colour' were additional attributes which could be said to lay claim to 'objectivity'. The semblance of 'objectivity' by the end of 1949, would have been largely responsible for the sudden decline of criticism, and the elevation of news to a position of supreme status in the Commission's programmes. It has been pointed out in Chapter three that Boyer's consensual leanings, and the necessity to compromise on basic issues in order to maintain political support, strongly influenced the content of news. This editorial policy affected the selection of 'facts'. As well, as Tuchman says, the persistent presentation of 'facts' presented from differing viewpoints in order to allow the listeners to make up their minds, can and does lead to selective perception. Thus in the ABC's case, as with the newspapers, procedures demonstrating objectivity frequently mean "there is a distinct discrepancy between the ends sought and those achieved".

Unquestionably this process of successfully introducing and using news procedures which protected the ABC from charges of bias and from continued political interference, received great stimulus from the onus placed on the news service to demonstrate its superiority over the press in terms of 'impartiality' and 'objectivity'. The huge outlay on the service had to provide the public with something which was demonstrably different - an alternative news service, which was faster and more reliable. Before 1946, one could say that the ABC

133. Tuchman, "Objectivity", p.674.
134. Tuchman, "Objectivity", p.676.
newsmen at times lacked sufficient 'news sense' to follow standard 'objective' procedures. After 1946, the trend was towards more rigorously observing 'objective' procedures than their newspaper competitors. The path towards greater 'objectivity' was the ruthless exclusion of extraneous material which 'coloured' newspaper reports. The newsmen who joined the ABC did so because this new type of 'factual' journalism was appealing. Many of them were disillusioned with newspapers. Keith Fraser has confirmed that the driving force of the news service in those early years of the independent service was the feeling that it was a more 'honest' form of journalism, without editorial policy. "We were there to dig out the facts and present them unadorned without editorial comment, without slanting, or undue emphasis ... that was about the dynamic of the whole service."\(^{135}\) Or, as Oakley puts it, the early journalists were "idealists who believed that facts were stubborn things and if presented simply would speak for themselves and the listeners could do the assessments".\(^{136}\) Sigelman in questioning Breed's stressing of the significance of conflict between reporter and newspaper,\(^{137}\) argues that bias in reporting is the result of a far more complex organisational process. The recruitment, socialisation and working norms of reporters are intended to avoid conflict by preserving "the institutional mythology of objective reporting, while they also assure newspaper leaders of favourable attitudes and performances".\(^{138}\) His research indicated that instead of newspaper executives selecting staff on the basis of their compliance with their policy viewpoint, journalists are hired on the basis c

135. Interview with Keith Fraser, 25 September 1975.
professional qualifications alone. The end result is the same however because journalists are attracted to seek jobs with organisations with which they have sympathy. The process of self-selection preserves the myth of a "free and responsible press" while actually ensuring they share similar attitudes. Clearly this socialization process occurred within the ABC's news service, as the evidence of the early newsmen shows. Staff were attracted to ABC news because they believed that an alternative method of presenting news was nationally desirable. The 'community service' aspect of the work of the ABC, so frequently emphasised by Boyer, and the quest for greater 'objectivity' than the press could have been very much in accordance with their journalistic role definition. There was never any need therefore for 'selectivity' on the part of the ABC in recruiting staff. Fraser has recently confirmed this point, categorically denying that in the early years of the independent service the news service had ever, in his experience deliberately sought people that might fit into the ABC way of doing things.139

Other socialisation procedures would also have been operating. Contacts with more experienced newsmen, who no doubt regaled the new recruits with tales of newspaper perfidy, would have aided this process. Sigelman also draws attention to the organisational control measures, at the editorial level, and the assigning level, which maintain policy and yet are accepted by journalists as not being in conflict with institutional mythology. These existed in the ABC. Fraser has recounted the problems encountered in getting former newspaper reporters to write copy according to ABC radio style.

We had enough of the key men who really believed in what they were doing. We had enough of those to be able to knock these other blokes into shape and it was done with subbing, it was done with chief of staffing ... you'd brief the brumby

139. Interview with Keith Fraser, 25 September 1975.
newspaper recruit as to the type of story the ABC wanted, the treatment he was to give it and you'd follow his copy through, particularly if you were doubtful of him and you'd knock him over the head with it if he didn't write it properly. 140

Some of the early appointees to the news independent service found the reality different from the expectation and left. The bulk stayed on, reveling in the fierce competition with the press and feeling more confident about the final product and the reaction of the public to it. People began to come to the ABC with stories which they felt the newspapers would not print - the 'positive' story in ABC judgment, instead of the 'sensational'.

We started to get the support of ... the educationist with an axe to grind, the countryman who had some sort of story to tell who wasn't getting it into the local press, the local authorities ... and above all the country people ... We started to get an ABC news type of story, something that was almost exclusive to us. Some communal activity out in some country town where everybody got together to send little Tilly Brown to the conservatorium for music lessons ... The more abstract against the more sensational ... [The Press] chased after us like nobody's business. 141

Dixon's record of the ABC news service - Inside the ABC - makes it appear that working journalists everywhere were in sympathy with the aims and efforts of ABC newsmen. It was the proprietors, in his opinion, who issued the instructions which caused trouble for the ABC in the field. From the examples already quoted however, it is clear that some press reporters were hostile to ABC reporters. It is appropriate to refer to Sigelman's analysis in this respect also. In the two newspapers which he examined, there was a distinct conflict in editorial policy. Yet in each, organisational mechanisms -

140. Ibid.

141. Ibid. Fraser recalls that although the Press were forced to follow up some ABC stories, they invariably looked down on ABC reporters, claiming they were not 'true journalists'. This was another source of friction.
recruitment, socialisation and working arrangements - had resulted in co-operation between staff and proprietors. This model would explain why some newspaper reporters happily went along with their bosses in attempting to frustrate early ABC attempts at news gathering. The fact that there was hostility at the working level seems to question Breed's theory of essential conflict between newspaper policy and journalistic norms - reasoning which mirrors Dixon's views. Newspaper antagonism towards the ABC news service would seem to run contrary to journalistic canons of behaviour. Therefore one might have expected overwhelming support from working journalists for the ABC. This was not the case however, indicating a degree of harmonious accord between some of the newspaper journalists and newspaper policy.

The socialisation process which has been described helps to explain the degree to which the News Department swung behind Boyer and the Commission in the years after 1946. The news staff shared the belief in the need for an alternative, more 'objective' news service and they were in agreement that the 'excesses' of the press were to be avoided. Press attempts to undermine and destroy confidence in the service would have merely stiffened the resolve. Finally, when the Commission itself was so angered by the continuation of the press campaign against the news service that it spoke out in its defence, it gave its blessing to the continuation of the strong anti-newspaper ethic fostered in the news service in the years before 1946. While the service after 1946 could no longer play the active role against the newspapers that it had, because of the acquisition of a greater sense of 'news judgment', the determination to prove radio's superiority over the press in the speed and accuracy with which news could be communicated to the public, became paramount in the Department's thinking. Also, because ABC newsmen were convinced that they kept their functional autonomy within the bounds of ABC policy, a harmonious relationship with management...
was established, which would have had the effect of reinforcing the bias towards consensualism inherent in Boyer's philosophy of broadcasting. As Sigelman says, "The key to understanding bias lies not in conspiracies, not in conflict, but in co-operation and shared satisfactions". \(^{142}\)

Just how strong the socialisation process was in the ABC news service can be gauged by Hamilton's reaction on coming to the ABC. According to Con Simons, former *Sun* Sporting Editor, and a close personal friend of Hamilton when he worked for that newspaper, Hamilton severed all links with his former newspaper colleagues soon after becoming ABC Editor-in-Chief. \(^{143}\) In September 1962, Hamilton gave vent publicly to the disenchantment he now felt for the newspapers, and in particular for his old employer, *The Sun*, when he wrote a highly cynical article for *The Australian Quarterly* about press criticism of a film story in the TV News feature programme, *Weekend Magazine*. \(^{144}\) The film had dealt with the shooting of kangaroos on a N.S.W. property, and the ABC news service was criticised by both *The Sun* and *The Mirror* for allowing it to be shown. \(^{145}\) Hamilton detailed the way in which the newspapers had built up the story, implying deliberate distortion of the facts and 'sensationalism'. He concluded: "Nobody had objected to, even referred to, a film we showed in the same programme the same night of abandoned and destitute African children living on street refuse". \(^{146}\)

\(^{142}\) Sigelman, "Reporting the News", p.149.

\(^{143}\) Personal communication, Con Simons, 25 May 1977.

\(^{144}\) W.S. Hamilton, "The Kangaroo Affair", *Australian Quarterly*, Vol.34, No.3 (September 1962), pp.47-52. The programme was shown on 20 May 1962.


\(^{146}\) Hamilton, "Kangaroo Affair", p.52.
The obsession with confronting the press and demonstrating the superiority of its news service in eyeball to eyeball competition had several important consequences. It validated and strengthened the method of news-gathering which had begun with Denning in 1939. ABC reporters moved on rounds or beats with their newspaper counterparts. The Act of 1946, making the ABC responsible for gathering all its Australian news was interpreted to mean that all beats had to be covered in this way. So the ABC had its parliamentary, industrial, police, law court and general roundsmen, exactly as the newspapers did. ABC reporters waited for press releases at the same outlets, and attended all news conferences. Speed, accuracy and greater 'objectivity' were the weapons to demonstrate the strengths of the ABC news. Competition meant covering all the news in the newspapers. Missing any news story would be a reflection on the service and would undercut its role of being in James's words "a kind of policeman" which would keep the newspapers on the right path by providing a check on whatever they reported. The necessity of beating the newspapers in getting the news to air meant a heavy concentration on immediate or 'spot' news which could demonstrate radio's advantages. Because everything was covered so as not to give the press any opportunity to score points, the volume of news was considerable. This accentuated the trend towards brevity, in order that as many items as possible could be squeezed into a bulletin. What went into those brief, heavily edited items was limited to simple factual information, because, as we have seen, Boyer believed anything which went beyond this, was comment, which was inappropriate for the ABC. Because ABC news had long believed that press news was frequently inaccurate, because of 'errors' which had been repeated in the days of reliance on newspapers for news, the ABC would by contrast check and verify every fact of every story. Nothing would be taken for granted. So the ABC News Directive sternly warned that newspaper
and ABC standards were different.

Do not be influenced by newspaper treatment of a story. It is not permitted to take any story, any fact, from a newspaper. We may follow up newspaper stories but a reporter must get all his own facts and statements from the correct source. The taking of facts unchecked from a newspaper will be regarded most seriously. No excuse will be accepted.147

So dubiously were newspaper sources and facts regarded that the News Service would not permit newspaper clippings to be kept in reference files. In this way, the possibility of any newspaper influence was supposedly removed. This ban was lifted as recently as July 1976.148

Because the newspaper method of gathering news was duplicated in order to compete, the possibility of the ABC introducing overseas techniques in radio news reporting receded. Ex-newspapermen were recruited to do the job they had always done - to write copy. The style, subject matter and motivation were frequently different but the product was in the same category. The newspaper methodology and the newspaper format made any consideration of alternative news presentation unlikely. The contrast with overseas methods of news presentation grew more extreme.


148. In memo from Handley to Chief of Staff, 5 July 1976. The reasoning was that they would "give a broader base to a story, or provide useful background reading".
The war had enhanced the reputation of the BBC news. Its impartiality had won world-wide praise. The news-gathering side of its operations had expanded with its observers covering events abroad and in Britain. As Kenneth Adam, then BBC Director of Publicity wrote in 1947:

The BBC's corps of war correspondents took its place alongside that of the Press on every fighting front, and it is being succeeded, at the present time, by a select company of reporters in the main news-gathering centres of the world, specialist correspondents and home reporters. The newcomer now has the key to the door.150

Clearly the British press was not happy about the full-scale entry onto the news scene by the BBC, or by the continued demonstration of radio's advantages in getting news to air before newspapers appeared on the streets. As Ivor Brown of the BBC put it in 1946, 'The entire Press has to submit to being 'scooped' nightly on the nine o'clock news and this may be called a lingering pain in the Fleet Street neck'.151 Adam believed that:

Radio has lowered the value of news as news. Every time Frank Phillips opens his mouth, he reduces the possibility of a 'scoop' on which modern newspaper fortunes were founded. And just as the 'scoop' is becoming a thing of the past, so the 'stunt' and the 'sensation' are beginning to pall.152

149. Much of this section relies on two important sources: 
(1) Interview with Ivan Chapman, 9 October 1976; and 
(2) A report compiled by former ABC journalist Margaret MacCallum, who joined the BBC in 1947. At Moses's request she wrote an excellent survey of BBC news reporting called "The Topical Broadcast: Some Observations on the BBC's Policy and Practice". It is 19 pages long with appendices, in SP286, Bundle 6. It will henceforth be referred to as MacCallum Report. No date, but received in Sydney in December 1948.


152. Adam, "The Press", p.73. Emphasis is Adam's.
The press gave evidence of their uneasiness about the BBC's expanding invasion of the news field in 1949. In that year the Newspaper Society told the Beveridge Committee:

that it would view with very great concern any further extension of news broadcasting, especially in the form of extended broadcasts of regional news, and asks that the Committee will pay full weight to its representations in this respect.153

Margaret MacCallum had reported in the previous year that the BBC's regional news bulletins were limited by a gentleman's agreement with the Newspaper Society to five minutes a day.

The BBC consistently sought to mollify the press, denying that it had any intention to compete. A.P. Ryan, Editor of BBC News told an audience of newspaper journalists in 1946 that he did not believe that the BBC was a serious competitor with the press, and that BBC news would merely whet the public appetite for what was in the newspapers. He assured them that "The function of the BBC correspondent ... is not to cover spot news. The idea is to get one man in each country who can explain the news".154 As far as home news was concerned they were going to have three or four domestic reporters who would cover stories which could be better done in voice. There was no suggestion of collecting all their own news. The same year Ryan briefed Bearup in London on the expansion of the BBC operation. After telling him that the BBC intended to appoint correspondents to all the important world centres, Ryan emphasised that their role was not competitive with world agencies.

Their instructions specifically are not to cover the ordinary 'agency' matter - they realise that in nine cases out of ten, the agency report would be first in anyhow ... Their job is to amplify or supplement the agency despatches and to keep the BBC informed and advised as to the relative importance of the events so reported.155

155. Bearup to Moses, 11 July 1946, SP724, Box 38,15/1/2.
MacCallum believed that by 1948, much of the press resentment was beginning to die down. The Press, she said, "is prepared to consider the BBC as a kindred craft and the BBC newsmen ... as fellow journalists".156 In 1962, Donald Edwards, Editor of News and Current Affairs revealed that one or two British newspapers with interests in commercial television had endeavoured to handicap BBC news-gathering two years previously. But he dismissed this as a minor and relatively unimportant problem which had been solved. He praised the press for their ideas and repeated the adage that television coverage increases the appetite for newspapers.

Newspapers render many services and have many advantages which broadcasting cannot rival. We have no wish or need to rival. The press and broadcasting are partners, allies, helping and supplementing each other, in the public service of interesting the public.157

Ivan Chapman remembers that within BBC news there was no feeling of competition with the newspapers at all. If they were unsure of something they would wait for an hour or so before putting it on air, to ensure authenticity. With an event like the death of King George VI, they were beaten easily by the press because they sent a taxi to the home of the chief news reader to enable him to read the item, as specified in standing studio instructions.158 BBC correspondents "were specifically told ... that their function in life was not to break stories, but to explain stories".159

158. This story was widely told in BBC news, when Chapman joined in 1949. Personal communication from Ivan Chapman, 9 October 1976.
159. Interview with Ivan Chapman, 9 October 1976.
Given this leisurely approach to news gathering, and the lack of any competitive relationship with the press, the BBC might have been expected to concentrate on the development of more extended use of the voice report and actuality recording which they had pioneered during the war in Radio Newsreel. However this was not immediately the case. As Jonathon Dimbleby puts it: "For the first time in twenty years, it had the techniques, the equipment, the talent and the reputation to exploit radio in peace as in war. Instead the Corporation squandered the lot". 160 The BBC decided to rely heavily on the press agencies for domestic news, although expanding the number of correspondents abroad, and appointed Tahu Hole as News Editor. 161 It was he who forbade 'scoops'. Instead of using the war correspondents to widen the horizons of peacetime coverage, the War Reporting Unit was broken up. There emerged a "doctrine of broadcasting which was to terrorise a young, enthusiastic and energetic News Room into petrified immobility". 162 It was based on strict observance of 'objectivity' and adherence to what was in the "sober public interest". Although the techniques of Radio Newsreel did not immediately spill over into the normal news bulletins, the programme itself was introduced for the first time to domestic audiences in November 1947. It had an immediate impact. After its first six weeks on the Light Programme, it had an audience of six million. By 1948, it had risen to nine million. The programme contained a succession of voice reports from BBC correspondents:

on the lines of cinema presentation with stories inadequately covered by the news. It was to avoid news highlights in favour of background stories which could always be pegged to the news of the day. Although dramatic in form, the content was to be objective and unbiased. 163

160. Dimbleby, Dimbleby, p.270.
161. See Chapter 4, p.421.
162. Dimbleby, Dimbleby, p.204.
Its duration on the overseas service had been fifteen minutes, but for domestic listeners it was lengthened to thirty minutes. Nine or ten items averaging two and a half to three and a half minutes in length were included.

The running order of items and the linking commentary of the narrator give a pattern of sound by contrasting voices - the narration, the straight talk, the interview and actuality which give considerable movement and flexibility to the pattern.164

BBC news bulletins were compiled from material from the news agencies, from BBC correspondents and its monitoring service of shortwave broadcasts from overseas. The policy was not to use an item from an agency, unless it had been corroborated by another agency or by a BBC correspondent. Preference was given to despatches from BBC correspondents. These were cabled despatches or transcripts of voice reports for Radio Newsreel. Voices were rarely heard in the news bulletins. It was the failure to thus expand on the Radio Newsreel style of presentation which was so galling to the former war correspondents such as Dimbleby.

Unlike the ABC however, the BBC had the latent talent and expertise on hand which could revamp news bulletins at any time. The Radio Newsreel style was copied in a number of other programmes such as "The Eye Witness" and "In Britain Now", which were prepared by the News Division's News Talks and Outside Broadcasts Departments. Although they functioned separately, their material was used in bulletins. Their staff were made up of the voice reporters who recorded interviews with people in the news, and who described outside events. The BBC news staff was therefore made up of specialised voice reporting staff and sub-editors who became adept at handling material from recordings. Only major events in Britain were covered by its own reporting staff, who were still few in number.

164. Ibid., p.15.
Although the Corporation and Tāhu Hole were determined that news should continue to be presented in brief factual form read by an announcer, Radio Newsreel's example began to cause many people to rethink the role of the radio news bulletin. The distinguished journalist and broadcaster, Donald McLachlan, strongly criticised its approach to news in an article in the BBC Quarterly in 1948. Claiming its content was unvaried and that it was limited in content, style, sources and delivery, he went on to criticise its simple, stereotyped recording of details, facts, official instructions which had only a very limited relevance to the listener. The major nine o'clock bulletin he said, "is too much about the things that a politician or a government official would want to hear. It seems completely appropriate in a London club's smoking room; completely inappropriate in a London pub". McLachlan objected to the taking of snippets from BBC correspondent's voice reports and putting them into the bulletins. BBC correspondents "must shudder to hear how fragments of their carefully written pieces are lifted out of their contexts and inserted into new contexts of which the style and purpose are quite different". McLachlan pleaded for introduction into the news bulletins of the explanatory comment and the colourful picture from the man on the spot, as in Radio Newsreel. He suggested that a full half hour be devoted to news at nine o'clock. What listeners are getting in Radio Newsreel he said, is the news approach, the newspaper technique of comment and entertainment adapted to broadcasting - a technique still in its infancy in British studios. And with this technique it is possible to bring again and again to the casual listener ... the clear and simple picture of the world he lives in, ... By this method an immense amount of effective education can be unobtrusively achieved.

165. For a view critical of the voice report, and defending the old announcer-read system, see Alvar Liddell, "Here is the News", The Listener, 2 November 1972. Liddell was one of Britain's most famous news readers.


168. Ibid., p.159.
Despite eloquent pleas such as this, the expansion of news bulletins to include voice did not occur for another seven or eight years. Chapman recalls only two instances in the period 1948-54 - the first being a tube train crash in London and the second the arrival of British prisoners-of-war released from North Korea. Finally, it was television news which was responsible for the change in radio news bulletin style. When well-known reporters from Radio Newsreel began to appear in front of television cameras in the mid nineteen-fifties, radio news decided that it could hold back no longer. From that time, voice reports became an integral part of longer bulletins.

The contrast with the ABC news service will be immediately apparent. There was no break-neck competition with the press to get news first. There was a different type of reporter, a specialist trained in broadcasting skills. His role was different, being that of backgrounding news events. Although the traditional bulletins did not make full use of BBC correspondents for many years, much of their information was incorporated into bulletins, allowing the BBC to treat items at greater length. Chapman confirms that ABC bulletins were much more tightly edited than BBC bulletins. Referring to the ABC he says:

I think we didn't tend to background stories. I think everyone thought it was a bit heavy going and I think we were wrong there. I think everyone tended to assume that the listeners were very, very intelligent and knew all this anyway, the background, and I don't think this was quite valid in assuming that.

By building up professional skill in the presentation of explanatory voice reports, the BBC was laying the foundations of the technique later used in TV bulletins. The reporter trained in voice reports was the man logically called upon to do work in front of camera. The ABC had

169. See Chapter 4, pp.421-22.
170. Interview with Ivan Chapman, 9 October 1976.
no such foundation to build upon. Voice reporting was entirely the province of other departments, notably the Talks Department. There was no training ground, no ABC version of Radio Newsreel within the News Department. The Talks Department produced its News Review nightly but it was more of a magazine programme than one related to the major events of the day. The News Department however was not ignorant of the expanding role of radio news reporters overseas and from time to time there emerged within it a questioning of the rigid formula to which it still subscribed. The next section will deal with these occasional gestures of frustration and the reasons for their discontinuance.

**Efforts by News to Expand its Role**

The McCall-Deamer report of 1942 had recommended that the ABC should take a service of news from the press, abandon the directly competitive news-gathering field, and concentrate instead on a new type of news presentation using voice reports from 'observers', recorded descriptions of events, and actualities. The proposed news agreement of 1943 included provision for these ideas. Because, however, the agreement was couched in such a way that made it appear that the newspapers had forced the ABC to abandon news-gathering, and the arguments in favour of 'observers' were less than convincing to ABC news staff, the observer concept was abandoned at the same time as the Government and the PSCB prevented the passage of the agreement.

171. See Chapter 2, pp.111-117.
172. See Chapter 2, pp.137-139.
The older news staff could see themselves and their techniques being overwhelmed by the influx of news/talks observers and producers. Any spark of understanding or enthusiasm for the new ideas propounded by Deamer and McCull was doused by the anger and resentment felt by news staff at the supposed Commission 'sell out' to the press. The observer principle was too high a price to pay for reliance on the press monopolies as a major supplier of news. The observer idea seemed almost to be an idea proposed by the press as a smokescreen to prevent the ABC gathering its own news. When the PSCB itself criticised the idea, it was laid to rest for some four years.

It was unfortunate that antipathy to the press and the breakdown in communication between the Commission and its News Department cut short what could well have been a logical extension of the news role in wartime. Dixon was not a broadcasting man, but BBC overseas broadcasts had alerted him to the contribution of 'broadcasters' to war news. In March 1941, for example, he complained to Bearup about the poor handling by the Talks Department of the departure of the American fleet from Sydney harbour. He felt it was a great opportunity lost by lack of 'news sense' within Talks, who had failed to describe the event direct or include any actuality. He appealed for News to be given direct control of the coverage of all news events.

We are inadequately staffed and we have no men capable of going on the air and giving an eye-witness description of big events, but these difficulties could easily be overcome. 173

In addition, Dixon wanted News Commentaries to be restored to News. Bearup expressed sympathy with all these viewpoints but nothing

173. Dixon to Bearup, 24 March 1941, SP286, Box 1, S2.
eventuated. Again on 15 August 1942, Dixon urged that all the material gathered by ABC war correspondents be placed under the control and at the disposal of the News Department. There were two types of correspondents covering the war for the ABC. There were 'observers' - the broadcasters - sending back recorded material for broadcast by the Talks Department and there were war correspondents sending back cabled despatches for news. Dixon felt that news sessions would be made more dynamic and interesting if short excerpts of the 'observer' recordings were made available to news for inclusion in bulletins. Pointing out that News Talks in the BBC was controlled by the News Department, and not Talks, Dixon said, "I should like to see the question of an Australian Radio Newsreel revived".174

Dixon was also aware of the fact that the BBC ran longer items than the ABC and hence gave more information. He stressed this point in a letter to Moses in June 1939 when he agreed with the BBC principle that:

the first consideration in news presentation must be to see that each item contains sufficient information to satisfy listeners who have no immediate access to a daily newspaper to read the additional facts.175

Nevertheless he felt there was not much the ABC could do about it at that stage because bulletin periods were shorter than on the BBC. By 1943, however, when the number and duration of bulletins were greater, Dixon acknowledged that ABC news items were still on average half the length of BBC items. The BBC therefore obtained "a rounded rhythmic style".176 He did not explain why the ABC news editors persisted in

174. Dixon to Bearup, 19 August 1942, SP286, Box 1, S2.
175. Dixon to Moses, 8 June 1939, SP286, Box 1, S2.
176. Dixon to Deamer, 16 July 1943, SP286, Box 1, S5, "Radio News Style".
writing items of two and three sentences in length although he admitted "such brief items tend to be staccato and colourless". 177

One clue however is contained in the same memorandum when, in replying to criticism from a member of the Talks Department that there were too many items containing 'officialese' which was meaningless to the general public, Dixon revealed that the news staff itself had difficulty in understanding the vague and indefinite language of many official handouts. They had difficulty also in finding people who could help them clarify the facts. It seems therefore that many items were kept as brief as possible to avoid errors of interpretation.

In 1943, bulletins were reduced from twenty minutes to fifteen, largely at the expense of the State news segment which was reduced to three minutes. 178 This was a major blow to Dixon and a decision he fought strenuously over the next six years. It resulted directly from his growing isolation and that of his News Department within the ABC. 179 This had accelerated from 1943 onwards with the obvious campaign by the news staff to win Government and union support for stand against the newspaper agreements. But it had its origins earlier in long and sometimes bitter disputes Dixon had had with senior programme executives, particularly the Controller of Programmes, Keith Barry and the manager for N.S.W., Basil Kirke. In the nineteen-thirties Barry and Dixon frequently clashed over two issues - the 'pessimistic' reports from overseas about events in, and the attitudes of, Hitler's Germany, and crime and accident reports in the news. Barry believed

177. Ibid.

178. This apparently occurred after Curtin's approval had been obtained in May 1943 to give the main items of news first, irrespective of origin, instead of reading Canberra news first. See Chapter 2, p.118.

179. See Chapter 2, pp.140 and 181.
that Hitler was maligned by the international press and that ABC news should adopt a more 'balanced' approach. He also felt the news was no place for crimes and accidents. Kirke, who was directly in control of announcers, frequently complained about late copy being thrust into news readers' hands just before, or actually during, bulletin time. Dixon and his staff insisted that they had to include any major story that came in before the bulletin ended. In June 1943, there was a serious dispute between the two men when Dixon resisted efforts by Kirke to get him to cover a news conference to explain the game of American gridiron, in which American servicemen were to take part. In the same month, Dixon was given a final warning to co-operate with other members of the staff by the Commission. By this time his Department had few friends but many enemies.

In November 1944 Dixon attempted to persuade the Commission to extend bulletin times by five minutes but was unsuccessful. The Commission determined that:

the attention of listeners lags after fifteen minutes - in many cases, no doubt, before this period - first, because of the strain of concentrating, and secondly because the news is becoming progressively thinner during the period.

In rare circumstances, however, the Commission was prepared to allow an extension - that is, when several major news events coincided. In the same month, Dixon was reprimanded by Moses for failing to carry out an instruction that announcers were to be given news bulletins fifteen minutes before they went on air.

180. The correspondence on this subject, over four years, is contained in SP286, Box 3, S2.

181 Correspondence on this dispute is also in SP286, Box 3, S2. Kirke had also antagonised Dixon by backing Deamer in urging a reduction in news staff.

182. Commission minute of meeting of 28-30 November 1944.
In May 1945, he clashed with McCall when the latter refused to refer the question of extension of bulletin times to the Commission once again. Dixon's reasons for wanting the extra time were not related to the need for providing more information and background on specific stories. He wanted more time for more stories. The difficulty as he explained it was that he was obliged to run so many stories based on Government statements that he had little time for anything else.

If there is any justification for the complaint sometimes made that our 7 p.m. session carries more than a fair proportion of news relating to government activities, the blame rests not with the news staff, but with the inflexible period which prevents us from giving other items of general interest that might make the bulletin sound more varied and balanced.183

Dixon complained that too often his requests for extensions on special occasions had been refused by McCall, Barry and Bearup. The following month Dixon protested that since News became part of the Public Relations Division under first Deamer, and then McCall, his authority had dwindled. He was no longer consulted about the choice of announcers to read the news, and he asked that the principle be adopted of news bulletins in future being read by members of the news staff. The suggestion was not adopted.

With Cotton's appointment in 1946, Dixon found to his dismay, that instead of having an ally on the question of extending bulletin times, he had someone with a very open mind. Cotton believed that bulletin durations should be flexible. If there was not much news, they should end early, or be extended on heavy news day, as in the BBC. Cotton influenced the Commission which adopted his point of view in June 1946. There is no evidence however of bulletins ending before time, and only rarely was permission given for extensions. The fifteen minutes for major bulletins was firmly adhered to. In August 1946,

Cotton warned against running bulletins up to time by including insignificant material. He implied that this concept of news presentation, which differed from that of the BBC, resulted from ABC efforts to compete with the press. In the BBC, he said, there is no attempt to dress up stale news to fill a bulletin. In fact, a frequent lead begins: 'There is little fresh news since our last bulletin ...' The BBC knows it has no need to compete with the newspapers and it is felt that frankness and honesty in the long run is the best policy.  

Despite his BBC background, Cotton brought with him no great desire to include voice reports or have the News Department move into the area of voice reports. He did however favour the inclusion of brief actualities in the bulletins, such as part of the swearing-in ceremony for the State Governor. But these he said should be used sparingly, be as brief as possible and should not normally affect the length of the bulletin. He saw them as a way of brightening the bulletin, rather than a way of shedding additional light on the issues covered. His major contribution in the field of new methods of presentation was the introduction of a 'tabloid bulletin'. This was made up of lighter items, not demanding great listener concentration, using material normally left out of main bulletins. It depended on terseness of writing and liveliness of reading. It began at 9 p.m. each day from the start of the independent service but was abandoned in February 1948 after Cotton became despondent at the insistence of Moses that it should conform to traditional bulletin patterns and allow each State to present its own segment of a few minutes at the end. Cotton felt this destroyed the national character of the material and disrupted the style and flow. While it was obviously a bulletin of a different character, and broadened the scope of the service, it did nothing to aid the understanding of the day's news. The emphasis was still on brevity and presentation of only 'essential facts'.

This trend towards cutting material heavily in order to cover as many stories as possible was formally made Department policy in the first news editors' conference of December 1946. It resolved:

That all news editors make a special point of trying to attain the greatest possible economy in the wordage of each news item, with a view to securing the widest possible coverage in the time available.\textsuperscript{185}

This was the news staff's own interpretation of the Broadcasting Act of 1946, which did not attempt to define news-gathering in this way. Nor did Boyer's news directives suggest the ABC should attempt to cover as many stories as possible.\textsuperscript{186} The 'alternative newspaper' principle, so strongly believed in by ABC journalists resulted in a facsimile approach to news-gathering. Wider coverage and briefer stories considerably weakened any chances of introducing news 'in depth'.

It followed that with the appointment of additional staff for the independent service, the number of news stories increased and so did the demand for extra space in the programme schedules. News received several additional bulletin spots in 1946, the main one being the morning bulletin at 6.45 a.m. The most important bulletin of the day however continued to be that at 7 p.m. which attracted the largest number of listeners. The Department regarded it as their most prestigious spot, and continued to urge that it be given more time. The News Editors' Conference of August 1947 resolved "That in the opinion of this conference the outlet for State news at 7 p.m. at

\textsuperscript{185} Minute of Interstate News Conference, 9-11 December 1946, SP724, Box 39, 15/1/17.

\textsuperscript{186} Moses however, recorded his agreement with the resolution, without feeling it significant enough to be referred to the Commission. Some of the other resolutions of the News Editors' Conferences were sent to the Commission for approval. See Moses to Dixon, 14 March 1947, SP341, Box 37, 11.1. Appendix X contains an outline of the mechanisms of communication between the News Department and other areas of the ABC.
present completely fails to do justice to the money spent on the
independent service, having in mind the large amount of news available".\textsuperscript{187}

Cotton dissented from this motion, still feeling that much news that
was trivial was still being used to pad bulletins unnecessarily.

The demand for peak listening time once again saw Dixon and Barry
at loggerheads. Dixon claimed, in support of his argument, that much
of the news now collected by his staff, went into the waste-paper
basket, because of insufficient time. His main premise is interesting
because it reveals a continuing uneasiness about the type of news in
ABC bulletins and uncertainty about its function. Obviously Dixon felt,
as he had in 1939, that there was a wider role for news if only a
formula could be found. He told Finlay: "Very little Australian news
on the intellectual, spiritual or socially significant level is appearing
in our bulletins, simply because the hard news, which demands priority,
is taking up practically all the available time".\textsuperscript{188}

There are many other examples in the document, prepared by Dixon, but representing
the views of all his Editors, of the realisation that ABC was failing
to communicate much of substance because of the brevity of treatment.

It went on:

\begin{quote}
if the effect of existing limitations is to cut stories
below the point where a clear and adequate outline of their
purport is possible, distortion and misrepresentation
inevitably follow. Similarly, selection of news items
becomes dangerous when space is so limited that a choice has
to be made arbitrarily ... The present bulletins prevent the
expression of viewpoints: yet the expression of viewpoints is
the most important day-to-day method of educating the adult
mind.\textsuperscript{189}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{187.} Minute of Interstate Conference, 4-6 August 1947, SP724,
Box 39, 15/1/17.

\textsuperscript{188.} Quoted by Finlay in Finlay to Barry, 27 August 1947, SP341,
Box 37, 11.1.

\textsuperscript{189.} Ibid.
The Department obviously felt that it should be giving more time to the larger issues and yet was prevented from doing so by the compulsion it felt to provide all the news. To abandon any one story, would be to leave itself open to criticism that it had failed to match the press. More time was seen to be the answer, not a reduction in the number of stories covered in the time available.

Barry countered by detailing the demands made for extra programme time by many other departments. He charged the news service with overstating its case, giving as evidence figures showing how frequently items were repeated in the news. Two out of three were broadcast more than once. Hence an impasse was reached. No more time was available yet the Department was not prepared to limit its scope. Brevity continued to be the order of the day.

At this time, the News Department became even more conscious that it was not really part of the ABC 'family'. Its incessant demand for more time, its escalating expenditure which threatened the budgets of other departments, its different union affiliations, and its history of conflict with the Commission all served to create a climate of alienation. Fraser remembers:

>a certain amount of resentment towards this johnny-come-lately that had achieved a pretty spectacular success ... a certain resentment towards our professionalism in an organisation that didn't have a marked professionalism.190

Oakley felt that a great deal of the hostility came from the Talks Department

where, at the time, there were few officers who had joined the Commission to continue their profession, none who had assisted in the intrigue that had prefaced the rise of News. Some of the Talks attitude arose from the fact that AJA salaries were then better than for Talks men generally.191

190. Interview with Keith Fraser, 25 September 1975.
The Department became inward-looking and sought to develop self-sufficiency. It soon worked in an environment that was all its own - its own little world, described by Fraser.

In radio we were a pretty self-contained group. We could go and get our news, sub it, and if necessary we could throw a switch and read it ... the only people we saw really, outside of the news staff ... would be the news reader ... and the technician.192

It was this divorcement from the broadcasting skills being developed in other departments, its failure to use microphones in the field, or make use of studio production facilities, which heightened its isolation. Moses confirms that News began to develop a complex that it was threatened by other departments.

You see Dixon was never a broadcaster and I think he felt at odds with the other heads of broadcasting departments and I think he was uneasy with them because I don't think he understood them ... so I think they might have felt isolated and that was because they never attempted to be part of the group.193

Later Fraser came to believe that this was in part responsible for the failure to introduce new techniques.

I think our very isolation, our very self-containment, worked against us ... in the area of broadcasting, that is the use of the microphone ... I think we could have learned a lot from our colleagues. I think they could have learned a trick or two from us too.194

There was a period of three years however, 1947-49, when it might have been possible for news to have engaged itself in broadcasting work, and thus brought new influences to bear on its bulletins. With the expenditure of the news service under close parliamentary and press scrutiny, Moses was concerned about the wastage of news copy as

192. Interview with Keith Fraser, 25 September 1975.
193. Interview with Sir Charles Moses, 8 February 1976.
194. Interview with Keith Fraser, 25 September 1975.
revealed by Dixon. The bulletins did not reflect the amount of work or the number of staff that had gone into their preparation. Desirous of providing more visible evidence of the value of the journalists, Moses and the Commission decided to explore the possibilities of their being used as broadcasters in News Review and News Commentary. The Department had for some years felt that some of its journalists possessed untapped potential as broadcasters, and there was concern during the war that the news correspondents did not have more opportunity to do recordings. Moses's suggestion was therefore welcomed by some in the News Department, particularly by Denning. As Acting Director, Denning made out a strong case for News Review and News Commentaries coming under the News Department. He suggested that when Talks got around to putting items in News Review the news value had gone stale. Professional journalists with the resources of the Department at their disposal would be able "to take immediate advantage of every opportunity to build each night an up-to-the-minute, dynamic News Review". It would be "a logical extension" of the news bulletins.

Denning's enthusiasm was less than convincing however to the Commission because he did not see the provision of material for these programmes being a normal part of the journalists' activities. In his opinion, journalists could not do their 'hard news' work and broadcast as well. If they did broadcast items, they would probably have to be prepared outside of normal working hours, and therefore should qualify for special payments. If this was not possible, extra staff would have to be employed. For Denning it was impossible to envisage the two roles of the journalist as complementary. BBC correspondents, as has been

195. See S.E. Pratt, Evidence, PSCB, 5 November 1943, p.28. For an account of an ABC Talks correspondent's work in wartime see Frank Legg, "War Correspondent" (Rigby, Adelaide, 1964).

mentioned, had their broadcast despatches for Radio Newsreel transcribed for inclusion in bulletins. The voice material was the basic contribution. Denning and other members of the news staff did not equate broadcasting with bulletin work. 'Hard news' could only be provided in copy form.

Denning had jumped the gun somewhat in his reply. Moses denied that any takeover of the two programmes by News was every contemplated. And meanwhile Molesworth, the Director of Talks, was doing his best to point out the unworkability of the proposal. Most journalists in the ABC, he claimed, lacked the authority or background to be news commentators. News Review required special broadcasting techniques, a flair and capacity for outside broadcast work.

After many years of experience, I can say without hesitation that as a general rule men trained in talks work give a very much better result in talks sessions on the air than do men trained only as a journalist ... there are two different spheres requiring two different types of technique, different qualifications and different training.197

Molesworth's suggestion that broadcasters needed additional skills to those possessed by journalists did not go down well in the News Department. The effective end to proposals that News men should do work for Talks Department programmes came when Molesworth dismissed peremptorily Denning's suggestion that he provide pieces for News Review on the High Court's hearing of the banking legislation case, which he was covering for News. Molesworth preferred to have an outside legal expert.

Dixon now continued from where Denning had left off. He wanted control of News Review to provide an additional outlet for his staff and to end what he called "the monotony" of ABC bulletins. He wanted a half hour from 7 p.m. which would include a bulletin followed by News Review or a programme similar to Radio Newsreel. "We could then make use of our news staff throughout Australia to collect and prepare material that would entertain as well as inform listeners." He felt there should not be the competition in the newsfield that came from other departments. Again he drew an analogy with the press. "Much duplication of effort and additional expense are involved, and the service to listeners is poorer than if all topical features covered by a daily newspaper came under the control of the news department."199 It was Moses who, for all practical purposes, closed off the debate over the control of News Review and News Commentary. In putting Dixon's submission to the Commission, he recommended against it in these terms:

If it were known that the Commission's journalists were handling sessions dealing with comment, it would be difficult to maintain in the public mind the view that our bulletins are objective and impartial.200

The Commission deferred the matter until after the receipt of the Harris Report, but it was never again the subject of resolution. As we have pointed out previously, Boyer's viewpoint on this question was identical to that of Moses.201 In their minds, anything which went beyond the recital of essential 'facts', was opinion, and this could

198. Dixon to Finlay, 1 December 1948, SP286, Box 3, S2.
199. Ibid.
201. See Chapter 4, pp.398-400.
not be countenanced in news bulletins because it would undermine the 'objectivity' and 'credibility' of the service. Thus the Commission turned its back on the principle of introduction of additional material which would have enabled news items to be seen in some perspective. Its own rigid views on preserving 'impartiality', combined with the strong resistance of other departments such as Programmes and Talks to the expansion of bulletins or the entry of journalists into other specialised areas, meant that from this point News was to remain confined to its fifteen minute timeslot, unable to shed its fixation about matching the newspapers in all areas, and thus unable to expand its coverage of particular events because of its time limitations.202

In fact, there is evidence that the News Department itself was split on the issues. Oakley for example believes to this day that moves by the News Department to take over News Review were not genuine, but were made to counter moves by the Talks Department to take over News. He, for one, and Cotton, for another, were not keen to expand the role of News in this way. Some idea of the conflicting attitudes can be obtained from comparing two quite disparate resolutions at the News Editors' conferences of 1948 and 1949. In the former conference Cotton moved and Oakley seconded a motion which read:

That to preserve the objective atmosphere of news, readers regularly employed on national bulletins should not be used for talks, News Review, or any programme material which expresses a partisan viewpoint.203

202. In March 1947 and in January 1948, the Commission had reaffirmed its decision not to extend the 7 p.m. bulletin except in unusual circumstances. See Moses to Dixon 14 March 1947, Moses to Dixon, 4 February 1948. Both in SP286, Bundle 6.

203. Minute of Interstate News Conference, 31 May-2 June 1948, SP724, Box 39, 15/1/17.
Clearly some of the news staff did not think that the standards of 'objectivity' which they pursued so diligently, were held to apply in Talks. That department of course, denied this. The following year the news editors considered that News.Review was a "good session", but one which could be handled more competently by News. 204 Boyer, on the other hand felt the Department should confine itself to "factual news", and not enter "the magazine field".

Although News had been frustrated by Programmes, it did have one significant victory in this period, in an area which once again allows us to contrast the differing methods and motivation of ABC and BBC news services. We have earlier noted the Commission decision that bulletins should be handed to announcers fifteen minutes before air time, and that no new material should be accepted by the subs less than thirty minutes before broadcast. It was introduced at Cotton's suggestion in April 1948 after late copy on the clash between miners and police in Brisbane had led to allegations of bias by the ABC against the police. The move met with the strong approval of Programmes, who as we have seen, had for many years been trying to get a firm decision on a deadline for the handing of bulletins to announcers. Cotton had come back to Australia convinced of the rightness of the BBC approach in which accuracy and considered news judgment took precedence over the impulse to get last minute news to air. As Chapman says, there are occasions "where they'll wait an hour and even miss two bulletins to make certain some fact is checked". 205 The BBC also had a rule that no fresh copy was to be handed to an announcer if it came

204. See minutes of Interstate News Conference, 19-20 October 1949, SP724, Box 38, 15/1/6, "News' Editors Conferences".

205. Interview with Ivan Chapman, 9 October 1976.
in after thirty minutes before air time. Although Chapman says the rule is frequently broken the case of big stories, efforts are nevertheless made to keep to it in normal circumstances. The instruction "was put in writing, it was on notice boards, and it was drummed into a new sub the very day he joined the service that we're not going to be panicked, we're not going to be pushed around. We're the BBC".206 The idea was quite contrary however to every instinct in the ABC news service, where the emphasis was on 'spot' news and speed in order to demonstrate a degree of superiority over the press and the competing commercial stations. Thus the Commission decision met with strong resistance.

There was one practical reason for dissent which Dixon and some of the State news editors immediately raised. The States sent their most important stories to Sydney for possible inclusion in the national bulletin. Frequently they had to wait until the last minute before being informed by Sydney whether their copy was being used or not. If it was not, or only used briefly, they had to make immediate arrangements to include it in their own State bulletin. This could not be done if the thirty minute deadline was made to apply to them. But the general reaction in newsrooms throughout Australia was best summed up by South Australia. "In effect, we promised the public that our service would be up-to-the-minute, and to impose a deadline on copy means a departure from that promise and the exclusion of much valuable and important news in hand."207

206. Ibid.

207. Wicks to Dixon, 21 May 1948, SP286, Box 3, S2.
At its July 1948 meeting the Commission agreed that the deadline need not apply to the States but ruled that it was still to stand as far as the national bulletins from Sydney were concerned. It thus rejected a motion passed at the News Editors' conference the previous month which urged that the decision about inclusion of late copy be left to the judgment of each news editor. By March 1949, the Federal Studio Superintendent, F. Gordon Scott, reported that the scheme seemed to have failed completely as the News Department did not seem to be able to prepare bulletins earlier than ten to fifteen minutes before air time. At the News Editors' conference of October 1949, faced with a unanimous demand for the abolition of the deadline, Boyer began to waver. Cotton, its supporter, was no longer with the ABC. The news service had at last begun to win public and political support for its 'objectivity'. Hamilton, the new Editor-in-Chief put forward the antithetical view to that of the BBC. The minutes record that:

He contended that more errors are made when there is plenty of time to write a story as the brain is more alert when the pressure is on and there is a rush of copy to go into the bulletin.208

Oakley supported him claiming that a journalist's training enabled him to make decisions in one tenth of the time taken by "an ordinary person". Boyer defended the original decision saying that it was taken to "protect" the news staff, but he did not want to continue a restriction which was considered irksome. At the Commission meeting of October 1949, the original resolution was rescinded, but the News Department was reminded that "in no way should this action be taken as indicating any relaxation of the Commission's primary concern for accuracy, good taste and dignity in news bulletins".209

208. Minute of Interstate News Conference 1949, SP724, Box 38, 15/1/6.
Despite the degree of awareness by some senior news personnel, such as Dixon and Denning, that there was some degree of shallowness in ABC news items, because of their brevity, the disquietude was never sufficient to question the overriding principle of wide newspaper-type coverage which was pursued with such zeal. As the prospect of supplementation and change in bulletin format receded, a mantle of defensiveness began to be drawn around the news service. The difference in approach to that of the BBC was recognised and attempts were made to justify it. In August 1948, Dixon for example compared the number of bulletins produced by ABC journalists to the number produced by the BBC. 80 journalists on the BBC were said to put out eight and a half hours of news a day. Dixon calculated that 88 ABC journalists produced ten and a quarter hours. He concluded, "It is obvious ... that the ABC staff covers a much wider field and turns out a much greater quantity of work than the BBC staff".210

The most revealing correspondence however was elicited by Margaret MacCallum's report, which was sent by Moses to Dixon for comments. Dixon in turn sent it to all States. It immediately provoked a prolonged argument between Dixon and Cotton about the relevance of BBC practice. Unfortunately, however, the comments are not as wide-ranging as they should have been, because Dixon distributed only part of the report, that dealing with the presentation of bulletins. Two important sections, one dealing with Radio Newsreel and the other with News Talks and Outside Broadcasts, which were vital to understanding the broadcasting component of BBC news were deliberately omitted. Thus remarks were restricted to the duration of bulletins and to the areas covered. There was no invitation to discuss the inclusion and value of voice material within the news area. From this, one must question

whether Dixon was ever conscious of the full value of the voice report in bringing greater authenticity and understanding to important news events. He and Denning seemed more concerned with taking over News Review in order to justify the employment of a large journalistic staff and to provide a way for them to earn extra income.

It was immediately clear from the MacCallum report that the BBC restricted its coverage to what it considered to be the major stories of the day. There was no thought to embracing the range of stories covered by the daily press. As Dixon said:

Clearly the BBC does not attempt to provide a complete news service in competition with the daily papers; the ABC does.211

The BBC's coverage of 'home' news was comparatively poor, Dixon thought, whereas the ABC sought to give "a fairly complete picture" of happenings. Denning made much the same point.

There appears to be no effort [in the BBC] to compete story for story with the papers, but rather to highlight the big or colorful items. When a high selectivity is practised, it is comparatively easy to compress the day's news ... into a brief span; this is not true where a wholly independent service is striving to compete with the newspapers by giving its listeners the fullest possible cover of the day's news.212

Combined with this recognition were arguments presented for the first time to vindicate the ABC's approach. The importance of the service for country listeners was advanced as the most relevant reason for an all-embracing coverage. Denning felt that it was for listeners in remote country areas particularly, who lacked other means of speedy communication. He argued, "British listeners ... almost invariably have quick access to a wide variety of newspapers, most of which are of far better standard than the Australian press".213 These

211. Dixon to News Editors, All States, 5 January 1949, SP286, Bundle 6.
212. Denning to Sholl, 7 January 1949, SP286, Bundle 6.
213. Ibid.
were decidedly rationalisations made only after the difficulties and drawbacks in matching press coverage were recognised. The news service could not convey more than a tiny percentage of the information carried by the press, yet it kept on trying, because it was swept along on the compelling tide of anti-newspaper feeling, and the obligations it felt to provide an alternative newspaper-type service for the Australian public.

The arrival of Hamilton had several important consequences for the debate over flexible bulletin times and efforts by Programmes to counter the encroachment of the News Department on programme schedules. Backed by Commission belief that News in its new 'objective' form had become a strong asset, he was able to resist any challenges to his domain so successfully that by the end of 1950, Programmes had given up the struggle. At the Commission meeting of 16 February 1950, for example, there was a very strong reaction against attempts to end the practice of broadcasting the 7 p.m. news from both metropolitan transmitters. This had been urged by Managers and Federal Officers at their last two annual conferences. The Commission rebuffed them by ruling that not only would the system remain, but the 7.45 a.m. bulletin would also be broadcast by two stations simultaneously. The Programme Managers and Federal Officers' conferences had also been critical of the 'triviality' of many news items and had wanted bulletins shortened, rather than run the full fifteen minutes. But when, at the Commission meeting of 2-3 August 1950, Nette recommended cancelling some bulletins to save money, Barry backed Moses and Hamilton in their successful efforts to oppose this.

In fact, a period of stasis began under Hamilton, in which for a considerable time, all debate about the content and style of bulletins
ended. At both the 1951 and 1952 News Editors' Conferences, Hamilton expressed himself satisfied with present bulletin lengths. There was no discussion about altering the type of coverage or introducing new methods of presentation. At the 1954 Conference however, there was a recommendation for five more minutes of bulletin time at 9 p.m. This was not for a more reflective, backgrounded approach, but to once again attempt to beat the newspapers by introducing more items into the bulletin from interstate. Thus, according to the minutes, Boyer "agreed there was an urgent need for a better coverage of interstate news, particularly in view of the completely parochial outlook of metropolitan papers generally".

It was an attempt to find space for a great deal of the interstate material sent to Sydney, as part of the wide national coverage being attempted. This problem of the pressure on time due to the flow of copy, grew as the service tried to expand into an ever increasing number of news areas. At the next News Editors' Conference, four years later, Hamilton candidly admitted that far too many stories were being discarded because of lack of time. In one week, 260 stories regarded as being worth using, were omitted. In the same week 674 items were used, which means that slightly more than 38 per cent of material was not included. This very heavy wastage rate emphasised still further the need to squeeze as many stories into bulletins as possible. Hamilton had by now come round to the same point of view as Dixon. More frequent or longer bulletins were needed to cope with the volume

214. Moses says of Hamilton, "It's possible ... that he may not have developed with the times ... he remained very much the news man he was when he joined us. That's why I felt over recent years it was a pity that the ABC's news service had remained completely static". Interview with Sir Charles Moses, 8 February 1976.

215. Minute of Interstate News Conference, 3-4 August 1954, SP724, Box 38, 15/1/6.
of copy. There was still no call for extended, more explanatory coverage for this would mean the exclusion of items and a limitation in range.

This was still the position in 1961. Brevity, speed and accuracy had become the ingredients of a formula for presenting news. In the Commission's eyes, and in those of Hamilton and his news staff, they had been successful in promoting the image of 'objectivity' and therefore public credibility.

It is not my intention to review events after 1961 in any detail. It is however worth noting that the News Division's first regular essay into voice reporting, the weekly programme, "This Week in Asia" was begun in 1963 because the all-encompassing format of news bulletins could not cope with the steady stream of very specialised, and in some cases authoritative, material which began to flow from South-east Asia. The ABC had opened an office in Singapore in 1956, largely due to the reasons advanced by Hamilton after a visit to the area in 1955. He believed that "we ... should show a sympathetic interest in the progress of these countries and an understanding of their objectives". The agencies were failing in this respect.

"Most newspapers want news that is startling, that will excite ... a riot will excite people; the opening of a new irrigation project will not excite people. The agencies will certainly report the riot they will report the irrigation project only if they have nothing else more exciting ... I do object ... to the failure of the agencies

216. Hamilton to Finlay, 27 July 1955. ABC File, 'South-East Asian Establishment', SFA1. Another important objective in setting up the office was the obtaining of programme material for Radio Australia, and the assessment on the spot of the impact of Radio Australia's programmes. It can rightly be inferred from this quotation that Hamilton was favourable disposed, to say the least, to the Governments of the countries he visited - Singapore, Thailand, South Vietnam and Indonesia. His report rings with phrases. "We can help the cause of the free democracies we are associated with." In the 'sixties he became strongly anti-communist in outlook in terms of foreign affairs, and influenced news coverage within the Department in this respect. Oakley, and Chapman give examples of this. Both Moses and Lowndes deny the Commission was aware of, or condoned, this policy.
properly to background and explain the causes of riots, demonstrations etc. Perhaps they give up because there is no market for this type of reporting. But we need it and must have it if we are to fulfil our charter." 217

By 1961 the ABC had opened an office in Djakarta, and its Singapore establishment included two journalists, a News appointee as Representative, and a Talks appointee as Assistant Representative. In keeping with Hamilton's concepts of its operation, the office backgrounded important events within the area. It regularly had a man in Vietnam for example, from 1961 onwards. These posts were unique at this time. In London, journalistic staff still basically edited agency material for rerouting to Sydney. In New York, the Talks Department had had an officer since 1958, supposedly to feed both departments. In practice, however, News received little suitable specialist copy from him. In Southeast Asia, News for the first time had journalists whose brief was a supplementary one. But being asked to background events was one thing. Inclusion of material of any depth in the already overcrowded bulletins was another.

As the Asian operation was comparatively expensive, Hamilton realised that to do justice to these journalists, and prevent their usefulness being questioned, it was necessary to provide a special outlet for them. "This Week in Asia" began as an uneasy amalgam between the copy style of presentation and the voice report or recorded interview. 218 Reports were brief and by present day

217. Ibid. Hamilton's emphasis. ABC newsmen still occasionally refer to their 'charter'. The word seems not to be used to refer to the Broadcasting Act, 1945, but rather to the Commission's news policy of 1946, as expanded upon by Boyer and Hamilton.

218. It was first broadcast on Saturday evenings from 3 August 1963. From 17 April 1966, it was repeated on Sundays in the early afternoon. From 4 March 1973, it is now broadcast on Sundays only.
standards very prosaic. But it was a beginning. Immediately the Talks Department reacted. Alan Carmichael, then Director of Talks believed "that News Department should deal with factual bulletins, while it is Talks' responsibility to handle comment and opinion".219 The intervention by Talks was unsuccessful and "This Week in Asia", although restricted to the handful of journalists working in Asia, began to provide experience for journalists for the first time in broadcasting techniques and in the use of tape recorders. Occasionally, for example, when Singapore withdrew from Malaysia, these voices would be heard in news bulletins. But this was a rare occurrence.

The difficulty in introducing voice into bulletins stemmed from two factors which have already been outlined. Boyer and Hamilton believed in retaining the narrow definition of 'fact' and 'opinion'. 'Facts' alone should be the News Division's responsibility. The public should make up its own mind on this basis. Any attempt to provide more than this would be to trespass into the territory of 'opinion'. Such injection of the reporter's own views could undermine the 'objectivity' which protected the news service, and the Commission from undesirable criticism. Hamilton began to blur these definitions as soon as he sent the ABC's first reporters abroad to provide the background missing from press reports. But the 'factual' role of the domestic ABC reporters remained in uneasy contrast. These men, moving in the more contentious and politically dangerous areas of domestic politics were, and still are, far more restricted in the degree to which they can interpret stories. The BBC were in much the same situation immediately after the War. Voice reports came overwhelmingly from their overseas correspondents. Tahu Hole for years restricted the use of this technique in the domestic arena. Also, of course, voice reports took much longer

219. Quoted by Hutchison, Controller of Programmes, in Hutchison to Duckmantion, 17 March 1966, 11/1/1.
than copy stories because of their interpretative nature. To use them, as we have demonstrated, would be to reduce the coverage given other material.

The number of ABC offices abroad quickly increased during the nineteen-sixties. Representation was established in Kuala Lumpur in 1963, Tokyo and New Delhi in 1966, and Washington in 1967. In London, the news operation was radically changed from 1 January 1963 with the decision to buy the full AAP-Reuter service for delivery in Australia, end the agency editing work of the journalists in that office, and instead begin a full-scale reporting of British and European affairs. By 1970, voice reports on major news developments overseas were more frequently used, but there were many in the Division who viewed the technique with some misgiving. Oakley, then Controller, was one. The dilemma facing radio news was apparent in the minutes of the News Editors' Conference of 1968. It was recorded that:

Conference considered that continued use should be made of voice reports but there should be some restraint in the selection of voice reports for radio. It was felt that, if this technique were misused, a voice report could be a distraction rather than an added element to the story.  

The use of voice was seen to clash discordantly with the heavily edited factual style of the rest of the bulletin. There was uneasiness about the degree to which one should allow reporters to put an item in broader context. There was uncertainty about the definition of comment and background.

220. Oakley says: "I must confess that when voicecasts became the vogue I was at first no champion of them. I could not see that a straight report of an earthquake by cable had less impact, for instance, than the same words in voicecast form ... As time went on, I got used to it". Letter to the writer, 20 July 1976.

221. Minute of Interstate News Conference, 30 September-2 October 1968. ABC File 15/1/6, "News Editors Conferences".
By 1972, Bangkok and Hong Kong had been added to the list of overseas offices. The pressure for more voice outlets grew. Reporters who had developed skills and confidence overseas returned to find that the domestic role of the news broadcaster was extremely limited. The broad 'newspaper-type' canvass and the unchanged bulletin format and duration meant voice reports were still something of a novelty. There was still a distinct fear of allowing the average ABC reporter to give his interpretation of contentious stories. By this time however, television news was beginning to embrace the voice report to camera as a highly desirable technique. Filmed reports from overseas offices were seen with more frequency in the late 'sixties. At the beginning of the present decade the use of reporters' voices, frequently with agency film, was standard procedure in television.\(^{222}\) Special filmed reports were arriving at more frequent intervals as the overseas reporter began to see television as his most important outlet, given the restrictions of radio news. The News Editors' Conference of 1972 recognised that pending dramatic changes in attitude in radio news, the trend was inevitable. It recorded that it was not possible to offer any more outlets for voice work in the News Division than is the case at present. Most reporting in the home radio service is very limited. The Conference kept in mind however, the necessity for News to continually seek and train people with broadcasting potential.\(^{223}\)

\(^{222}\) This marked the ABC's late arrival into the era of technological and professional revolution in the TV news field. The development of new portable equipment and demands by broadcasters overseas to use it, meant that "by 1968 every major international news event was swarming with small television news teams, their equipment swinging round their necks on straps, their microphones connected by invisible radio links to their cameras; they covered riots, demonstrations and invasions". Smith, \textit{Shadow}, p.80.

\(^{223}\) Minute of Interstate News Conference, 19-21 September 1972, 15/1/6.
This pessimistic view of the future of voice in radio news programmes has however not proved to be correct. The situation since 1972 has changed markedly. A new outlet for the voices and interviews of domestic reporters was established from 5 May 1975, in an afternoon programme called "Newsvoice". 224 ABC journalists have been encouraged to provide recordings for other radio outlets. A major reorganisation of the role of overseas offices, which began in 1971, saw the staff integrated so that each correspondent would provide material not only for news but also for the Public Affairs programmes 'AM' and 'PM'. The result has been to involve the latter two programmes much more in the news of the day. Their constant demand for voice material from the overseas staff, had the immediate result of forcing News to include much more voice material from the same men in bulletins. In 1977, it is now common to hear the voices of three or four overseas reporters in any one bulletin. The effect of this has been to give special emphasis to overseas events. Domestically, voices of senior Canberra reporters are now heard frequently but the aversion to voices in bulletins persists in other reporting areas. Instead short segments of 'actuality' recordings with figures in the news have now become a regular device for updating news presentation. It is dubious whether this technique - allowing a prominent politician, or trade union official the use of a microphone for twenty or thirty

224. "Newsvoice" was largely the response to the challenge being mounted by the Public Affairs Department in the field of hard news reporting. The programmes "AM" and "PM", which were the successors of News Review, became in the late 'sixties and early 'seventies, aggressive proponents of the voice report and interview, often in competition with the 'copy' reporters of News. The contrast resulted in demands by news reporters for an outlet of their own. The Public Affairs Department (formerly Current Affairs) is one of three radio departments which resulted from the breaking up of the old Talks Department in 1969. The others are the Science Unit and the Radio Special Projects Department.
seconds - is a valid substitute for the voice report. The role of the voice reporter is to put such statements in context to provide more intelligent evaluation. He would perhaps use such a recording himself, but in the body of his report. 'Actuality' recordings would appear to be a method of improving news presentation, without any commensurate improvement in the flow of information. Intellectual stimulation, the opening of the mind to new ideas - the ideal envisaged by Nordenstreng - would seem to be still a long way from being realised in the field of domestic news on ABC radio bulletins.

It will be interesting to see whether the newspaper style of news-gathering in ABC radio news, and its extreme sensitivity to the dangers it feels are inherent in moving beyond the confines of 'fact' can survive the pressures building up within the Division for more interpretative reporting. "Newsvoice", the voice outlet, already provides a stark contrast to the older style bulletins, much as Radio Newsreel did in the BBC news output thirty years ago. Newsvoice is extremely selective about the stories it covers, taking eight or nine of the major stories of the day. In television, a greater selectivity can also be seen to be operating.225 There is a demand for more, in

225. The same domestic reporters of radio who are denied the opportunities to present their own reports in radio bulletins, frequently appear in vision presenting their own television reports. This anomaly seems to stem from the feeling that radio news is still the 'official' ABC statement on the day's events, representing considered news priorities. TV news is allowed greater latitude because of its special demands in presentation and visual terms. But as we have noted these concessions have been made with misgivings and uneasiness about TV by news executives. See for example, Fraser's statement: "In news, it is not a crystallized medium. It is a mongrel medium and the result is you've got a peculiar hybrid, a mixture of different techniques ... and the result is that it doesn't crystallize as a medium and the stories don't have the same impact as radio". Fraser, interview, 25 September 1975.
particular a chafing at the obligation to include the 7 p.m. headline stories from radio news. Many of the younger generation of ABC journalists to whom the writer has spoken, feel no urge and feel no need to compete with the press. There is, however, a great desire to present news more analytically and to use the special techniques of radio and television to achieve this. It is worth noting that the wide-ranging approach to news gathering has inhibited the development of specialist reporters, apart from those overseas and in Canberra. There has been too little scope for them. A move to greater specialisation would presumably make it worth while engaging or developing more specialist staff which would, it seems, in turn, give Radio News a greater confidence in its reporters.

Summary

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to trace the origins of the traditional hostility between ABC news and the press, and the consequences that flowed from it. Up to 1939, ABC news was intent on winning access to press news. From then to 1942, it was engaged in attempting to win the right to supplement. From 1942, when restrictions on ABC reporting were removed at Government intervention, ABC news staff saw their opportunity to set up an alternative service, with Government backing. The ABC's reporting of Government activities led to derision and then anger among the newspapers because of the different set of 'news values' involved. This disparity led to increasing antipathy to the press among ABC news staff, and an increased and obvious leaning to the side of the Government, when it and the press clashed on the issue of 'press freedom' in 1943-44. From this point, influential Labor members and senior ABC news staff worked towards the goal of setting up an alternative service, which would 'balance' the anti-Government press monopolies.
ABC news staff interpreted their role, after the passage of the 1946 legislation, as one which would cover the same areas as the press, in the same way, but which would broadcast the news faster and more accurately than the papers could publish it. The Commission, on the other hand, aware of the pro-Government and anti-newspaper bias of the pre-1947 service, sought greater 'impartiality' and 'objectivity', in order to protect the organisation from political and public censure. The quest for greater 'objectivity' was assiduously followed by the news staff, which recognised that the Department's survival was dependent on creating such an image, and also saw that this was an excellent method of contrasting the output of press and ABC. The ABC would be 'non-policy' in contrast to the editorial colouring of the newspaper columns. The Department was not so certain of the need to selectively cull the news. It wanted to throw its net as far as possible, in order to catch the newspapers in every way possible. When the Press kept up their criticism and the Commission and the newspaper proprietors angrily confronted each other, this approach seemed to be accepted at Commission level and win general approval. Twin forces were at work to reinforce the appearance of strict 'objectivity'. The brevity of items, due to the wide field covered, meant only simple fact could be included. Also, Boyer's insistence on fact alone, without explanation, and adherence to a 'neutral' prose style was accepted as having won over a doubtful Government at a time of continuing industrial and political crisis in Australia. This apparently successful formula for ensuring political survival and at the same time sufficiently contrasting output with the press, was adhered to faithfully by Hamilton.
Within the News Department, the occasional questioning of the worth of news reporting in this fashion, was outweighed by the considerations mentioned above. Moves to experiment with voice reporting and involve reporters in a more interpretative capacity were also thwarted by antagonism from other departments and by the increasing sense of isolationism affecting the Department. The Department gradually evolved a reasoning which saw a 'rightness' in its approach and a waywardness in the approach of other departments and other news organisations. Thus organisational factors reinforced the trends already apparent.

After 1947, a developing professionalism and 'news sense' allowed ABC newsmen to point to their product as 'objective'. A strategy or ritual was evolved which demonstrated impartiality. The verifying of facts and the presenting of the arguments of both sides so that the listeners could judge were the procedures adopted. However, as we have seen, 'facts' selected for broadcast were in accordance with the Commission's view of the role it should play in Australian society, and with the newsmen's view of the role they should play in relation to the newspapers. It is, as Tuchman points out, a highly dubious proposition therefore that such 'facts' can speak for themselves, when they are so dependent on other processes. The ABC news service seems to exemplify the discrepancy between ends and means described by Tuchman. The need for protection and to justify the establishment of the service as an alternative competitor with the press, drove the News Department to extreme lengths in its demands for blameless 'objectivity'. Keith Fraser sums up in this way:

'It was almost a fetish, the objectivity, the factual content ... what happened, in striving for these qualities we limited ourselves ... and one of the big casualities, or one of the big limitations ... was that we didn't get into interpretive reporting to the same degree we should have ... Another limitation that did effect the quality of our bulletins, we didn't
background sufficiently ... There was such an obsession, or such a discipline that required us to source for material, that we limited the ability of the journalist to form his own assessment.226

226. Interview with Keith Fraser, 25 September 1975.
CONCLUSION

Summary

The Period 1932-42

From its inception in 1932, the ABC resented having to take its news from a press monopoly which imposed restrictions on news broadcasts, in terms of durations and schedules, in order that they did not interfere with newspaper sales. The ABC felt it was not supplying a news service to the public which accorded with audience needs or expectations, or with its status as a national broadcasting instrumental-ity.

As there was no other news service available - there being no internal news agency of a suitable kind - the ABC might have been prepared to go along with the restrictions in the short term, had it not been for the fact that commercial stations, who were not supposed to get news from the press on more advantageous conditions than the ABC, began broadcasting news outside the agreed hours. Many of these stations were controlled by newspapers. The Commission's status was therefore at stake, and also its chances of survival. The provision of an inferior service to that of the commercial stations would have invited questions about the value for money the Australian community was getting from the ABC.

The two news agreements with the press - one for overseas news and the other for Australian news - had been unsigned. The circumstances of the agreement for Australian news were particularly vague and the Commission therefore had no compunction in altering broadcast times unilaterally to gain parity with the commercials, and subsequently denying the agreement had ever been firm.
In late 1935, the ABC was emboldened to seek major changes in the agreement because of widespread feelings within the political arena against the growing influence of the newspapers, particularly in the radio field. The ABC was also angered at the use by the press of its columns to mount a campaign against the ABC while negotiations were in progress. In this climate of confrontation, crucial talks between press and ABC broke down, apparently because of the last minute intervention of Sir Keith Murdoch, who took a particularly hard line against radio news broadcasts.

Allegations of 'bad faith' followed which had repercussions extending over many years, and which help explain the bitterness which clouded other discussions, such as those in 1939.

ABC Chairman Cleary broke off talks with the press, and declared at the end of 1935 that ABC would gather news independently. At the same time he approached Prime Minister Lyons and others in the Government for support. This, in retrospect, seem to have been aimed at gaining public and political support against the newspapers, in order to win concessions. The ABC had no 'expert' knowledge of press operations and no infrastructure to enable it to set up a news service without press assistance.

The ABC failed to get substantial support but did succeed in persuading Lyons to put pressure on Murdoch to give the ABC better bulletin times. However, legalistic and procedural delays and arguments still prevented the signing of any formal agreements.

At the end of 1936, two important developments occurred which helped move the ABC into a competitive relationship with the press. It appointed a Federal News Editor, M.F. Dixon, who was strongly opposed to the press monopolies, and who understood the mechanics of news-gathering. He was instructed to make preparations for news-gathering, in case ABC and the press broke off relations completely.
At this time the news service had no coverage on Sunday evenings, or overnight between newspaper edition times. News could only be taken from newspapers after publication. The agreement for overseas news with AAP did not however preclude the ABC collecting its own news overseas. Through 1936 to 1938 at times of major international crises, special weekend cable services were arranged. In 1937 Dixon organised local news collection for Sundays in Sydney and Melbourne although there were rumblings of protest from the newspapers.

These were the beginnings of independent news collection by the ABC. They engendered a feeling of increasing self-confidence and a taste for more.

As Europe headed towards World War II the delay in getting overseas news to air was particularly obvious and listeners complained. Resentment at restrictions when demand for news was increasing led Dixon to take more words from the newspapers than the 200 he was allowed daily, under the agreement with AAP. This caused more press resentment.

But in 1938, ABC and AAP at last thrashed out the essentials of an agreement for overseas news which allowed ABC more words, but which also for the first time placed restrictions on the time and duration of broadcast. Previously restrictions of this kind applied only to Australian news.

As war approached in 1939, two further problems arose between AAP and ABC which heightened the feeling of impatience within the ABC at being denied its right to news and therefore failing in its duty to the community. First was the realisation that ABC could not rebroadcast shortwave BBC news, because AAP claimed rights to the Reuters' material contained in those bulletins. The second was the new practice adopted by the newspapers of using AAP cabling facilities for "special correspondent" reports from overseas, which had the effect of reducing the total amount of AAP copy available.
The ABC at this time was under attack by the press for its 'extravagance' and 'incompetence'. The press urged major changes in the ABC. The ABC felt, for its part, that its access to news was bound up with its public image and ultimately with its survival.

In mid-1939, the Lyons Government did act to help the ABC in an unexpected way by insisting on the ABC having its own correspondent in Canberra, to faithfully report Government actions. Lyons had had a dispute with the press over coverage. This arrangement caused strong press resentment and the newspapers subsequently sought to prevent the ABC from 'supplementing' newspaper coverage beyond this. The success of the first ABC correspondent, Warren Denning, in feeding back 'straight' 'factual' reports pleased the politicians and brought with it the desire for further supplementation by the ABC. Both Dixon and Denning saw the correspondent's role as one in which Government statements would be fed back quickly - thus competing with the press at the same outlets and aiming to illustrate radio's special advantage of 'speed'.

The outbreak of war in September 1939 saw the ABC again attempt to sidestep press restrictions while hoping to gain Government protection in doing so. When Army authorities sought a nationally relayed news service from the ABC at more convenient news times for listeners, the ABC hurriedly agreed without seeking press permission. After newspaper protests, the Minister of Information himself presided over a conference to seek a mutually satisfactory arrangement. In doing so, he apologised to the press for their exclusion from previous decisions, thereby admitting and acquiescing in continued press control over news broadcast times. Nevertheless, Government influence brought ABC better news times at this conference, but the ABC was forced to agree not to supplement news outside Canberra. AAP agreed to allow BBC news rebroadcasts within a set schedule.
However, confusion arose over the BBC section of the agreement. First, the commercial stations and then the ABC began broadcasting BBC bulletins in full, although the schedules agreed did not allow this. After Press protests the ABC agreed to return to truncated broadcasts, Cleary apparently believing that by so doing, he would arouse public and Governmental resentment against the press and thus force it to be more generous in allowing access to news. Cleary's plan was to resume BBC broadcasts in full after a period of public outcry, in order to defy AAP and test its rights to BBC material which the ABC disputed.

The Government would not permit this to be done, however, and took the matter out of ABC hands, to Cleary's disgust. AAP rights were eventually proven and the ABC was forced to conclude an agreement with AAP for BBC news in April 1940, allowing their rebroadcast in full, but with a substantial payment to AAP.

The ABC had by this time realised that its own flow of news from other overseas sources was full enough to allow it to do away with the AAP cable service. When it did so, restrictions on overseas news broadcasts were finally ended. ABC took its overseas news from its own full-time London correspondent, appointed in 1939, British Official Wireless News and the BBC.

In 1940-41, the ABC became increasingly belligerent over rights to 'supplement' Australian news and warned the press that it reserved the right to do so. As a firm written agreement seemed as far away as ever, the Government stepped in and set up an enquiry - the Gibson Committee - which was empowered to investigate the broadcasting of news.

The ABC at this time was in a delicate situation. It wanted to press ahead with its challenge to the press but felt itself weakened by the Government's delays in confirming Commissioner appointments, by a reduction in revenue, and by forthcoming broadcasting legislation. Cleary was becoming increasingly worried about the editorial
coloration of newspaper material and the fact that the ABC could not vouch for the accuracy or impartiality of much of the news it broadcast - that is, that taken from the papers. It had a salutary reminder of the dangers to its existence when Murdoch, appointed Head of the Department of Information, took over the compilation of its major evening bulletin for several months.

The ABC was also becoming concerned at increasing pressure to include statements from Canberra, with Ministers' names attached. Politicians had begun to see the value of the ABC as a reliable outlet for reaching the public. When the Fadden Government fell and Labor came to power in September 1941, Labor Ministers who had long-standing grievances against the major newspapers looked to the ABC for redress. They also felt the urgent need to reach the public direct in order to more effectively warn Australians about the danger from Japan. In December 1941, when the Government intervened directly in news broadcasting by altering broadcast times and ordering the introduction of bulletins compiled in Canberra, the ABC felt alarmed. In January and February 1942 this interference increased and sometimes took the form of personal abuse of ABC executives who were thought to be obstructive.

In January the Commission was instructed to ensure the news emphasised Curtin's new 'Australia first' foreign policy. BBC broadcasts were ordered to be reduced. Faced with the possibility of the Department of Information taking over ABC news Cleary took the initiative of proposing that commercial stations take major ABC bulletins, thus allowing the Government to reach the public through a blanket coverage. This was accepted by the commercial stations. Simultaneously the Canberra news was given priority over that from overseas and broadcast first. This caused the ABC great difficulty with its listening public which decried attempts to foist a number of 'minor', 'dull', official stories on them when they were waiting for important war news. Many resented also the cut in BBC broadcasts.
In February, the ABC was attacked by the entire press and a great number of listeners for its obviously supine approach to the broadcasting of political statements during a bitter controversy between Spender and Ward. To many people the service was now being run on distinctly propaganda lines.

The Gibson Committee reported in March and only served to increase the Commission's concern. It failed to come out in support of an independent service, and instead urged an agreement between the press and the ABC. It thought the ABC should refrain from attempts to gather news itself.

Faced with this situation, and no indication from Prime Minister Curtin that he intended to help establish an independent service, the Commission began to look for alternatives which would still give ABC news credibility and a degree of independence. Sid Deamer, an ABC executive had, in January 1942, proposed a service on BBC lines in which broadcasters supplied 'observer' reports to supplement a basic 'hard' news service from the press. 'Observers' would provide background and explanation.

The BBC and other overseas organisations had by this time resolved their early differences with the press by engaging in this type of supplementary role, which was not competitive. From the Munich crisis of 1938 onwards American and British broadcasters began to use the microphone and recording machine to describe and add to news stories. The ABC, with no access to agencies, and only anxious to obtain basic news on a more continuous basis outside of newspaper edition times, had never developed this 'news observer' capacity. The obligations inherent in the appointment of its Canberra roundsman to provide simple coverage of Government statements on a competitive 'roundsman' basis similarly worked against the evolvement of techniques which used the special facilities of broadcasting.
Denning's operation and the resultant ABC demands to 'supplement' press news further increased the fear of the newspapers that the ABC was determined to set up an alternative news service with Government backing. Newspapers still felt they should be first with the news and resented the speed of radio reports, which exemplified the element of competition. Responding to the challenge, the press began to put obstacles in the way of ABC reporting from Canberra. Some Ministers were urged not to give statements to the ABC for broadcast prior to press publication, or newspapers would not use them. Rivalry and bitterness thus developed at the news gathering level which was to grow in momentum as different approaches to reporting and 'objectivity' developed between press and ABC.

In 1940, Dixon had a clandestine meeting with Curtin to seek his backing for an independent service. When Labor came to power, the Government's directions to increase the news coverage from Canberra, were seen by Dixon as providing an excellent opportunity of gaining funds for expansion. If the Government were pleased with the ABC news coverage it was likely to assist. He accepted that the ABC would mostly serve those in power. On the other hand, Cleary and the Commission could only see the situation as being fraught with danger for Commission 'autonomy'. They shuddered at the financial prospect of ABC news expansion when funds had been reduced. Because the ABC's only 'independent' news coverage, that from Canberra, had been increasingly the subject of Government interference, and newsmen seemed powerless to prevent it, the Commission began to think it was best to withdraw from this competitive news area. Instead it thought it best to concentrate on a different type of news which described, explained, and added new perspectives.
The subsequent close ties of the radio news staff with the Government was the key to the dispute which caused considerable bitterness and suspicion to develop between them and the Commission.

The Period 1942-46

Government legislation on broadcasting in 1942 gave effect to the Gibson Committee's recommendations. The ABC was given certain 'safeguards' against Government interference. Instructions had to be in writing and recorded in ABC Reports. But overuse of Ministers' names in ABC news continued to cause criticism and Commission misgivings. News staff defended the practice, though they were forced to try to tone it down. Even some Labor politicians, including Curtin himself, thought it was overdone.

Deamer and Robert McCall, another ABC executive, were instructed by the Commission to report on the ABC's news service towards the end of 1942, with a view to changing its emphasis and lessening the influence of politicians. The Report criticised the strong Canberra emphasis of the news and urged agreements with the press which would give the ABC complete freedom on times of broadcast, in return for leaving the hard news area exclusively to the newspapers. The ABC would instead concentrate on broadcast 'observer' reports. From the sensitive news centre, Canberra, news could be supplied direct to the ABC by newspaper correspondents, thus ensuring there was no editorial manipulation. The cost of news collection could be reduced by taking AAP's overseas service instead of using the ABC's own sources. They foresaw that 'observer' reporting would ensure newspaper compliance in the agreement by removing direct competition in news dissemination.
Subsequent negotiations, with the McCall-Deamer report as the basis, saw the ABC and the press reach agreement on all major points. But by this time Dixon and his news staff had become aware of the nature of the proposed changes and began secret talks with Labor politicians and with their union, the AJA, to frustrate Commission plans. When the ABC approached the Government for its approval for the agreements it was rebuffed.

A compromise solution put up by the ABC and the press suggesting that the ABC take an agency service to be established by AAP in Canberra, was eventually also rejected. The newspapers exacerbated the situation by threatening that there would be no agreement for the supply of news from elsewhere in Australia, if the proposal for Canberra was rejected.

At this stage, the ABC felt major questions of principle were involved and chose to refer the matter to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Broadcasting (PSCB), which had been set up by the 1942 legislation, as a result of the Gibson Committee's recommendations. The Committee aimed at providing a method of parliamentary supervision of broadcasting matters.

The ABC felt the Government had no right to intervene. Although approval for contracts over £5,000 had to be obtained from the Government as required by the Broadcasting Act, the Commission claimed this was a financial provision intended only to supervise expenditure, and should not be used to veto a policy decision of the Commission, which it was entitled to make under the section of the same Act which gave it the right to obtain news in whatever manner it saw fit.

Labor, on the other hand, was alarmed at the possibility that its key avenue of communication with the public would decline in effectiveness, and worse, perhaps fall under the influence of the anti-Labor press monopolies.
The evidence before the PSCB revealed to the Commission the extent to which its news staff had collaborated with the AJA in the preparation of the case against the agreements. For its part the ABC had trouble in explaining adequately its 'observer' concept which was unknown in Australia. It appeared as if the ABC was abandoning the news field entirely. Deamer antagonised Labor members of the Committee by criticising Government interference in news and describing personal attacks on himself made by Ward. Through the AJA, ABC journalists represented themselves as men following a different path in journalism to those employed on newspapers. They were more 'objective', 'straight' and 'impartial'. ABC news men had devised an argument which validated their news selection criteria. ABC newsmen adopted the 'neutral', 'good citizen' role. Newspapers stuck to their 'adversary' relationship with Governments. Newspaper and ABC standards began to drift further apart.

The PSCB in its report came down strongly in favour of the existing 'straight' ABC reporting methods, in which speed and 'accuracy' were thought more important than in-depth examination of issues. It thought the 'observer' concept, at least as far as Canberra was concerned, was dangerous and could possible be misused. It urged the ABC to work towards an independent service. The ABC it said, should get its own news in Canberra, but could take press news from elsewhere. The report effectively ended for the time being ideas of ABC newsmen backgrounding news in voice and committed the organisation to the same type of 'competitive', 'straight' news-gathering with which it had begun in the nineteen-thirties.

Dixon had by this time fallen foul of the Commission and management on two counts. He and his men had been, in Commission eyes, 'disloyal'. Dixon had himself given evidence against the proposed agreements. And he was blamed for the continuation of the practice of overuse of Ministers' names. Before the PSCB, Cleary had given him an assurance that he would
not be victimised for his views. As he gradually fell from grace, Dixon believed that Cleary had broken his promise, and he used this as one of his strongest arguments in asking for help from Labor politicians.

The Commission began to look for ways of reducing Dixon's influence from 1943 onwards. By mid-1944, a scheme had been devised for replacing him as head of the Department with a Federal News Editor. Dixon would be given only executive duties. Getting wind of this, Dixon sought union and political support. The Commission was faced with constant interference, from a group of politicians close to Dixon and his staff, led by Senator Amour, Chairman of the PSCE and including Calwell, Haylen, Allan Fraser and others. The Commission began to find it increasingly difficult to maintain any kind of control over its news.

In early 1945, the Government appointed Labor stalwart and journalist J.S. Hanlon to the Commission, obviously to protect Dixon, to prevent any closer links with the press and to ensure the Commission made moves towards independence in news collection. Hanlon established strong contacts among the news staff, and throughout his term conveyed the substance of supposedly confidential Commission decisions on news to them. Hanlon's influence immediately made itself felt and moves to weaken Dixon were abandoned. An attempt to give McCall power to supervise political content was quickly dropped. Dixon was soon promoted.

In March 1945, Cleary resigned, apparently fatigued by his battles with the politicians and also convinced some members of his staff had been disloyal. His successor, R.J.F. Boyer, was convinced of the urgency of reasserting Commission control of its news service. There had been regular listener complaints about the political nature or direction of the service from 1942 onwards. Further, the press were becoming bitterly antagonistic because in several major disputes they had had with the Government, particularly with Information Minister Calwell, over the issue of press 'freedom', ABC news had lacked 'objectivity'.

Instead it had appeared to side with the Government. The Opposition were also becoming restless at the extent of the coverage given them.

Evidence of Government interference abounded. Cabinet itself in mid-1944 declared that it was unhappy with ABC news, apparently because some Ministers still wanted their names used more frequently. Also it put pressure on the ABC to terminate a short-term agreement with Australian United Press for an out-of-hours backup service in Canberra, although the agreement was not technically subject to Government approval. The Government did not officially record this 'instruction' nor did the Commission have the fortitude to insist on this being done, so that the public could become aware of the Government’s moves. The 'safeguards' in the 1942 Act were thus neatly sidestepped.

Boyer believed that if the Commission were able to negotiate a satisfactory agreement with the press, it would be seen to be deciding for itself its news sources, instead of being seen to be under Government direction. Government manipulation he thought to be a greater danger than the possibility of using 'coloured' press news. The Agreements he proposed would adequately cover the areas in which the PSCB disagreed with the 1943 agreements. The Government would have no cause for complaint. Also he had Curtin's assurance that agreements along these lines would be approved.

The major disagreement with the press was over price. They agreed to the Commission's right to collect its own news and to access to news within newspaper offices before publication. The news, it was felt, would therefore not be subject to editorial change or emphasis, and this would put an end to any disquiet about the use of newspaper sources. The Canberra news would be collected by the ABC's own staff.
The price question being resolved after an independent enquiry, the ABC went to Postmaster-General Cameron with every confidence he would approve the arrangements. When he procrastinated, and sought more details, it became clear that more trouble lay ahead. The ABC could not grasp the realities of the source of power in broadcasting matters. It was not successive Postmaster-Generals who made major decisions but the group centering around Amour and Calwell. Approaches to Curtin, Ashley or Cameron could not bring results unless the group mentioned were in agreement. Also the death of Curtin in mid-1945 immediately dissipated the value of the assurances he had given Boyer.

Dixon had been excluded entirely from negotiations over the 1943 agreements, foolishly as it turned out, in view of the effectiveness of the resources he could bring to bear to stop them going through. In 1945-46 he was involved, but at a late stage when it was thought it would do little damage. In fact he made things difficult by insisting on almost impossible conditions from the press and by calculating that the additional staff needed to man the newspaper offices would cancel out any savings. He urged that instead, an independent service be immediately created for the same outlay. By this time the ABC was collecting a considerable quantity of its own news. The necessity for adequate Federal coverage to meet Government demands had meant considerable expansion, not only of the news staff in Canberra, but also the staff in other States, who were also expected to cover national stories. Dixon claimed he now had the basic infrastructure to begin independent news collection.

Meanwhile Hanlon and Dixon were doing what they could behind the scenes to forestall and prevent, if possible, the passage of the agreements. At some time during this period, Dixon had secret talks at his home with both Calwell and Amour over the future of the news service.
Boyer approached Prime Minister Chifley early in 1946 to try to get early Government approval. Although Chifley could see no major problem, the matter was eventually referred to the PSCB. Dixon was persuaded by Amour to give evidence in public, so that convincing reasons could be given for Government intervention once more. Dixon's estimate of the cost of the independent service was crucial as it turned out. It was so low that he won the support of Moses who urged the Commission to reconsider. Boyer however was determined to press ahead mainly on the question of the principle of the Commission being given the right to determine its own news sources. But by this time, Boyer too was beginning to realise the extent of Labor's fear of the major newspapers, and the fact that ABC news and such sources were incompatible. ABC news had to be removed entirely from the suspicion of press influence. It had to have a service which reflected its own sense of community values.

Dixon successfully pointed out the unworkable nature of the proposed arrangements for getting news from newspaper offices and strongly argued that such methods would interfere with one of the strengths of his service - the speed with which news could be got to air.

Dixon's figures proved persuasive. They were accepted by the PSCB as authoritative and more worthy of consideration than the estimates for an independent service quoted by Boyer and the press, which were considerable higher.

The PSCB found against the agreements and said the ABC should have its own independent news service in order to win public confidence. Within a few weeks the Broadcasting Act was amended to make it compulsory for the ABC to set up its own completely self-sufficient news service within Australia. It allowed the collection of overseas news from agencies. The Opposition believed that this was a tactic to give the
Government continued control of ABC news. Government speakers emphasised the unacceptability of any proposal under which the ABC took its news from the press - news which could be, and most certainly would be, 'coloured' so as to give it an anti-Labor tinge.

The Act severely restricted the Commission's right to determine its own news sources, but it did make the organisation entirely responsible for its own news output. Up to this time, it had succeeded in surviving criticism because it could point to other influences at work over which it had no control. From this point, the onus was on the Commission to win back control and provide evidence of the validity of its own news priorities. If it could not, then its independence could come under threat once again.

This brought the Commission into further conflict with Dixon and his political supporters over the nature of the new service - whether it would continue to apply the old principles or adopt new ones of strict 'impartiality'. It was a question of whether Dixon's news philosophy of 'news not views' could still be held to apply. Up to this point it had been interpreted as meaning Governments received vastly preponderant coverage because they 'acted'. Oppositions did not 'act' but merely offered 'opinions' and therefore were not frequently categorised as 'news'.

The Period 1946-49

Boyer believed that a new set of principles had to be laid down internally for the news service if it was to regain community confidence. The news policy of 1946, still the core of ABC news thinking, embodies his beliefs about the necessity for gaining Opposition, as well as Government, support, by embracing strict 'objectivity'. The need to demonstrate 'objectivity' was urgent, not only in terms of giving the
Opposition parties better coverage, but also because 'impartiality' had been singularly lacking in the ABC's reporting of the disputes between the press and the Government in 1944-46. All sides had to be presented to obtain the look of 'objectivity'.

Boyer originally wanted immediate mathematical balance between Government and Opposition but was forced to compromise. However, he did succeed in enforcing stricter adherence to the principle of obtaining the Opposition viewpoint. It was also laid down that Government statements were only to be used if newsworthy.

In terms of broad broadcasting philosophy, Boyer was committed to maintaining 'national unity' in the face of divisive issues, within the framework of the parliamentary democratic system. He wanted the ABC to be used as a 'national forum' in which all viewpoints could be expressed to assist in public judgment of issues. He supported the consensual principles on which Australian society was based. News policy was therefore to work within this framework.

Within the news policy of Boyer was enshrined the anti-newspaper ethic which ABC newsmen had long accepted - the opposition to 'sensationalism' and 'circulation building for its own sake'. Also 'community service' was to be the new criterion. 'Facts' only would be presented leaving the conclusions to be drawn by listeners. Anything beyond 'fact' was 'opinion' and this was outside the ABC's area. News was wanted which was 'fast', 'accurate' and 'factual'. Beyond the directive, the ABC news editors themselves decided that they should also cover as many stories as possible. Hence news items had also to be brief. This decision was directly related to the 'competition' with the press which the news staff still believed was one of their major responsibilities.
Together, these news principles amount to what is now known as 'mirror image' reporting in which little explanation of the news is given and in which the decisions of those in authority are simply relayed. The quest for extreme 'objectivity' was pursued relentlessly from this time on, in the belief that ABC news had to demonstrate its superiority over the press as an alternative source of news.

Boyer was faced with the distinct possibility of the nationalisation of broadcasting by Labor. He was therefore also anxious that the Commission demonstrate a distinctiveness in output, so as to underline its special value to the Australian public, and thus help its chances of survival. A news service which competed and yet contrasted with the press was one way of achieving this.

Although Boyer had won a notable success in obtaining broad acceptance of his news 'fairness' doctrine internally, particularly at a time when the News Department retained such strong ties with Labor politicians, he and the Commission realised they would eventually have to remove Dixon from a position of editorial responsibility in order that the policy should become fully operative. This realisation became starkly obvious after the appointment of Leicester Cotton as National News Editor. Cotton was given responsibility for National news content and the Commission relied on him to ensure that the code of 'impartiality' was followed.

Dixon, Hanlon and their Labor associates however immediately attacked the appointment of Cotton, thus alerting the Commission to the fact that there were still strong forces working to maintain a degree of political control over ABC news. Cotton was alleged to be 'a stooge' of the press, whose job was to destroy the news service as part of some Commission/newspaper plot. Staff loyal to Dixon, whose Departmental reputation was enhanced by his successful opposition to the Commission, leaked material which was damaging to Cotton to the press.
Dixon began to urge a quick beginning to the new independent service. He advocated large scale staff increases, the money to be provided by the Government. This approach alarmed the Commission, as it had in 1942. It also angered Moses, because it was now apparent that Dixon's estimate of the cost of the news service, which had been so influential with the PSCB, was extremely inaccurate.

The Labor Government had consistently refused to regularise the method of financing of the ABC since 1942. The rising costs of broadcasting had been met by annual grants above the Commission's share of the licence fee. The Commission believed this short-term method amounted to a constant threat to the organisation's independence. In fact, the 1944-45 grant had been specifically tied by Cabinet to securing 'an improvement' it desired in ABC news.

Debate in the PSCB in 1946 on Commission finances had raised the possibility of a complete change in the method of financing, involving either a permanent system of annual grants, or some system of sponsored programmes. Anxious to retain the licence fee system, which it felt guaranteed some measure of independence, the ABC was in no mood for extravagant expenditure on news, which might trigger further Government interference. The Commission played for time to make its own assessment of the needs for news.

Dixon meanwhile became convinced that Cotton was leftist-inclined because of his insistence that both side of the political spectrum be balanced. Dixon was strongly anti-Communist as were his Labor friends Hanlon and Amour. Cotton became aware of anti-Communist leanings in news bulletins, and when he endeavoured to correct this, he ran foul of Dixon, Hanlon and Amour. Dixon began to bombard Cotton with complaints about his handling of news, so that Cotton's work was affected. Despite attempts by Moses and Boyer to get the Commission to lay down more firmly
the principle of Cotton's sole responsibility for the National Bulletins, they were only moderately successful. Dixon was only reprimanded. He kept up the flow of criticism. The overall responsibilities vested in him as Director of News gave him some excuse and he benefited from Hanlon's protection. Cotton's own position was further weakened by the fact that there were a considerable number of 'factual errors' made at this time for which he had to take responsibility.

Dixon's power was, however, failing. The Commission avoided giving him any responsibility for new staff appointments. Against his advice, the Commission decided to sever all contacts with country newspapers and to obtain its news from 'stringers' in rural areas. Dixon complained this upset his estimates because he had always intended to obtain news from the country press. Boyer, on the other hand, wanted all press influence removed so as to remove any chance of criticism on that score. Boyer and Moses also saw that a regular and independent coverage of country news could establish closer contact with country listeners and give the Commission a strong boost in terms of listener appeal, thus further enhancing its distinctive image.

At the PSCB hearing in 1947 into the Commission's finances, Dixon came in for criticism because of inaccurate figures given the previous year. His image and that of Amour suffered as a result. It was realised that the full costs of the news service would be nearly twice Dixon's estimate. But it was not conceded that the Commission was blameless in terms of excessive expenditure. It was decided that a Select Committee be set up to investigate Commission finances, largely because of the spending on news.

The PSCB, and the subsequently appointed Fitzgerald Committee called upon the ABC to explain its expenditure on regional news. Boyer warned his staff that the ABC now had to justify its existence. The
independent service which began on 1 June 1947 could do this by demonstrating its individuality in news values, and by adhering to standards superior to those of the press. External criticism must be avoided.

The influence of Dixon and the group of Labor politicians who supported him was further undermined when the Commission successfully challenged them over the dismissal of a pro-Dixon journalist. On this issue, the Commission received unprecedented support from the Postmaster-General, Cameron, thus illustrating the strengthening of the Commission's position and the placing of greater trust in it by the Government. Its new 'impartial' news service was undoubtedly responsible for this. The Commission was proving that the distrust of the Amour group was ill-founded. The Labor Party was not championing Dixon with the same certitude. Amour's own power base was crumbling at this time. The PSCB was under intense criticism and about to become redundant at the end of 1948.

During the Fitzgerald Committee enquiry, the Commission made great efforts to 'improve' its news service, reduce costs and justify expenditure. Senior newsmen made long trips to instruct staff. Ex-newspapermen were told to reduce the amount of copy. A large amount of 'evidence' was obtained to indicate the impact the news had made in rural areas. Nevertheless, the Fitzgerald Committee found regional costs high and said there was insufficient evidence to justify proposed staff increases. It did endorse the overall value of the news service but recommended that another expert enquiry be held in order to increase efficiency. It criticised the fact that control of the news operation was not centred in one man, and made adverse comments about the disputes between Dixon and Cotton.
No other aspect of the ABC's operation came in for criticism and Boyer felt that the organisation had come out of it very well. But the Government were apparently bent on using the criticism of the news service as justification for introducing far-reaching changes in broadcasting which would mean closer supervision of the Commission. The Broadcasting Act of 1948 appointed two public servants to the Commission, abolished licence-fee financing and introduced permanent annual Parliamentary grants. All the Commission seemed to gain were statutory safeguards in respect of its 'independence' in handling political and controversial broadcasts. When Boyer complained, Chifley told him frankly that the Commission could never be given a degree of 'independence' which would allow it to completely evade Government influence.

Thus the costs of independent news had allowed - in the sense of furnishing the occasion for making it easier - the Government to intervene once more into the ABC. Boyer thereafter knew that to gain full Government support, which would be necessary to end Dixon's influence, there would have to be even more stringent safeguards against controversy developing over news.

Another step towards evolving a completely non-objectionable style was taken during the serious industrial disputes involving Communist-led unions in 1948-49. During the Queensland rail strike of 1948, the Commission found its coverage coming under fire from Labor and conservative quarters because of reporting which was alleged to be too colourful and emotional. Boyer instructed the Department to keep to a colourless, bland style which was 'neutral'. At this time too he felt obliged to refuse to allow union leaders involved to make broadcasts in reply to those of the Queensland Government. The reasons relate to his attachment to the principles of parliamentary democracy and his
aversion to 'direct action'. The union leaders and their party were not represented in Parliament and the Commission did not feel therefore that they had the right of reply. By this reasoning radical minorities could be excluded from ABC microphones.

The Queensland incident was also noteworthy for the emergence of new ideas within the News Department about basic freedoms of reporting. A number of senior journalists supported Cotton when he protested at the decision by Boyer to suspend mention of the strike for several days, for fear of legal action. A new independent point of view was evident in which deliberate subservience to authority was no longer paramount.

Boyer struggled with conflicting principles over the issue of Communism. He resisted attempts by News Editors to ban all references to the Party, but at the same time, political pressures from both sides of Parliament combined with his own leanings to conservatism were such that allowing the Communist Party any time on air was unthinkable. News became seen as the safe outlet for these minority views. The Commission could claim that it had kept its pledge to allow all viewpoints to be expressed, by allowing brief occasional references to them in bulletins. But the Communists were not allowed longer exposure on air to explain their viewpoint more fully. Thus Boyer was using the ABC to maintain 'national unity' in the face of the threat being mounted against the established system.

The 'rights' won under the 1948 Act proved rather illusory when the Commission was forced by Government pressure to put a Coal Board spokesman on air. No official instruction was given, and the incident was not recorded, as it should have been, in the Commission's Annual Report. The Commission dodged responsibility for allowing the miners to reply, by saying that it had no control over the content of the original broadcast.
When Boyer refused to allow the Queensland Premier Hanlon to broadcast an appeal to the miners in his State to return to work, it was because he realised that the Commission's position would become untenable if it was at the beck and call of State as well as Federal Governments. If it put Hanlon on air, it could, in conscience, hardly refuse to allow the miners to reply once again. Yet if it did, it would run the risk of extreme public and political reaction.

By this time Boyer had succeeded in convincing the Government that the ABC's intentions were proper and its attachment to the institutions of society secure. There was thus no intervention by the Federal Government on behalf of Hanlon. Yet Boyer felt that the Commission, because of its action, had still left itself open to censure and possible damage. Alarmed by the public and press criticism he took the unusual step of publicly proclaiming the Commission's attachment to the idea of containing Communist influence.

The idea that news could serve as a 'safety-valve' to allow brief expression of opinion in controversy, while allowing the Commission to avoid any longer discussion of industrial issues, put additional pressure on news to restrict its reporting to the most essential 'facts'. Safety and prudence in the interests of the Commission's survival were seen by both journalists and Commission to be essential. It was mutually acknowledged that this was the path to self-preservation.

Other factors were impelling news in this same direction. The Press had reacted to the founding of the independent news service in a hostile manner. Stung by the emergence of a service which was anti-press and devoted to an 'official' reporting style which they despised, the press attempted to interfere with ABC news-gathering, particularly at State Government level. The press was on constant look-out for breaches of journalists 'norms' and attacked the ABC in 1948 over the breaking of an official British embargo. Charges and counter-charges
of embargo breaking followed. Evidence began mounting of pressure and influence being exerted to deny the ABC news at the State political level. Press attacks were mounted on the ABC, particularly over the Fitzgerald Committee report. The Commission was stung into taking a position of hostility towards the press, which matched that of its news staff. This had the effect of endorsing the highly competitive position adopted by the news service towards the newspapers and the copying of news-gathering and editorial methods which were felt necessary to match newspaper coverage. An obligation was felt to cover all the areas the press reported or suffer from the comparison.

In addition, faced with the fact that news broadcasting staff overseas were involving themselves more and more in descriptive and analytical voice reports, there was support by some of the news staff for entry into this area, by taking over the Talks Department's nightly News Review programme. They were however compelled to abandon this idea by opposition from both Talks Department and management who felt it would amount to dangerous incursions into the field of comment. There was therefore an inexorable thrust at several levels towards making the news service unobjectionably 'straight'. Safety lay in the direction of absolute avoidance of 'background'. Putting the news in some sort of understandable context was, in Boyer's terms, putting the ABC at risk. It was 'objective' in appearance but lacked meaningful content.

The independent expert selected by the Commission to review the news service was the former member of the Fitzgerald Committee, W.T. Harris. His report underlined the necessity for one man control of news. At the Commission's urging, he came down heavily on the side of Cotton and urged that he be put in charge. But before the Report was completed, Cotton had gone on sick leave to the U.K. Moses and the Commission worked hard to demonstrate the lack of discipline and errors
of judgment that resulted from his absence. Their aim was to ensure that Cotton was installed as Head of News.

The Commission, in accepting Harris's recommendations, downgraded Dixon to a purely executive position, an aim that it had tried to realise from 1944 onwards. However it found it wise to reinstate him in terms of status, but not duties, after strong criticism politically and from the AIA.

The Commission's plans for Cotton were wrecked by a last ditch effort from Dixon and his Labor supporters. They mounted a campaign against him in Parliament which did not receive Cameron's support but which nevertheless succeeded in vilifying Cotton to a point where the Commission felt it prudent to drop him. Amour attacked him as pro-Communist, at the height of the anti-Communist clamour during the miners strike. He was sacrificed so that the Commission could attain its higher goal - that of ensuring one-man control of news and removing Dixon. This in turn would guarantee full implementation of Commission policy, which had been impeded up to now by the dispute between Cotton and Dixon. Thus would the Commission finally gain control of its news service.

Cotton's influence extended in several important directions. He was instrumental in gaining Departmental acceptance of Boyer's policy of strict 'impartiality'. In particular, he began moving the Department away from its dependence on Government handouts, after first convincing the Commission that he and not Dixon should have control of the Canberra newsroom. By applying the policy of 'impartiality' to conflicts involving the 'left wing' and the 'right wing' he helped swing the Department away from its predominantly 'right-wing' stance. The Commission backed him against the politicians.
Cotton also made attempts to include more background in stories, against the opposition of some of the older reporting staff. However, his success in this field was limited because of the tightening up of reporting style which followed 1948-49 strikes. Also he was somewhat inconsistent in applying this policy.

Cotton also helped give news an international flavour because of the importance be attached to overseas news. This preference too had to be modified when, afterwards, it incurred the displeasure of Labor politicians on nationalistic grounds.

Dixon could not survive his last call for political help over the Cotton affair. The Labor Party was slipping in popularity, Amour's position had declined, and Hanlon died. Within the Labor Government, the Commission had gained a reputation for even-handedness and responsibility in its coverage of contentious issues. The threat from the press was now overshadowed by the threat to Labor from Communism. Thus there was no Labor outcry at the appointment of W.S. Hamilton as Editor-in-Chief, even though he was a newspaperman. Finally, the defeat of the Chifley Government in December 1949 removed Dixon's last line of protection. In 1950 his position was declared redundant. He fought for a while over the question of superannuation but finally left the Commission in May of that year.

By the end of 1949, the Commission and its news service had survived a torrid testing time. Listener complaints had declined and there was recognition of the Commission's efforts in establishing what appeared to be a genuinely 'objective' news service, which gave firm indication of the Commission's attachment to and support of democratic consensual values. Labor was satisfied that it had evaded press influence and had adopted a reassuring stance when the democratic system seemed threatened by the action of Communist led unions.
The Period 1949-61

In 1949 and 1950 there was a challenge to news from another quarter. P.W. Nette of the Treasury, one of the two new public servant members of the Commission questioned expenditure on the news service, following the Fitzgerald Committee report. One of Hamilton's first jobs was to find evidence to justify independent news collection. He had to produce facts to support the Commission contention that the service was winning support, particularly in the country.

The pressure from Nette was so intense that at one point the Commission was forced to confirm that it was once again prepared to secure some of its news from press sources, if the Government raised the issue. But Government support for this move, which Nette apparently expected, did not eventuate. Also the Commission fought a rearguard action to convince the Postmaster-General that its present service should not be interfered with.

By the end of 1950, initial doubts about the attitude of the Liberal-Country Party Government over the news service, had been shown to be groundless. Boyer was justified in believing that the efforts made by the ABC to secure backing from both Government and Opposition since 1946 had been successful. As the year drew to a close, the Government ended the debate over regional news by giving the go-ahead for its expansion. Nette's influence declined.

Hamilton in the interim had found his prestige on the ascendant. His reports had proved very effective in answering criticism. He had been most positive in concluding that it would be most inadvisable to return to the press for news. He believed that public acceptance of the news service continued to depend on its removal from the prospect of being influenced by the press. Boyer backed Hamilton's arguments in telling the Government that the 'objectivity' of the news service was of greater value than minor savings if news came from the press.
Two years later, in 1952, the question of the cost of news collection was again raised by the Government but the Commission's reaction on this occasion was noticeably firm and unequivocal. Confidence was obviously growing in the non-contentious nature of the service. ABC news could now speak for itself. The formula devised for news had progressively disarmed political criticism and enabled it to be removed from the political arena. Commission and News Department at last were in agreement about the policy needed to survive and prosper. There was now a growing audience for ABC news - which had become one of the Commission's most popular programmes.

Hamilton's degree of success in maintaining and strengthening ABC news policy was recognised in 1953 when he was put on the permanent staff. From 1951-56, news almost dropped completely from Commission agendas. It was the first time this had happened since the Commission was set up in 1932, and it was an indication of the trust now put in Hamilton. News was evincing no public or political criticism.

The news directives which were issued by Hamilton were lengthy and detailed, in accordance with the belief that meticulous guidance was required to avoid trouble. He emphasised even more strongly than Cotton the need for full and adequate reporting of the Opposition, and opposing viewpoints generally in any controversy. He also reinforced the trend away from dependence on handouts.

Hamilton defined more closely than before some of the Commission's news policy aims. Those details which 'a right thinking person' might object to, were to be omitted. Crime reports were reduced to a minimum, reinforcing Boyer's belief in serving the forces of 'law and order'. Hamilton viewed the audience as one which was sensitive, easily shocked and needed protection.
This dovetailed with Boyer's ideas on emphasising the positive aspects of society and playing down the bad. The two men also saw eye to eye on other aspects of news policy. Both were convinced the press was becoming degraded and was debasing public taste. The ABC had to redress the balance.

There were flirtations with colourful 'human interest' material under Hamilton until the Commission expressed disapproval. From this point on, there was even less emphasis on language which was likely to awaken the senses. However, sensing the frustrations of ABC reporters, he did try to build up their role as much as he could within the narrow framework allowed. Reporters were allowed slightly more flexibility in injecting simple interpretive phrases and there was an easing of the ban on non-governmental unattributable statements.

The Commission was again markedly self-confident in handling a series of complaints in the nineteen-fifties by Opposition Leader Evatt. He felt that unless he remonstrated about the cutting or dropping of his statements, the Opposition would be ignored. This belief stemmed from the activities of the News Department prior to 1946, when the Opposition received very limited coverage. The staff resented his direct intervention and his implied threats to individual journalists. The Commission, for its part, had faith in the judgment of its journalists and recognised that Evatt was trying to influence news selection, rather than expressing any basic party dissatisfaction.

Boyer believed television had enormous potential for good or evil. It would influence community behaviour. On a trip overseas in 1950, in which he examined developments in television, Boyer was appalled by the American approach to presenting news. Attempts to explain and illustrate with visuals in his view distorted news values. He much preferred the BBC approach in which the radio news was simply repeated on TV over a slide.
While successfully arguing before the Royal Commission on TV that the ABC should be given control over the national TV service under the same conditions as applied to radio, Boyer outlined the dangers, as he saw them, of news selection falling into the hands of technical and other non-journalistic staff, who had no appreciation of the delicate news mix required if the Commission was to continue to win acclaim for news 'objectivity'. If illustrative values were to replace the proven formula for news judgment followed by radio news, the Commission could once again have the critical spotlight thrown on to its news service.

Once the Commission's new TV responsibilities became reality, Boyer increasingly felt the heavy moral responsibility entailed. TV news could not be allowed, for sensationalist reasons, to concentrate on the unpleasant or the divisive. It must help the positive social and democratic values.

In Britain the BBC had reluctantly begun TV news when confronted with the creation of a competitive Independent Television News Ltd (ITN). Early restrictions on illustrations were removed following unrest among news staff and press criticism. The BBC by 1955-56 was beginning to use plenty of film, and reporters in vision to interpret and explain the news. Boyer was dismayed at this 'surrender'.

In 1956, the year of the advent of Australian television, Hamilton reported enthusiastically on these developments overseas, including the advantages of making best use of technical expertise. Alarmed, Boyer insisted that the old standards of 'balance' and 'objectivity' must take first place above illustration. After assurances from Hamilton, some visual illustration was permitted in news under strict guidelines.
When TV news began, ABC reporters did not appear in front of camera. It was locked to the radio news format. But film did go to air - too much for the Commission's liking. Commission disapproval followed and early in 1957 it was ruled that the order, and wording of items in radio and TV had to be substantially the same, fewer 'still' pictures were allowed, and film story length was not to exceed radio story length.

The TV news staff decided to undermine these rulings by gradually increasing film usage. The head of TV news, Keith Fraser directed this campaign. For its part, the Commission felt that minor items were finding their way into bulletins simply because film of them was available.

Following continuing expressions of concern by the Commission, Hamilton attempted to explain that film stories invariably take more time than the brief coverage on radio news. Hamilton and Fraser were increasingly of the opinion that the Commission was concerning itself with technical matters which it did not fully comprehend.

The dispute over illustration continued through 1958-59. The Commission because of its sensitivity on the issue of TV news, began to intervene in other ways. Music was banned in both News and more timeless Newsreel, because of its 'emotional' effect. To challenge the ruling, Fraser decided to leave both music and effects out of Newsreel, knowing that the effect would be considered flat and full. He then restored them several nights later. Nothing more was said by the Commission.

Soon afterwards the Commission reacted to the gradual build-up of film by ruling that a 15 minute bulletin could have no more than 2 minutes of film. Hamilton protested forcibly. Fraser however saw the loophole that new sound cameras provided. He did not count filmed interviews within total filmed content, claiming that they were not really film at
all. After further argument, this interpretation was allowed. From this time on, more and more film began to find its way into bulletins. With the death of Boyer in 1961, the Commission lost some of its hypersensitivity about TV news and turned more to the new and potentially contentious area of TV current affairs.

In Britain, the BBC's Lord Reith had been devoted to the moral uplifting of the community. His influence declined during the years of television, as did that of Boyer. Television brought with it a new kind of professionalism which had a different concept of audience. These professionals did not take so kindly to traditions of audience protection, or to rigid viewpoints about the exclusion of all else but the skeletal outline of news events. But the questioning of Boyer's values did not go far in the ABC. The battle over illustration was of an elementary kind which did not at this period, escalate into a full-scale questioning of the rigid approach which excluded all interpretation in the interests of safety. In 1961, in both radio and television ABC reporters were still excluded in the main from presenting information which could aid understanding. Brevity and extreme factuality were still the rule. TV did bring with it a populist view of audience which was ultimately to have its effect on news presentation, and which, even at this early stage, led to some division of opinion between radio and television which was essentially based on the lack of understanding that each had its own way of achieving 'objectivity'. Radio values at this stage, determined news output, as they still do to a large extent today. In Commission eyes radio news values, and the radio news output, remain the officially authorised product of the Commission. Its priorities and its style mirror the Commission's own sense of community values, which are in turn related to survival, and to the Commission's own desperate search for a product which would help it in its quest for 'autonomy' -
instead of one which would invite political interference. From 1949 onwards, the Commission felt it had found a news style with which the community as a whole was satisfied. The 'success' of ABC news was therefore held to be responsible for the period of 'autonomy' and political quiescence which followed.

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News and the ABC's Autonomy

The experiences of the ABC with its news programmes bear out with singular clarity some of the key observations of Anthony Smith about broadcasting. Because of the power that broadcasting wields, Governments maintain controls over wavelengths, and in the case of Government-established instrumentalities to some degree over financing. To survive broadcasters must adhere to a doctrine of 'impartiality' and 'objectivity'.

The broadcaster has to obtain and retain official approval and protection if he wishes to carry on the business of broadcasting. The central dialogue in the life of broadcasting is a dialogue with the state.¹

The key to this relationship, is the political coverage of the broadcasting institution. A bargain of style and content is necessary in those areas which deal with political subjects. In the period dealt with in this thesis, that Department was essentially the one which presented the news bulletins. News is therefore the most carefully scrutinised Department, the one which makes the selection and judgments on which the broadcasting institution relies if it is to retain 'autonomy'. Clearly, in the ABC's case, for a considerable period it found it difficult to evolve a policy embracing style and content,

¹. Smith, _Shadow_, p.140.
which the politicians found acceptable. Because of this, news became the most controversial of the Corporation’s products, the treatment of which interfered most with ABC ‘autonomy’, and its chances of survival.

In the nineteen-thirties, the fledgling organisation believed access to news on terms acceptable to its listeners was essential if it was to survive press attacks. Increasingly, it came to believe that its standing with the politicians would be affected by its extreme dependence on news that came from widely criticised newspaper monopolies. It approached the Government to assist it to obtain greater independence from the press, but with only a small degree of success. Its efforts to obtain its own news coverage and appeal and continuing press resistance led to the Gibson Committee enquiry. The press restrictions on broadcast news and the new Labor Government’s convention that it needed fair and ‘impartial’ access to the people in the wartime emergency meant that any ministerial interference with ABC news from December 1941 onwards, damaged at the effect on its ‘autonomy’ and being told by the Gibson Committee and the Government to discontinue further efforts to collect news independently, the Commission combined new ideas in news presentation — ‘observer’ reports — with an agreement with the press for a basic supply of news and put the proposal to the Government. Internal efforts by the news staff to convince the Government that this amounted to ‘press’ control’ of ABC news led to the PSCB’s rejection of the agreement. The ‘observer’ concept was abandoned and a higher degree of emphasis placed on simple ‘factual’ reports. A follow-up proposal to combine unlimited ABC ‘factual’ news reporting with a basic press service for news other than that from Canberra was again rejected because ABC news was convinced the Government that an independent news service was only a short step away from what was being achieved.
currently. Ensuing legislation to specifically direct the method of news collection in 1946, led to further external examinations on the implementation and cost of independent news collection, eventually leading to closer Government supervision over Commission expenditure as a whole. A further internal ABC enquiry into ABC news had to be negotiated before ultimate Government approval of the service was forthcoming. After playing a significant consensual role in the attempts to thwart the 'violent' tactics of the communist-led unionists, and having cloaked itself with a new 'impartiality' towards all contending elements within the State democratic framework, the ABC was left more to its own devices in news. This in turn at last gave the ABC some respite from incessant political interference.

Throughout the period of almost constant enquiry into ABC news, 1941 to 1949, the Commission believed that news placed at risk its survival in the form in which it was constituted. The weapons used to threaten it were suggestions of possible widespread changes in broadcasting legislation, such as those which would involve nationalisation or commercial sponsorship of the same type as on commercial stations, and the provision of finance, which was linked implicitly and at times, quite specifically, with changes and 'improvements' in news. The Commission resisted strongly the changes that were forced upon it or threatened in news policy, believing that its 'autonomy' was being weakened. Yet the aim of the 1946 Amendments was ostensibly to give the ABC greater 'independence' in its news collection, by removing it from the influences inherent in any dependence on press sources. The Commission came in turn, to see the independent service as a guarantee of 'autonomy' by removing it from the twin areas of contention - the press and the Government. Further, Boyer came to see the news service as one of the most important arms of ABC policy, which, by presenting the 'facts' of controversial issues could assist in
the building of an informed and critical democracy. By 1949, Boyer believed:

the news service ... is gaining in popular regard ... The Commission feels that a continued and strict devotion to the continued objective of the news service, factual in content and sober in presentation, is further assisting the formation of independent individual judgement. 2

By 1952, news had become in the Commission's eyes, not an embarrassment and a cause for concern, but a distinct asset. By 1953, the Commission had gained "public recognition" for the way it had maintained "balance" in "the manner and presentation of news". News was providing a "vital service to a healthy democracy". 3 By gaining the goodwill of both those in authority and the public, the Commission came to feel that its independent news service had helped immeasurably in strengthening its position in society and enabling it to survive. From being greatly concerned about the changes that were forced upon it in news policy, the Commission came to believe that it had, in fact, gained a greater degree of 'autonomy' from the Government with regard to news collection and general programming. But to gain this 'autonomy', was the ABC obliged to become unduly supportive of wider social and community values in the news? Were the News policy conflicts with the Government up to 1946 on purely illusory grounds or was the Commission anxious to preserve a corporation character, based on freedom to gather and present news on an informational basis?

Recent writing in the field of organisation theory has suggested new methods of examining degrees of autonomy in statutory organisations. In this analysis extensive use will be made of recent work by Leon Peres in which he suggests that instead of being a variable, 'autonomy' is constant. What changes in corporations, he argues, is the degree of control they exercise over stocks of 'incentives', which induce contributions in line with the corporation's character. These incentives have been categorised as (a) purposive - which result in contributors being attracted by the organisation policy itself, or by the prospect of achieving organisational objective, (b) material - being the attraction of physical or material advantages, and (c) solidary - which is the inducement of simply associating with the organisation or the people in it. If one type of incentive is replaced by another because of competitive outside claims, it can result in a change of corporation character of a fundamental kind. The real test is whether such a change is desirable; whether a trade-off in incentives has been made which has resulted in the loss of a corporation character which was worth preserving. In this appraisal he combines two previous theories about 'autonomy' - that which sees it as control over the organisation's character and that which sees it in terms of capacity to attract contributions.

Applying methods devised by Peres to ascertain the probable extent of policy control possessed by a corporation, one can immediately discern that the likelihood of controversy in the ABC, and a consequent loss of 'autonomy' was high. The general definition of its news function in the 1932 legislation meant there was wide scope for competing policy conceptions. When general definition is combined with competing

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conceptions outside the organisation, the chances of controversy are markedly increased. The ABC was faced with competing policy conceptions from the press from its inception and from the Government from 1941 onwards. They did not end until 1949.

Using Peres's terminology, the ABC competed strongly first with the press and then with the Government for control of its news policy, in order to set organisation goals and to define organisation character. It wanted news contributions in accordance with its policy and control over the incentives necessary to obtain them. Up to 1939, its policy was simply to secure more independence in news selection and presentation. It competed strongly but without complete success because aspects of control were still vested in the press. Nevertheless it developed incentives sufficient to attract a small news staff who were dedicated to the ultimate goal of greater independence from the press. These were incentives of a purposive kind - that is, they attracted people who valued highly the goals of the organisation and who looked forward to the prospect of achieving them. No doubt solidary incentives were also a factor - being incentives deriving from benefits that flow from an association with an organisation of a particular character. Prestige and novelty would have formed part of the attraction of the ABC.

With the appointment of Denning to Canberra in 1939, and the growing public and Government demand for news of the war, the Commission's stock of purposive incentives would have increased, as independent collection of news became an established part of the ABC service, even if limited to Canberra and overseas. By the end of 1941, with the enlargement of the Canberra bureau and its increasing importance to the Government, ABC news would have been seen as an important adjunct to Government aims. The journalists and facilities at its disposal took on a national importance. Commission policy was however still circumscribed
by press agreements. The Commission competed with the press to give it the capacity to engage contributors in accordance with its aims. Lack of policy control meant lack of capacity.

Labor saw the ABC news service as essentially an arm of Government. It did not want to take over the Commission but did want de facto control of its news output. It was a matter of overruling the press agreements and winning some support from ABC newsmen themselves. The Commission was faced with competitive claims on its resources in news. The ABC's incentives had to compete with those of the Government for control over the ABC's own newsmen. Labor's incentives were also purposive and solidary. The purposive category centred around the attraction of assisting the Government in its aim of successfully mobilising Australians in wartime. As well, with greater financial resources at its disposal, it offered the opportunity to provide an essential alternative 'factual' source of Government news for the Australian people, which was not 'coloured'. This incentive would have had great pull for ABC news staff who had always desired greater independence from the press. The ABC had failed, through lack of policy control to fully achieve this. The Government could. The Government also had its solidary incentives - namely the personal links and associations with Australian political leaders which were cultivated by ABC newsmen.

In Peres's words, in this situation "the stability of the organisation will depend on the executive's capacity to resist competitive claims on the resources it utilises".  

5. Peres, "Resurrection", in Spann and Curnow (eds.), Public Policy, p.103.
establish monopoly control of incentives. In order to do this, it changed their nature. A change of news policy had also been forced upon it - it had to suspend its quest for greater news independence from the press as a result of the Gibson Committee report and the Government's endorsement of it. Wanting a less competitive and more informational and 'broadcasting' style of news it produced alternative incentives of a purposive kind, centering around the greater professionalism and scope offered by the 'observer' concept. They were intended to produce contributors of a different kind, more attuned to broadcasting work, and at the same time maintain support of present contributors. However the end which this seemed to imply to independent news-gathering, in the sense that most ABC newsmen understood it, and the apparent assurances to the press on this question made the new incentives useless in continuing to attract the support of ABC newsmen. For the first time, internal competing policy concepts arose, which became external when the newsmen sought and received Government backing. The chance to recruit new professional news broadcasters never arose as strong policy competition resulted in Government veto of the ABC policy. The Commission was faced with the task of trying to maintain control of its existing contributors. But from this point to 1946, the purposive incentives offered by the Government were extremely effective in retaining the support of ABC newsmen. The new associations forged between them and Labor politicians meant that the possibility of an 'independent' service became more real.

The 1944 PSCB Report rejected interpretive reporting and the use by the ABC of press sources from Canberra. Feeling that it was losing public and some political support from non-Labor, because of the degree of Labor control over news, Commission policy became one of endeavouring to demonstrate that it continued to have 'freedom' to obtain news from press sources, and also or persuading its newsmen to
accept a new code of impartiality. By 1946 the incentives it offered to its newsmen were freedom to supplement - that is, to collect news without restriction and also to join with their employer to help re-establish credibility by taking a basic news service from the press, as a question of 'principle'. These incentives were not sufficient to win support from ABC journalists, who were still largely motivated by the goal of independent news which now seemed very close due to wartime expansion of the service. Internal/external policy competition at this point, brought with it the 1946 legislation.

Peres points out that legislative change, such as that of 1946, which forced the ABC to be self-reliant in Australia for news, might in reality not deplete 'autonomy' as much as is assumed. The changes might 'protect' the corporation from competition or bargaining with groups which might affect its autonomy, reducing competing conceptions. They might also improve the corporation's capacity to attract contributors.

The 1946 Act was aimed at protecting the ABC news from press 'influence'. It is doubtful however whether the press had been greatly influential on ABC news after 1942. The self-reliance the ABC developed from 1942 onwards in the more controversial areas, such as political reporting, reduced any chances of this. By 1946, the year 'protection' began, ABC news gathered almost all its own news, getting from the press only minor State items. After 1944, and the PSCB rejection of the press agreements, the newspapers did not argue for any restrictions on ABC reporting. The increasing cynicism of ABC newsmen towards the press and its news, and their differing concepts of 'objectivity' were other factors which diminished the chances of 'influence'. The Act however did reduce the degree of generality in news purposes and aims, thus reducing the level of controversy. The press could no longer be a serious rival of the
Government in competing conceptions about the role of ABC news, but it did, for at least another three or four years, continue to create controversy - for as long, in fact, as the issue of ABC news remained controversial in Canberra.

By eliminating the press from any position to 'influence', the Government's own competitive stance in relation to ABC news became less aggressive, because its initial bid for control was made largely as a result of what it saw were press efforts to control ABC resources. The Act therefore reduced tension and enabled the ABC to set about creating a new set of incentives designed to attract and secure control of existing and newly recruited newsmen. The 1946 policy designed when the imposition of an 'independent' news service was about to become a reality, retained 'impartiality' as its core, but linked it with a strong anti-press ethic. By now World War II was over. The Government had lost two key elements in its competition for ABC news resources - 'independence' was no longer an issue, and the pull of 'authority' was not as strong. The Commission now shared the enthusiasm to compete with the press. Its purposive incentives were thus much stronger, the more particularly because being 'independent' the ABC was now able to offer individual newsmen a greater chance of achieving organisational goals, as distinct from Governmental ones.

But there were still competing role conceptions from inside and outside - from Dixon and his friends Hanlon and Amour, and also from the Government which competed for a degree of policy control by disagreeing as to the sums of money necessary for independent news and about some of its purposes. These resulted in a great deal of what can be called 'bargaining' over incentives. The caution, the extreme factuality, the rejection of interpretation and of voice reporting, the enjoiners to be sober and unemotional, the rigid sourcing, and finally the commitment to 'consensus' during the
industrial crises, all refined, codified, and stressed aspects of Boyer's policy. A subtle but distinct change in substantive incentives took place. In Peres's phrase the "capacity to offer individual freedom in programme determination" to attract high quality contributors declined. Some of the early recruits to the 'independent' news service no doubt genuinely believed that they would have a high degree of 'independence' in news judgments. Remaining, and now more important, was the 'alternative newspaper' concept with its dedication to matching the press output but in more 'objective' fashion. As the 'straight', 'unobjectionable' nature of ABC news became more apparent, competing role conceptions from inside and outside dropped away. Competition for resources ended, and the Commission at last had monopoly control over them. It had evolved a stock of purposive incentives which matched Commission news policy and which was sufficient to attract contributors of the type needed for its extremely 'factual', 'objective' service. These were essentially newspapermen, using newspaper methods to turn out an alternative newspaper. They were deeply committed to the belief that such a 'straight' service was needed in Australia to 'balance' the 'biased' press.

A considerable part of this bargaining process concerned the winning of Government support away from the Amour-Dixon axis to the Commission itself. Amour and Dixon insisted that press monopolies and attitudes to communism remained basic. This internal/external policy competition remained, trying to persuade the Government to continue its pre 1946 policy of competing for staff incentives and loyalties. It complicated the bargaining process the Commission was

6. Peres, "Resurrection", in Spann and Curnow (eds.), Public Policy, p.106.
engaged in with the Government and it made more difficult the task of winning all ABC newsmen to the new incentive of 'impartiality'. Dixon and his small group of older journalists were still motivated by the old incentives of 'authority'. It is worth noting that the Commission's own efforts at internal policy implementation were instrumental in ending the influence of the Dixon group. We have already noted in Chapters 2 and 3 that the Commission, in attempting to implement its programmes relating to news policy, had found difficulty in appreciating that certain action must be taken towards achieving policy goals once they have been set and that, instead of being followed by an apparently simple sequence of events, a policy decision results in a complex series of actions involving differently motivated people, with the ultimate chances of success being small. In 1943 and in 1946, it had failed to keep policy differences an internal matter because of lack of appreciation of the complexity of joint action required for successful implementation. Between 1946 and 1949 it was successful in implementing its programme, though with difficulty and over a considerable period of time, because it appreciated far more than previously the need to reach accommodation at various decision points, and methods of reaching that accommodation. Using this criterion, and judging by the ABC's experience, knowledge of the steps needed for successful internal policy implementation reduces the possibility of competing conceptions about the role of Government instrumentalities arising externally and thus lowers their controversy quotient.

The 1946 legislation did not in itself guarantee 'autonomy' but it provided the conditions on which the Commission could devise and build a stock of incentives which would ultimately secure for it control over its own news policy. Thus, instead of losing 'autonomy' in the 1946 Act, by being stripped of its powers to gather news as it saw
fit, it seemed by 1949 to have secured monopolistic control over a set of incentives which secured for it contributions in line with its news policy.

The substitution of incentives had changed Commission character. It is necessary now to compare the character of the Commission as it emerged after 1949 with its character prior to 1946. Did its final substitution of incentives 1946-49, bring with it an abandonment of incentives which were worth maintaining? In the Commission's case there were two elements in its news policy between 1932 and 1946, which may be directly related to its character. The first was freedom to obtain news from any source without restrictions, which remained consistent except between 1942 and 1944 when it was forced to suspend it. The second, was the desire to be something more than a replica of radio to broadcast and describe and analyse as the BBC were doing so effectively during the war. Although forced to abandon this proposal after two years, it remains a logical evolutionary progression based on increasing knowledge of the special techniques of radio, and of radio's capacity to impart information of an immediate and authentic kind. The quite specific evidence given by Boyer, Moses, Deamer and McCall before the PSCB in 1943-44 enables the drawing of two conclusions about the nature of the news service which would have resulted if the Commission had managed to wrest control of policy and incentives away 7.

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7. The Dixon view, maintained in Inside the ABC, is that the Commission's policy 1936-42 was to work for a complete break with all press sources. Thus, he argues, it was he who maintained continuity of purpose, by doggedly pursuing this policy through to its successful implementation in 1946, while the Commission abandoned it. There is, however, no evidence that the Commission was ever seriously bent on a completely independent service, and no evidence that Dixon himself seriously contemplated such a step until Labor Party friendships raised it as a serious possibility. In late 1944, he was still advocating a full AUP service from Canberra, and, as we have noted, still wanted country news from press sources after 1946.
from the Government. The first is that it would have moved the ABC news into the area of 'voice reports' which would have in turn imparted more perspectives of the news, in simple terms, more information, and would have reduced its capacity to serve the interests of 'authority' by providing a reflective 'mirror-image' for the actions and words of the institutions of the State. It would also have helped shift newsmen away from their obsession with press competition, with its consequent work patterns based on wide coverage and brevity. Instead newsmen, of a different type with different motivations, would have been more interested in more distinctive aspects of news work.

The advantages that would have flowed from the retention of its right to decide its news sources are less obvious but nonetheless real. They relate also to the relationship with the press. We have noted that in the nineteen-thirties the Commission came gradually to realise that widely held beliefs about the nature of the Australian press made it a far from satisfactory source of news, unless it could be 'checked' and 'supplemented'. Despite the period of friendly negotiation with the press to secure Agreements, between 1942-46, there is every indication that the Commission gradually became even more convinced of the dangers inherent in dealing with newspaper proprietors. The proposed 1946 agreement was so hedged around with special arrangements to avoid 'editorial manipulation' that it is unlikely that it would ever have worked as a basic supply of news. The much heavier emphasis was on the unrestricted 'supplementation' - which had come to mean simple news-gathering - so that the strong implication is that the ABC would have come to rely far more on its own reporters than on those of the press. It may, in fact, have simply used the press offices for up-to-the-minute information as to news happenings which it would have followed up itself. The Agreement was an interim
one for one year only and there is every indication that the Commission had come down firmly on the side of avoidance of the press by 1946, but pushed ahead with its agreement proposals in order to demonstrate its 'independence' from the Government. The inescapable conclusion, particularly when linked with the opposition to press 'standards' in the news policy of June 1946 and Boyer's own criticism of the press before the PSCB in 1946, is that the Commission would itself have eventually ended any contractual arrangement with the Australian press. Had it been allowed to reach this ultimate conclusion and act accordingly, the rivalry towards the press in ABC news might not have been as great. The PSCB reports of 1944 and 1946, and the evidence which preceded them, aroused bitter press feeling, because of the imputation that it was 'suspect' and 'biased'. The public ventilation of these views and Government endorsement of them created a bitter antagonism towards the news service, which was immediately reciprocated by ABC journalists. Had the newspaper agreements eventually been allowed to lapse - and there is evidence from the interim one year nature of the 1946 agreement that they would have done - ABC newsmen might not have been as determinedly anxious to match the press in every direction. As with 'observer' reporting, this might have helped produce a more selective approach and one which was less geared to 'spot' or 'immediate' news.

An analysis of ABC Annual Reports from 1947 to 1962 shows that the qualities most ascribed to the news service by the Commission were 'objectivity' and 'impartiality'. In this thesis attention has already been drawn to the observations of Gaye Tuchman on the subject of 'objectivity'. She argues that in order to claim 'objectivity' and thus avoid dangers to themselves and their organisation newsmen follow a ritualised procedure. Facts are verified, conflicting possibilities presented, events structured in appropriate sequence
and they use their 'news judgment' to decide what is true and can be taken for granted. But, as she points out, these procedures are merely attempts to obtain 'objectivity' and do not guarantee success. Facts are held 'to speak for themselves' when they cannot and facts are presented in such a way as to invite selective perception. Significant problems arise because some of these crucial procedures are ultimately dependent on claims of 'news judgment' or 'common sense' but as Tuchman points out, these are frequently dependent on editorial policy and on individual views of social and political reality.

It would be remarkable if the ABC newsmen's search for 'objectivity' was not routinised in this way as it was, and is, in the media everywhere because of the way newsmen work. As Tuchman says:

[the newsmen] must make immediate decisions concerning validity, reliability, and 'truth' in order to meet a problems imposed by the nature of his task - processing information called news, a depletable consumer product made every day. Processing news leaves no time for reflexive epistemological examination. 8

At this point we should look at the consequences of the type of work pattern evolved by ABC news in its attempts to compete with the press, namely the speed with which news was broadcast and also brevity, which resulted from the wide news field which was covered and the pressures which have been enumerated to reduce news items to only essential factual material. Tuchman notes that "Newsmen ... stand out as workers called upon to give accounts ... of a wide variety of disasters - unexpected events - on a routine basis". 9 News organisations have to find ways of coping with the unexpected or of reducing the variability of raw news. She found that "news organizations routinize the processing

8. Tuchman, "Objectivity", p.662.
of seemingly unexpected events by typifying them along dimensions that reflect practical tasks associated with their work". 10

The ABC newsroom had to cope with a very large number of stories. A considerable number were not used but nevertheless involved time in assessing. As many as possible were included, being heavily edited in order that the cover was seen to be 'comprehensive'. These had to go to air as fast as possible to demonstrate the superiority of ABC News. There was an incessant insistence on preparations to cover 'immediate', 'spot' news because it was in this area that ABC had its best chance of 'beating' the press. Because the ABC had bulletins throughout the day, its need for speed was much more essential than the newspapers. The ABC had far more deadlines than those of the press. Tuchman notes "the need for speed is so overarching that it influences characteristics of news stories". 11 So it was with ABC news. A system had to be devised to provide a quick coverage and turnover of a large number of stories. As far as national bulletins were concerned, many of these would come from interstate; for state bulletins, many came from country areas. The unexpected nature of much of this material, coming from so many remote sources, will be apparent. If we use Tuchman's typifications it will be seen that ABC news was heavily related to pre-scheduled and un-scheduled events, rather than those which are non-scheduled. There was no room or inclination to use the latter category, which relates to investigative reporting of a less urgent kind. Speed of handling and brevity in this situation would undoubtedly have meant even greater necessity than the press to control work activities and a much greater need to process all

10. Ibid., p.117.
11. Ibid., p.118.
stories routinely. This, as Tuchman points out, amounts to perceiving and defining events in such a context that social reality is reconstructed.

Elsewhere, in discussing TV news, Tuchman explores the possibility of newsmen masking the extent to which a story has been manipulated by showing events and interviews in a way that "draws upon taken-for-granted cultural definitions of visual perception and patterned role expectations concerning the use of space".12 This gives the visual impression of 'objectivity'. It seems obvious that much the same thing can be said of radio news that is so heavily and routinely processed as that in the ABC. Such processing was undoubtedly a considerable aid to the 'objective' nature of ABC news items. The standard presentation form of copy demanded on the reporters in order to make quick subbing possible would have been subjected to heavy editing which would enhance the 'objective', 'impartial', 'neutral' nature of the coverage. But processing news in routine fashion to create 'objectivity' can, as we have said, transform the nature of the news to fit a particular pattern. Speed and brevity themselves mean less time and less space can be devoted to even the ritual procedures necessary for 'objectivity'. The ABC work routine would have meant extreme adherence to the principle that "newsmen, in practice, mean by objectivity that one must interview an opponent and a proponent of any controversial measure".13 As Tuchman suggests, the work process means that the interaction obtained is itself 'routine' because the opponents and proponents are well-known and quickly accessible. This would have been particularly so in the ABC's case. This is one real way in which this kind of cursory attempt at 'objectivity' aids the

dissemination of the viewpoint of officialdom while giving those that challenge authority fewer opportunities to do so. Thus work patterns themselves aid the promulgation of accepted values.

It is possible to argue therefore that the approach to news gathering and presentation of ABC news made genuine 'objectivity' very difficult to attain, probably far more so than newspapers found, because of the greater space and time at their command. A work pattern based on compression and speed is bound to mean fewer sources can be located, fewer points of view put, less time to check and include 'facts. An excessively heavy emphasis on routinised 'objectivity' can in fact mean standardisation or tailoring of material to meet editorial policy requirements.

'Impartiality' is, of course, one of the components of objectivity, being the attempt to 'balance' viewpoints of both sides in a controversy. Tuchman observes that:

the insistence on balance ... maintains the organizational structure and minimizes the importance of those who challenge government authority ... Supposedly illegitimate challengers are never offered the opportunity to criticize governmental statements with the same frequency.14

Hall takes this argument further by arguing that 'impartiality' gives the appearance of autonomy to broadcasting institutions, while actually ensuring the conformity of broadcasting to the political system as a whole and the structure of the State. In his view the 'impartiality' concept has been taken too much at face value. Agreeing with Smith that broadcasters cannot 'originate', Hall points out that 'impartiality' in Current Affairs programmes is played to certain rules, but the mediating 'neutral' broadcaster is dependent for his sources and his authority on the same political world from which his contending

politicians come. "Within the rules of impartiality, politics, which grants independence, is the originating moment, and exerts the determining force over the whole circuit. In terms of the broadcasting function, politics is the determining instance." The politician while appearing to submit himself to questioning within the framework of 'impartiality' is able to project himself to the audience with a considerable degree of transparency because the broadcaster must remain as 'invisible' as possible, merely couching his questions in a form which represents the 'other side' or 'public opinion'. Because broadcasting institutions share the basic beliefs of those politicians they question, on 'rule of law' and 'democracy', he views the struggle between broadcaster and politician within the rules of 'impartiality' as something of a sham which conceals a basic sharing of common beliefs. In this view the 'impartiality' of 'autonomous' broadcasting organisations is a structured device to give the State an avenue for ideological reproduction.

We have noted in Chapter 3 the twin pulls of Boyer's broadcasting philosophy. He wanted to defend and preserve 'national unity' against divisive elements, he was opposed to violent 'undemocratic' means of resolving disputes, and yet in social and political issues, believed that the ABC should present as many viewpoints as possible to enable and facilitate the formation of individual judgment, thus aiding 'citizenship'. An informed 'citizen' was the backbone of democratic society. In 1948, however, he was faced simultaneously with the problems of burgeoning radical unionism with attendant close scrutiny of ABC news coverage and an enquiry into ABC expenditure, both of which placed the ABC at risk. In the circumstances, he felt obliged to compromise to protect the ABC, by limiting the radical minority to occasional brief references in the

news bulletins. The application of 'impartiality' was limited to those parties functioning within the framework of parliamentary democracy.

Yet despite the strong institutional pressures to conform and give themselves over entirely to the strong public and political mood of anti-communism, Boyer and his Commission still felt that their obligations to the community demanded some action which demonstrated ABC 'independence'. Hence the refusal to ban references to the Communist Party in news and the unprecedented refusal to allow the Queensland Premier to broadcast. Gestures they might have been, but they indicate that broadcasting organisations do not always passively reproduce all the viewpoints of the political 'consensus'.

However, it is equally clear that the traumatic industrial events of 1948 and 1949 proved overwhelming influential. They and the continuing controversy over news caused the Commission to concede that the most vital issue for survival was not 'citizenship' or 'minority rights' but the winning of Government and Opposition confidence by obvious support for and attachment to consensual viewpoints - in particular the view that 'disruptive' minorities could not be given equality of treatment. Only in this way could true 'autonomy' in news and therefore institutional' autonomy' be finally achieved. In fact not only was wider consensual support needed by the Commission but the Commission itself had to assume an active consensual role through its broadcasting of these events. The 'legitimacy' of the institutions of State being threatened by the 'illegitimate' communist tactics was undoubtedly the thrust of ABC news bulletins largely given over to statements from the 'official' and 'parliamentary' viewpoint.

From here on there was 'ideological reproduction'. Boyer and his staff had merely adjusted the balance between forces which shared power in Canberra, and between other conflicting viewpoints within the
parliamentary democratic framework. They realised that the ABC could not survive a transition of power unless this was done. ABC 'impartiality' represented a recognition of the requirements for survival. Thus "broadcasting maintains the ideals of society as a whole".\textsuperscript{16} And while

the contribution of radio and television to social and political opposition is among its most valuable gifts to society ... licensing anxiety impels the broadcasting institution as a whole in the opposite directions, towards stasis.\textsuperscript{17}

It would have been remarkable if the ABC, given the political problems that had confronted it with its news, had developed any different concept of 'impartiality'. But, as with 'objectivity', what must be considered is the degree of 'impartiality' achieved within the limitations imposed by its commitment to the State. Here it is worth analysing some of Hall's comments in greater detail. Although maintaining in general terms that "the media can only function, and fulfil the requirements of the conditions of impartiality, by as faithful and transparent a reproduction of the political sphere as it is possible to accomplish"\textsuperscript{18} he goes on to concede that the treatment of raw materials by broadcasters transforms them to some degree through technical and labour processes. They amount in fact to a refraction, rather than a simple reflection. Further:

This transparency is not as easy to accomplish in practice as it is to state in principle. For the broadcasters also work under the constraining imperative to 'inform and educate'. And this may operate against the grain of the strict and perfect 'reproduction of the political sphere through the media'.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{16} Smith, Shadow, p.55.
\textsuperscript{17} Smith, Shadow, p.66.
\textsuperscript{18} Hall, "Broadcasting", Mass Communication Research Conference, p.19.
\textsuperscript{19} Hall, "Broadcasting", Mass Communication Research Conference, p.21.
We therefore have a situation in which broadcasters, although sharing institutional rapport with the State, can affect the degree of transparency with which the views of politicians and others reach the audience, because of professional beliefs they hold about their role. This comes very close to echoing Smith's viewpoint that there are struggles within broadcasting organisations about concepts of audience, the broadcaster's point of view sometimes being at variance with that of the institution which is geared to survival.

These observations have a direct bearing on a central theme of this thesis. It has been held that the news 'voicecast', the form of news broadcasting in which the reporter presents his story assessment himself, frequently using actuality inserts to stress certain important points, is an inherently superior form of news presentation than the routinised heavily-edited announcer-read form that has traditionally prevailed in the ABC. It is not only the question of length which determines this superiority - the 'voicecast' invariably being longer than the standard form and therefore presenting more information. It is also necessary to consider the extent to which the reporter intercedes between 'raw news', frequently statements, speeches and other political matter, and the audience. He structures, emphasises, and explains. While it is inarguable that he must still work within the confines of the beliefs of the organisation that employs him, it is equally clear that he does prevent to some extent the simple 'reflection' of viewpoints. ABC news bulletins of the time with their rigidly 'factual' reporting style and the brevity of individual items were, in the main, devoted to simple exposition of viewpoints, without intermediary. The decision to reject the 'voicecast' therefore meant that ABC 'impartiality' was related to an extreme degree to the needs and purposes of the elitist groups whose activities were being reported, because of the direct, unimpeded, 'reflective' manner in which news bulletins treated them.
In 1949, the Commission stated that: "it has a peculiar responsibility to employ the National Service ... as a positive contribution ... to the building of an informed and critical democracy". In the same report it averred that the news service was providing information in a form which would assist in the formation of independent judgment. It is extremely open to question whether the Commission achieved its purpose in this respect either. Nordenstreng, as one of the leading advocates of informational criteria for news, contradicts one of the tenets on which Boyer based his confidence in the extent to which the community benefited from the information contained in news bulletins. As we have noted, Boyer believed that the Commission should simply present the 'facts' and allow the audience to make up its own mind. Nordenstreng believes this limited kind of information is not enough. Only with 'many-sided information' can people be intellectually activated so that the alienation and powerlessness they feel at being unable to understand or control the events in the world around them, can be overcome. He points out that researchers have found that news bulletins too frequently provide a diet of familiar comforting material which provides a feeling of security, reinforces the already existing world view and provides temporary relief from anxieties. 'Many-sided' information would aim at conquering the state of alienation and enable people to awake to their state and begin to participate in the world around them. This in turn would aid the development of a healthy democracy. This information may at times have to be disturbing, causing in the short term additional insecurity, but in the long term this would


be the key to understanding world events, putting an end to all anxieties. Nordenstreng's definition of 'many-sided' information is that in which the 'invisible' development surrounding events has been given - news in which analysis has been provided, beyond what is merely 'official' and 'visible'. He also is critical of the thinking which advocates that a news service must satisfy the public. This kind of satisfaction means merely that the public is being fed information which is supportive of their existing ideas and keeps their minds closed to new ones.

It will be clear that, judged on this basis, ABC news did very little to intellectually stimulate and encourage democratic participation. Its news was certainly not 'many-sided'. Nor were the news staff encouraged to include very many disturbing news items as this did not accord with the Boyer/Hamilton ideas of uplifting society by ignoring the unsavoury and concentrating on 'positive' aspects of society. Also ABC news was heavily geared to gaining public support to justify itself, as the frequent references to this subject in Annual Reports indicate. The transmission of news experience did not find a place in this scheme of things. The 'factual' brief nature of ABC news items seem to have been as far removed from 'many-sided' information as it is possible to be.

Up to 1961, ABC news had projected institutional beliefs that buttressed the legitimacy of existing institutions, and so encouraged what Tuchman has described as national 'hegemony' - the domination of a certain way of life and thought and one concept of reality. Her conclusion regarding American television could equally apply to the ABC in this period in that "it adumbrates political and intellectual discourse. It not only buries dissent; it buries the possibility that new ideas may emerge". 22 Nordenstreng is equally relevant, as far as

the ABC is concerned, when he says: "The message of the mass media is largely biased in favour of prevailing ways of thinking, on the side of previously assimilated opinions and attitudes against new information and open-mindedness". However, more wealthy and illustrious broadcasting institutions overseas had also, in this period, perpetuated hegemony, and it is therefore not surprising that the ABC found itself in a similar situation, particularly in view of the extreme difficulties it had had in satisfying the politicians.

What is remarkable however is its extreme and unchanging supportive attachment to accepted institutions and values over such a long period. This is obvious from the three perpectives just examines. A news style and consequent work patterns which flowed from the conception of the ABC as being an alternative and competing vehicle for news dissemination with the press, and also from the rejection of 'interpretive reporting, meant that even the ritualised procedures for establishing 'objectivity' had to be reduced to a minimum. For the same reasons, 'impartiality' went no further than the presentation in raw form of opposing statements. Instead of being the material for democratic opinion forming, ABC news was more likely to have confirmed existing prejudices. The cumulative effect of its failure by 1961 to reach even existing media norms of 'objectivity', 'impartiality' and information content, would have accentuated its considerable lean towards hegemony. It will have been noted that the practices and procedures outlined continued without basic change throughout the nineteen-forties and nineteen-fifties, and well into the nineteen-sixties. Other broadcasting organisations had by this time long launched themselves into the task of providing more explanation of the news, even though some, like the BBC had found it initially difficult to do so.

It is doubtful therefore whether it can be said that the Commission's character as it emerged by 1949, and continued through 1961, was a worthy replacement for the character of the Commission up to 1946. The essential trade-off in incentives had been those of an anti-newspaper, heavily pro-censensual kind in place of an informational, broadcasting kind, which also offered greater individual 'freedom' in determining output. The character of the Commission was indissolubly bound up with a policy which it was never able to introduce because it failed to marshal the incentives needed when the Government competed for resources. The Commission vigorously resisted attempts to interfere with its news policy, because it wanted to preserve the character which was bound up with it - freedom to collect news as it wanted, and its corollary, freedom to present the news as it wished. The too-easy assumption in judging the ABC's independent news service, is that because the product was more 'objective' and 'impartial' than it was before 1946, its 'superiority' is self-evident, and therefore so is its justification. This ignores the fact that the Commission's news pre-1946 did not largely represent its views at all. Control over incentives lay with the Government.

It can be seen that the 'autonomy' gained with the 'success' of independent news was at the cost of a substitution of incentives which brought a basic change in Commission character. 'Autonomy' was acquired at the price of zealous mirror-image reporting of the people and institutions whose support it needed for survival. Peres says: "Survival should mean more than sheer organisation survival; it should mean survival as an organisation of a particular character". The Commission survived and ultimately produced a respected, 'objective', 'believable', news service. But the new character which it took on in doing so could

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24. Peres, "Resurrection", in Spann and Curnow (eds.), Public Policy, p.106.
be said to suffer when compared to several important facets of the particular character it formerly possessed and which it was forced to change.

In the Commission's case, the history of its news service involves several important factors which were unique to the organisation itself or to the Australian environment. Thus it is difficult to draw broad conclusions which relate to the media elsewhere. The press itself took upon itself a strong adversary role in relationship to Government and to Government instrumentalities. Its opposition to the ABC also stemmed from its controlling interests in commercial radio. The monopolistic nature of the Australian press made it the only supplier of news, which produced the quixotic situation of the ABC being dependent for its supply on a grouping which ran most of its competitors. The 'confrontationist' nature of Cleary himself might have been counter-productive in the long term. His largely unsuccessful appeals for Government assistance in his battle with the press, and his strongly critical attitudes to the press generally, could have confirmed traditional Labor attitudes to the 'biased' newspaper proprietors, and the correctness of its intervention into ABC news. Reith has been criticised for his easy acquiescence in press restrictions on the broadcasting of BBC news up to 1938, but this policy avoided head-on collision with the newspapers and large-scale intervention by the Government. The BBC eventually secured a news service which was noticeably less restrained than that of the ABC. Boyer's character too was an important consideration bringing with it strong moral convictions on the need for protection of Australian family life and the need for issues to be ventilated and talked out without recourse to violence. This attitude of mind made easier the transition of ABC news to a role which was not only supportive of hegemony, but also played an active role in preserving consensual values and winning support for them from the public.
Nevertheless, there seems to be two linked characteristics. A period of extreme and constant Government interference in, and pressure on, ABC news resulted in a news policy which, in order to escape this, developed extreme attachment to hegemony and consensualism. It is possible therefore to theorise that broadcasting organisations which to an unusual extent are faced with Government manipulation and threats to reduce their 'autonomy' feel that their only salvation is to go to excessive lengths to win support from, and take a place within, the wider membership of the establishment. A demonstrated commitment to the unity of the State as a whole and its political ideologies and forces, is the alternative to commitment to one single element in that combination. Over-attachment to Governments can destroy the broadcasting institution's credibility and its capacity to survive. The ABC was reasserting the principle governing all broadcasting institutions in which as Smith says:

There seemed to be no intelligent alternative to making broadcasting draw its fundamental title from the state; the question was how to find a point of editorial control over the whole content which would satisfy the whole political spectrum of the nation.25

Further:

the broadcaster cannot place himself in permanent political jeopardy - but the terms in which he can rescue himself from this are profoundly related to the totality of the dominant beliefs of the society he is serving.26

25. Smith, Shadow, p.43.

A Speculative Comment

It can, of course, be argued that the ABC's independent news service brought with it many 'benefits', despite its consensualism. It provided an alternative source of news for the Australian public to that of the press and commercial stations and thus enabled listeners to make some kind of comparison between sets of 'facts'. Some would say the more varied the sources of news available, the better a community is served. It gave country listeners a service of news, particularly of local events, which was superior to anything they had had before. It gave the public some news items which the press had either missed or ignored. It provided a satisfactory form of employment for many ex-newspaper journalists who, for various reasons, were dissatisfied with the way the major newspapers operated. It enabled the ABC to survive and prosper so that it could, in many diverse ways, help answer "the need to create a literate, socially conscious, adaptable and active society". In other words, it enabled the ABC to fulfil its wider 'role' in society.

The latter point raises broader issues about the purpose of the ABC and its role in the community which it is not the intention of this thesis to explore. There is some validity in the rest, but they do not affect the wider conclusions reached which relate to the reasons why the ABC adopted such a conservative news style, and the effect of such an approach.

When one talks about the possibility of change or reform in ABC news, it is common to hear the view expressed that no change is possible because all that has happened to mould the service stems from the nature of the 1946 legislation itself. However, it cannot be claimed

that the Act of 1946 was so definitive and restrictive that no other type of news service could have eventuated, and that therefore changes are difficult or impossible. The Commission policy of 1946 has been far more influential in shaping news content than the legislation.

The one restrictive effect of the Act has been the ban on other internal sources of news within Australia. This has meant a drain on and a dispersal of resources so that the Commission is in a position to cover and be kept aware of news happenings. It has had the result of prohibiting Commission use of the one agency service in Australia - that of AAP from Canberra. There is still no Australia-wide agency cover. Certainly the lack of an agency service, such as utilised by overseas broadcasting organisations has forced the Commission to engage more staff and spread them more widely than other broadcasters have had to do. It means the Commission has no immediate agency alert to 'spot' news of the unexpected kind, which the BBC, for example, has. 28 But the ABC, like the BBC, now is an established part of the media network in Australia. It is advised by all groups and organisations within the community of events in which they are concerned. It is on every press release list. It has 'roundsmen' who keep abreast of upcoming events in their specialist areas. This means that not only does it not have such a need for press or agency sources that it once had, but the lack of an agency service is no longer an excuse for its failure to be selective in the items it chooses to cover. If it were more selective, items could be covered at greater length and in a more informational fashion. It could also lead to a reassessment of the thirty-three year old conception that only fifteen minute segments or less are suitable for news. The widespread coverage that the ABC embarked upon in 1946

28. As a safeguard against missing unscheduled 'spot' news, ABC news staff anxiously scan each edition of the newspapers, monitor commercial radio bulletins and listen to the police waveband.
was not essentially related to the 1946 Act, as we have seen, but more to the role conceptions of ABC journalists. There would, in the writer's view, be nothing to prevent paying more attention to the pre-scheduled and non-scheduled type of news items, thus causing beneficial changes in work patterns which are now geared heavily to the un-scheduled variety, with resultant shallowness and superficiality. Newspaper competition is no longer a real factor within the newsroom.

This thesis has argued at two levels. On one hand, it has drawn attention to the reasons for, and the degree of, commitment to consensual values and hegemony. On the other, it has maintained that greater emphasis on 'professionalism' in the presentation of news, using the techniques of voice report particularly, would have lessened this attachment. It has been noted that in the BBC, for example, the collapse of Reithian values was brought about by the need the new breed of reporters felt for the exploration of new and previously unreported issues. Similarly Boyerism was undermined by the demand of the TV professionals to make more use of the filming facilities at their disposal.

Yet it must be conceded that professionalism of the kind the ABC refused to countenance in the period to 1961 - the introduction of a more interpretive style of reporting, based on fewer items, greater selectivity, a less rigid interpretation of 'comment' and 'colour' - could not in itself have brought any marked change in ABC support for hegemony. ABC journalists would still have been basically wedded to their own establishment-oriented version of reality, in much the same way as the other media. The possibility of 'disturbing' the world view of the audience, by putting forward alternative versions of reality, thus offering opportunities for opinion changing, would still, in the Australian environment of the 'forties and 'fifties, have been slim.
What we have tried to show is that professionals, can, even though they are part of the consensual apparatus of the State, still stand between the simple 'reflective' method of reporting, and the public, can interfere with simple consensual reproduction, and instead introduce differences in emphasis and can question central social concepts to varying degrees. As far as the ABC is concerned, it is simply argued that the professional news broadcaster and the more interpretive report could have simply lessened the undue attachment of the ABC to central consensualist ideas, by providing additional 'depth' to the simple statements emanating from approved institutional sources.

Professionalism therefore is not the sole answer to the problem of consensual attachment as it affects the ABC. The BBC is still accused of favouring the establishment to the detriment of minorities, despite its professionalism. Professionalism can at times insist that the broadcasting institution widen its perception of audience and insist on acting to meet audience needs, as did the ABC TV news staff in the early years of TV news. But on the other hand, as Burns points out, professionalism can also be inward looking and lead to a lack of appreciation of audience requirements. It can become a closed artistic world.

A new professionalism in both ABC radio and TV news is trying to bring changes to the pattern of consensual attachment. Radio newsmen are increasingly unhappy about the fact that radio news has changed so little in its approach to Australian coverage, and in TV news there is unrest at the degree of control still exercised by radio news which is heavily centered on 'traditional' news policy.

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29. Oakley says: "I suggest that even today the radio news set up has not changed greatly (voice pieces excepted) from what Hamilton found on his arrival". Letter from Oakley, 20 July 1976.
Sigelman points out that commitment to an organisation's goals or to policy norms can be disrupted by emerging professionalism. This phenomenon calls for greater looseness in organisational structure.

The professional holds dual citizenship. He is to a greater or lesser extent committed to the methods and goals of both his organisation and his profession. This duality presents a potential for conflict which will be actualized when there is tension between organizational and professional standards.  

Sigelman claims that professionals require greater autonomy of action, leaving organisation leaders in a quandary.

But even if, for this reason, ABC policy control based on hegemony was weakened, and an 'in depth' approach to reporting in news became the norm, ABC might shake off some of its inherent and unique conservative tendencies, but would still be in the position faced by the BBC and other broadcasting organisations overseas - that of being accused of legitimising the system and of being elitist. In other words the major issues which have elicited calls for media reform because of declining credibility would still remain.

The dangers of professionalism becoming inward-looking in the ABC would seem to be real. We have noted that the early impetus to the independent news service was the Commission's belief in the value it represented to country people. The response showed this was a valid assumption. Later, however, under Hamilton, elitist reaction became predominantly important, and remains so to many executives to this day, despite the vague adherence of some news staff to populist ideas of audience. Feedback from the public is limited.

Mayer has recently analysed the necessity and prospects for media reform in Australia, pointing out the important role of media controllers who:

30. Sigelman, "Reporting the News", p.141.
actively shape our image of what we are, what we might be and what the cost of achieving change might be. They shape our self-image, our relations with the mighty, and to the deprived, and increasingly our perception of what we need and what, in consumer terms, we just 'must' have.31

He draws attention to "the citizens' or public right to information and to its effective transmission",32 in similar terms to Nordenstreng.

The path to reform he believes, is a two way process. It depends first on an increasingly obvious demand from the public for more information about how the media operates, not only asking why only one particular version of reality is made available, but asking who was responsible for the decision. He suggests that the public have a right to diverse and antagonistic information. Secondly, he argues for the encouragement by the media of institutional feedback, with newsmen explaining more about themselves and their work, thus obtaining more consumer support. An allied development might be one in which journalists' attitude to their work and their image could alter and cause changes within the media. Thus, a more investigative approach could help win back support. These ideas are particularly relevant to the ABC which, Mayer believes, must have organised support if it is to become bolder. Professionals therefore must see the need for audience support and be aware of the reasons for public concern. There must be a joint professional/concerned audience approach to the problems such as consensualism which is one of the main reasons for the declining credibility.

Among the higher educated at least, there has been a rapid decline in belief in both the possibility and desirability of 'objectivity' and of 'getting the facts' and an increasing knowledge on the part of even those who wish to shore up authorities that these lie and lie a lot.33

Smith is also relevant here. He argues that the consensual values on which broadcasting institutions were based are now being increasingly questioned by their audiences. In the ABC's case, it is likely that some of these beliefs around which news policy centered in the 'forties and 'fifties are no longer held by many politicians. Organised audience feedback and a growing institutional and professional recognition of the need to encourage this could have the twin virtues of causing the Commission to reappraise the survivalist guidelines for the news service and enable it to reach a new understanding with its journalists because of this.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Primary
II. Theses
III. Government and Statutory Authorities
IV. Books
V. Articles, chapters in books, monographs.

For Symposia etc. the full title of the work is under IV, specific chapters are, with short title, under V.

I. Primary

ABC Archives

(i) Files. ABC Archives contain some early material 1932-1948, which is still being prepared for transfer to Australian Archives. Files were consulted under two headings:

R17. General Managers' Correspondence
R32. Commission Correspondence.

(ii) Tapes. Taped recordings made with former ABC staff by ABC Archives. Recordings used were those of:

E.R. Dawes
M.F. Dixon
R.H. Morrison
J.G.J. Oakley

Files are located at 164 William St., City. The Archives Office itself is in the ABC Building, Forbes St., Darlinghurst, Sydney, and tapes are also located in this building.

Australian Archives. Former ABC files, now held by Australian Archives. Those consulted were under the following headings:

SP286 "General Correspondence from News Department"
SP314 "General Correspondence from ABC Central Registry"
SP341 "General Correspondence from Programme Department"
SP613 "General Correspondence from ABC Central Registry"
SP724 "General Correspondence from ABC Central Registry"

These files are located at the repository, 76 Miller Road, Villawood, Sydney. Applications to see any ABC archival material should be addressed in the first instance to Senior Archivist N.S.W., Australian Archives, Commonwealth Centre, Chifley Square. In the case of files more recent than 1947, the Senior Archivist will refer the enquirer to the ABC Archivist, Miss Kelly. This is in accordance with the 30 year access rule applied to Australian Government records.
Tapes

Interview with Keith Fraser, 25 September and 28 November 1975.
Interview with M.F. Dixon, 13 January 1976.
Interview with Sir Charles Moses, 3 February 1976.
Interview with Ivan Chapman, 9 October 1976.

All tapes are in the possession of the writer.

Letters

From M.F. Dixon to the writer dated 26 June 1976, 31 August 1976,
From J. Oakley to the writer dated 20 July 1976, 25 August 1976,
28 October 1976.
From E. Speedy to the writer dated 16 June 1977.
From V. Black to the writer dated 8 July 1977.

Personal letters received by M.F. Dixon from Charles Moses 1938-41.
In Dixon's possession.

Also examined were other miscellaneous letters and articles written
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(they have no addresses) drawing attention to his alleged
mistreatment by the ABC.

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Hamilton, W.S., "Responsibility in the Public Sector of Broad-
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15/1/6 News Editors' Conferences.
SEA. South-east Asian Establishment.
29/1/5 Radio Australia - Relations with Dept. of External Affairs

Staff File. W.S. Hamilton.

These are held at current Central ABC Registry, Broadcast House, 145-147 Elizabeth Street, Sydney. Enquiries about them should go to ABC Archivist Miss Kelly.

Internal News Division Publications as follows:
W.S. Hamilton, ABC News Service Style Notes (undated).
K. Fraser, News Directive, August 1972.
K. Fraser, Style Notes, September 1972.

Of the above, only the Fraser Directives and Style Notes and the Denning Cadet Manual are still in current use within the Division. Enquiries about them should be made to the Division. No file copies of the Hamilton material remain within the Division. Some of the older ABC journalists however might still retain theirs. The writer's copies are from his own personal files. He intends to donate copies to the ABC Archives Section, and any enquiries regarding them should be directed in future to the Archivist, Miss Kelly.

II. Theses


III. Government and Statutory Authority

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# APPENDIX A

**Occupants and official designations of heads of the ABC News Service**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupant</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.F. Dixon</td>
<td>Federal News Editor</td>
<td>August 1936-March 1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.F. Dixon</td>
<td>Chief News Editor</td>
<td>March 1943-November 1945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*M.F. Dixon</td>
<td>Federal Director of News</td>
<td>November 1945-May 1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**L.C. Cotton</td>
<td>National News Editor</td>
<td>April 1946-April 1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.S. Hamilton</td>
<td>Editor-in-Chief</td>
<td>August 1949-August 1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***W.S. Hamilton</td>
<td>Controller, News Services</td>
<td>August 1959-July 1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.G.J. Oakley</td>
<td>Controller, News Services</td>
<td>October 1965-February 1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Fraser</td>
<td>Controller, News Services</td>
<td>February 1968-January 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.G. Handley</td>
<td>Controller, News Services</td>
<td>February 1977-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*From May 1949, Dixon was given the post of Federal News Executive, a position which carried no editorial responsibility. He remained in this position until his retirement in May 1950.

**From the date of Cotton's appointment as National News Editor, he and Dixon effectively shared control of the News Department. Cotton took extended sick leave from January 1949 and did not return to the ABC.

** In August 1959, the News Department was elevated to Division status. Heads of Divisions are designated Controllers.
**APPENDIX B**

### Summary of Agreements for Supply of Australian News

#### Agreements and Disputes

**Agreement of 1.10.32**

Between the ABC and the ABC for 3 years. Resulting from conference held 30.9.32. It applied to Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane only. The other States to continue "as before". No one was clear what the arrangements were "before". Apparently S.A. could take anything from morning press but could not broadcast it because of the arrangement for evening papers permitted before 1945. Queensland had four sessions of 7 mins. each per day. S.A. had 5 mins in morning, 10 mins. at midday, and 5 mins. at night. Tasmania had three sessions of 10 mins each. This was the original "gentleman's agreement". It is unlikely that some of the scheduled times were ever adhered to.

The years 1932-38

The agreement was progressively and unilaterally changed by the ABC in response to what it considered to be breaches of the agreement in respect of news supplied to the commercial stations. No special step-by-step record of these changes exist, but by 11.4.35 it is known the Schedules had been altered as in next column.

On 1.10.35 ABC began new national evening bulletin, in contravention of the agreement. ABC opposed this strenuously.

Following the breakdown of talks with the ABC in Melbourne on 3.10.35 the ABC continued its bulletins as at that time, excepting the early evening bulletin which reverted to the originally agreed time. ABC argued that 1932 agreement had never been precise and terms never fully agreed upon.

ABC also argued: (1) Parl. has recognised ABC's right to broadcast an adequate news service; (2) Newspaper service has not been satisfactory, particularly for country areas. (iii) There are continuing breaches by commercial stations.

The talks of 23, 24 Jan. 1936 broke down over the question of the time of the early evening broadcast, though tentative agreement was reached about other Schedule alterations.

#### Schedule

1. Not before 0750, 5 mins. only from morning papers.
2. Between 1000 and 1100. Repeat of previous bulletin. 5 mins. only (Both transmitters)
3. Between 1300 and 1400. 5 mins. only, being additional news from morning papers
4. Between 1950 and 2000. 5 mins. only from evening papers
5. Between 2200 and 2230. Repeat of previous bulletin, 5 mins. only.

#### Conditions

No supplementary services beyond "routine and sporting news"

Supreme natural events can be broadcast 20 times p.a., not to include descriptive events.

No news to be supplied to commercial stations at hours or in quantities which would give them an advantage

#### Payment

£200 p.a.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedule alterations to Schedule by 11.4.35</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. In Sydney, 1st bulletin begins 0709 (not 0750). 6 mins duration (not 5).</td>
<td>No supplementary services beyond &quot;routine and sporting news&quot;</td>
<td>£200 p.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In Sydney, 2nd bulletin begins 0855 (not 1000).</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. In Melbourne, 2nd bulletin begins 0951 (not 1000).</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. First midday news in Melbourne begins 1220 (not 1300).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Second midday news in Sydney at 1400 (instead of before 1400)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. First midday bulletin at 1300 in Sydney included news from evening papers (not morning papers only as stipulated).</td>
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</table>

Further ABC Alterations to Schedule as at 1.10.35

1. First evening news at 1930 approx at end of overseas bulletin beginning 1915 (instead of 1950). This news put back to 1933 from 26.10.35.
2. 2nd morning bulletin at 0755 (changed from 0855).
The Agreement of 1 July 1938

Negotiations on basis of Jan 1936 talks continued sporadically until 1938. Then a new agreement was finally arrived at verbally but never signed. The major points in it became effective from 1 July 1938. Agreement had to be effective for 2 years.

Conditions
Regional to broadcast £200 p.a.
local news not more than twice a day, two minutes maximum per item.
Exemptions are weather, stock markets, sporting events and events of national importance and disasters, up to a maximum of 25 times a year, and descriptive events such as elections, air-aces, weddings, funerals, processes, congresses and other broadcasts direct from the spot. ABC to broadcast above as and when it sees fit.
Commercial stations subject to no more advantageous conditions

Schedule weekdays from July 1938

1. Not before 0645. 5 mins. only, from morning papers
2. At or about 0800. 5 mins. only, repeat of earlier bulletin.
3. Between 1030 and 1130, but not before 1100 if possible. 5 mins. only. Repeat of earlier bulletin.
4. Not before 1255, except Adelaide where not before 1300 local time. Not more than 5 mins. in NSW only, 2 mins. from current evening papers, balance from morning papers.
5. Not before 1930, except Adelaide where not before 1900 local time. 5 mins. only, from evening papers.
6. Late evening bulletin at time determined by ABC. 5 mins. only, repeating 1950 news. Tasmania to take news from Melbourne

Schedule Sundays

1. Not before 0700 relayed all States, except those unable to prepare news from own local papers.

The Years 1938-39

There was disagreement over ABC’s right to collect its own news on Sunday evenings when there were no papers. ABC continued to press for amendments allowing this. At this time ABC was broadcasting local news collected by itself on Sundays at 1850 and 2045 (together with overseas news from its own cable sources).

In Jan 1939 ABC appeared to agree with the contention that ABC should collect own news on Sundays, had the right to check newspaper items occasionally and to update items. The appointment of Denning to Canberra in May 1939 upset the apparent agreement and caused newspapers to demand that ABC agree not to supplement the news. ABC became adamant that it needed this right.

Agreement of 4.9.39

3.9.39 Agreement between ABC, Federation of Commercial Broadcasting Stations, P&G’s Dept. and Army Headquarters. Commercials to relay two of the ABC’s main bulletins. ABC acted in accordance with Government’s request. Newspapers protested at lack of consultation, particularly at ABC moving evening news forward thus breaching ‘agreement’.

Changes to Schedule 7.9.39

First evening news 1910 following BBC news (formerly 1930).

From 14.9.39, this session reverted to 1930.

The sessions of news at 0645, 1250, 1900 and 2350 to be relayed to commercial stations on request.

Agreement of 18.9.39

Between ABC and ANC, Federation of Commercial Broadcasting Stations, P&G’s Dept. and Army Headquarters.

Changes to Schedule 25.9.39

a. Additional mid-morning bulletin not before 1000 (repeat of earlier news) 5 mins. only.
b. Additional midday bulletin 1330. 5 mins. only (same conditions as for 1230).
c. Main evening bulletin 1910. From evening papers and ABC Canberra office. 5 mins only.
d. Additional late evening bulletin First not before 2200, repeating 1910 news plus late Canberra material. Second after 2300, same as above. Both 5 mins. only.

Changes to Schedule 7.9.39

First evening news 1910, following BBC news (formerly 1930).

From 14.9.39, this session reverted to 1930.

The sessions of news at 0645, 1250, 1900 and 2350 to be relayed to commercial stations on request.

Conditions
Government acting in accordance with National Security Regulations.

Changes to Schedule 25.9.39

ANC agrees not to press objection to ABC’s Canberra roundsmen. ABC agrees not to extend news-gathering activities by appointment of additional news staff as ‘roundsmen’. No more commercial relays.
The Years 1939-42

ABC gave ANC notice of termination of agreement on 12.4.40 but it was extended by mutual agreement, month by month. Commission insisted that it should be free to supplement present services. ABC cited Ullswater Committee Report of 1936 (UK) which said BBC should have freedom of choice in news sources.

On 17.12.41 Govt. instructed ABC to alter midday bulletin times. ANC was not consulted, and protested.

Changes in Schedule 18.12.41

a. First midday bulletin to total 20 mins made up of:
   (i) 1230 o'keas news
   (ii) 1240 Canberra Statement
   (iii) 1245 Local news.

b. Second middle bulletin to comprise:
   (i) 1330 o'keas news
   (ii) 1340 Canberra Statement
   (iii) 1345 Local news.

Both o'keas and Canberra segments to be relayed.

c. Major evening bulletin to comprise:
   (i) 1900 o'keas news
   (ii) 1910 Canberra Statement
   (iii) 1915 Local news.

Changes in Schedule as at 16.1.42

Additional Canberra statements to be included in news at 0745 and 2200.

Canberra Statement at 1910 to be 8 mins. in duration.

Agreement of 11.2.42 Between ABC and Federation of Commercial Broadcasting Stations.

Commercials to take 0745, 1230, and 1900 Australian news bulletins. Could take o'keas news as well if they desired. Operated from 16.2.42.

Changes in Schedule 16.2.42

Australian news to precede o'keas news services at 0745, 1230 and 1900.

Full Schedule of Canberra bulletins from 16.2.42 (relayed and unrelayed) as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Relayed</th>
<th>Unrelayed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0745-0750</td>
<td>1230-1235</td>
<td>1330-1335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000-1908</td>
<td>2215-2225</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundays</td>
<td>0700-0708</td>
<td>2215-2225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Changes in Schedule 16.2.42

Commercials to get relayed ABC bulletins free of charge.
APPENDIX C
Summary of Agreements for Supply of Overseas News

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement of 1 July 1932</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>200 words daily in each State, being brief summaries of most important cable news.</td>
<td>Not to be used until one hour after publication in the press.</td>
<td>£1,251 p.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There was no arrangement about times of bulletins.</td>
<td>There was no restriction on use of other overseas sources of news by ABC.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cable news was read at the same time as local news (See Appendix B)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Years 1932-38

On 24 May 1935 ABC was advised that Australian Associated Press (AAP) had now been registered and would take over from Sun-Herald and APA, their contractual obligations. This was done from 18 September 1935. Original agreement continued in force after 30 June 1935, but still unsigned.

From 1935 onwards ABC wanted more cable news. At some time late in that year (date unknown) the Government had denied it permission to use Transocean.

In 1937 ABC began its own weekend cable service from London.

By February 1938, AAP claimed ABC was using in each State approx. 700 words daily of AAP matter.

AAP claimed that agreement was quite specific and meant overseas news as printed. ABC was using 15 times more than permitted. ABC claimed agreement referred to cabled words only which had to be "padded".

Discussion in 1938 over new agreement mainly centred on question of price for more AAP wordage, and disagreement over length of certain bulletins.

ABC now wanted access to proofs of AAP material as received, rather than take material from press, claiming some could be "suppressed" by newspapers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedule</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadcast Times by 1935</td>
<td>From 1 October 1935 major evening overseas bulletin began at 1915, consisting of BOW and Transocean news only.</td>
<td>As at October 1935, the following separate overseas bulletins were programmed in Sydney.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0805-0810 BOW news</td>
<td>1. 0805-0810 BOW news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1000-1010 Transocean news</td>
<td>2. 1000-1010 Transocean news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1305-1308 Overseas news, all sources</td>
<td>3. 1305-1308 Overseas news, all sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1405-1408 Overseas news, all sources</td>
<td>4. 1405-1408 Overseas news, all sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1915-1925 Overseas news, all sources</td>
<td>5. 1915-1925 Overseas news, all sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(from 20 November 1935 extended to 1930)</td>
<td>(from 20 November 1935 extended to 1930)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2220-2225 BOW news</td>
<td>6. 2237-2240 Overseas news, all sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Melbourne, the schedule was as follows:</td>
<td>In Melbourne, the schedule was as follows:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1005-1010 BOW news</td>
<td>1. 1005-1010 BOW news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1915-1925 Overseas news, all sources</td>
<td>2. 1915-1925 Overseas news, all sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2220-2225 BOW news</td>
<td>3. 2220-2225 BOW news</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Agreement of 7 September 1938

Between ABC and AAP for 2 years as from 1 September 1938. This became effective but was never signed and there was some dispute as to the wording of this agreement. ABC insisted on including its own cable news and BOW news in Sunday evening broadcasts.

Agreed Schedule - Weekdays
1. Not before 0645, 5 mins. only.
2. Not before 0800, 10 mins. only; no additional AAP matter.
3. Not before 1250. In Sydney only, not more than 3 mins. of new AAP matter. May be repeated between 1330 and 1400.
4. Not before 1915, 5 mins. only. May be repeated twice, the first not before 2055.

Schedule - Sundays
5. Not before 0800, 5 mins. only.
6. Not before 1000, repeat of early session.
7. Not before 1845, 5 mins only, repeat of early session. May be repeated not before 2030, and again not before 2200.

Conditions
When there are happenings of great importance ABC can broadcast a brief statement, such occasions to be no more than 24 times annually. AAP news not to be given to any other station. AAP not to give its news to other stations on more favourable terms than those for ABC. No more than 5 mins. in each session to be devoted to AAP matter.

Payment
£2500 p.a. for average use of 600 words daily of AAP matter. The words will be the no. of words broadcast, in conveying the intelligence of an AAP message whether or not the same words are used. Repeats not counted. AAP copy to be delivered by messenger. AAP matter not to be used before publication. AAP reserved right to offer service to commercial stations.

The Years 1938-39

During the 1938 Munich crisis AAP allowed ABC to use 1200 words' of cable news daily.

ABC became concerned at the more frequent use of "special correspondent" reports in press from o'seas, which were squeezing out some cable news.

In August 1939 AAP advised that its agreement and that with ANC could not be signed separately. They had to be signed together.

AAP had claimed rights of prohibiting BBC news rebroadcasts in Australia, because it held Australian rights to Reuters material they contained. This became a big issue after outbreak of war on 3 September 1939. AAP wanted it to permit BBC rebroadcasts. AAP agreed to do so free of charge, for one week only. However it was extended for several weeks.

Agreement of 4 September 1939

At the conference between ABC, commercial stations, PMG's Dept. and Army Headquarters, a new schedule was drawn up for o'seas news broadcasts. AAP was not represented (see also Appendix B). It was changed slightly after two days due to protests by Murdoch.

Schedule of BBC rebroadcasts
from 7 September 1939
0645 BBC news, 15 mins.
1615 BBC news, undefined duration
1900 BBC news, 10 mins.
2130 BBC news, 10 mins.
BBC news could be included in other o'seas bulletins.
The schedule was constantly being revised for several weeks.
The sessions of news at 0645 and 1900 to be relayed on Request to commercial stations (see Appendix B).
Agreement of 18 September 1939

Between ABC, commercial stations, ANC, AAP, Consolidated Press, PMC's Dept and Army Headquarters, to regularise arrangements of 4 September 1939 with newspaper approval. AAP wanted to withdraw its service from the ABC. ABC rejected this but was forced to accept fewer words for higher payment, in order to continue BBC rebroadcasts.

The Years 1939-42

Disputes began almost immediately about the broadcasting of BBC bulletins in full. The schedule limited most BBC rebroadcasts to 10 mins, thus cutting off the last 5-15 mins. Commercial stations began broadcasting some in full and ABC followed suit. ABC discontinued this following AAP protest, and assurance commercial stations would be brought into line.

AAP intimated BBC bulletins could be broadcast in full if there was increased payment. AAP and ABC argued as to who was responsible for truncated BBC broadcasts. ABC claimed BBC had right to permit Australian broadcasts, not AAP

On 14 December 1939, Govt. took issue out of hands of ABC, in order to decide legality of situation.

ABC wanted to end AAP agreement at this point, but Govt. would not permit this until situation clarified. ABC claimed it no longer needed AAP. It wanted no further hampering restrictions, and wanted to broadcast news while it was fresh. In March 1940, ABC was advised that the Govt. considered AAP had Australian rights to BBC bulletins.

Revised Schedule of 18 September 1939

1. Not before 0645. 10 mins. only. Rebroadcast of BBC, or items from AAP, Consolidated Press(CP) BOW and ABC.
3. Not before 1255. 5 mins. only. Repeat of AAP or CP material, plus additional BOW, BBC, ABC matter.
4. Not before 1330. 5 mins. only. Same as for 1255.
6. Not before 1900. 10 mins only. Rebroadcast of BBC news, or news from AAP, BOW, BBC and ABC.
7. Not before 2200. 5 mins only. Source AAP (but not new material) ABC, BBC and BOW.
8. After 2300. 5 mins only. Same as for 2200.

Conditions

No restriction on use by ABC of own overseas material.

ABC to use up to 200 cables words per day from AAP and CP. AAP cable flimies to be made available at half hourly intervals, but cannot be broadcast until after publication. ABC can broadcast up to 16 news flashes weekly, not more than 3 in one day. Can be used immediately or in first news session before publication. Commercial station permitted to rebroadcast BBC in accordance with ABC schedules. AAP and CP to get copies of ABC's own cabled material.

Payment

£3000 p.a. Any news flashes to be paid for at same rate as for 200 words.

Scheduled BBC Bulletins at 28 March 1940

1. 0650
2. 1615
3. 2130

The 0650 and 2130 bulletins ran to about 30 mins. on BBC Empire Service. ABC was limited to first 10 mins. 1615 bulletin was always broadcast in full.
Agreement of 15 March 1940
Between ABC and AAP, for right to rebroadcast BBC bulletins in full

Weekday Schedule of BBC Bulletins
From 10 April 1940 (all in full)
1. 0650
2. 1615
3. 2130
4. 2315

Sunday Schedule
As for weekdays.
From 5 May 1940, ABC also broadcast
1800 BBC bulletin, in line with commercials.

Change in Schedule 14 May 1940
From 14 May 1940, ABC broadcast an additional overseas news summary at 1055 for 5 mins. to also bring ABC into line with commercial stations.

On 17 December 1941 Govt. instructed ABC to alter midday bulletin times (see Appendix B)

Changes in Schedule 18 December 1941

1. First midday bulletin to total 20 mins made up of:
   (i) 1230 overseas news
   (ii) 1240 Canberra statement
   (iii) 1245 local news

2. Second midday bulletin to comprise:
   (i) 1330 overseas news
   (ii) 1340 Canberra statement
   (iii) 1345 local news.

Conditions
BBC bulletins to be broadcast in full.
ABC free to supplement BBC news with own cable service. AAP agreement of 1 July 1938 terminated.
AAP to provide news flashes of events of outstanding importance.

Payment
£3000 p.a. towards cost of news in BBC bulletins, half of which to be paid by commercial stations taking BBC broadcasts.

[Table]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekday Schedule of BBC Bulletins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From 10 April 1940 (all in full)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. 0650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 1615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 2130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 2315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BBC bulletins to be broadcast in full.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC free to supplement BBC news with own cable service. AAP agreement of 1 July 1938 terminated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAP to provide news flashes of events of outstanding importance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£3000 p.a. towards cost of news in BBC bulletins, half of which to be paid by commercial stations taking BBC broadcasts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX D

**MULTIPLE INTERESTS IN COMMERCIAL BROADCASTING STATIONS—1st NOVEMBER, 1935.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Station</th>
<th>License</th>
<th>Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd.</td>
<td>2AY Albury</td>
<td>Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd.</td>
<td>Holds licence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3BO Bendigo</td>
<td>Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd.</td>
<td>Holds licence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4PM Port Moreby</td>
<td>Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd.</td>
<td>Holds licence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4TO Townsville</td>
<td>Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd.</td>
<td>Holds licence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4CA Cairns</td>
<td>Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd.</td>
<td>Licence approved, but not yet issued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5GF Grafton</td>
<td>Grafton Broadcasting Co. Ltd.</td>
<td>Holds shares in licensed company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6GN Goulburn</td>
<td>Goulburn Broadcasting Co. Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£4,000 (1 share)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000 shares issued, of which Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd. or nominees hold 500. Registered office is in Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd. Sydney office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6SM Sydney</td>
<td>Catholic Broadcasting Co. Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£15,000 (1 share)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4,512 shares issued of which Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd. holds 500, and conducts technical services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3HA Hamilton</td>
<td>Western Province Radio Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£10,000 (1 share)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4,912 shares issued of which Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd. holds 1,000. E. T. Fink is one of four directors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7LA Launceston</td>
<td>Findley and Wills Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£5,000 (1 share)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000 shares issued. Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd. holds 500 of these and also have nominal holding of 2,500 of remaining 5,000. Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd. operates station for £800 per annum. E. T. Fink is one of four directors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6PR Perth</td>
<td>Nicholson's Ltd.</td>
<td>Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>operate station at Perth Radio for £50 per week, plus 20 per cent. value of advertising secured by Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd. agents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4WK Warwick</td>
<td>Warwick Broadcasting Co. Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>Shareholding details not yet available, but Manager—Announcer is Amalgamated Wireless (A/asia.) Ltd. appoints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3DB Melbourne</td>
<td>SDB Broadcasting Station Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£30,000—The Herald or its nominee holds all issued shares (£5,900)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4BK Brisbane</td>
<td>Brisbane Broadcasting Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£5,000 (1 share)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Queensland Newspapers Ltd. (Courier-Mail) or its nominees hold 1,802 of 2,103 issued shares. Directors—N. White, Managing Director, Queensland Newspapers Ltd., E. H. Macartney, Solicitor. Actual Herald interest in Queensland Newspapers Ltd. not known. Note.—Licence approved for Gympie, but not granted. Herald has 113,200 preference and 120,000 ordinary shares in Advertiser Newspapers Ltd. L. Dumas is Managing Director.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4AK Oakey</td>
<td>Brisbane Broadcasting Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£3,000 (1 share)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4GY Gympie</td>
<td>Brisbane Broadcasting Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£2,000 (1 share)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All issued shares (400) are held by nominees of Advertiser Newspapers Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5AD Adelaidio</td>
<td>Advertiser Newspapers Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£5,000 (1 share)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5MU Murray Bridge</td>
<td>Murray Bridge Broadcasting Co. Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£5,000 (1 share). All issued shares (400) are held by nominees of Advertiser Newspapers Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5PI Port Pirie</td>
<td>Midlands Broadcasting Co. Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£2,000 (1 share). All issued shares (820) are held by Advertiser Newspapers Ltd. or nominees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6ML Perth</td>
<td>West Australian Broadcasters Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£12,000 in 1 share of which 5,000 are held by West Australian Broadcasters Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6KA Katanning</td>
<td>West Australian Broadcasters Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£12,000 in 1 share of which 5,000 are held by West Australian Broadcasters Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6MD Merredin</td>
<td>West Australian Broadcasters Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£12,000 in 1 share of which 5,000 are held by West Australian Broadcasters Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6IX Perth</td>
<td>West Australian Newspapers Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital—£12,000 in 1 share of which 5,000 are held by West Australian Broadcasters Ltd.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Melbourne Heralds and associated publications
### Multiple Interests in Commercial Broadcasting Stations.—1st November, 1935—continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Licence</th>
<th>Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J. B. Chandler and Co.,</td>
<td>4BC Brisbane</td>
<td>J. B. Chandler &amp; Co. &amp;</td>
<td>Holds licence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td></td>
<td>Broadcasters (Aust.)</td>
<td>Nominal capital £15,000 (£1 shares)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4BH Brisbane</td>
<td>Ltd.</td>
<td>Chandler and nominees hold all (1,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ordinary shares, and 350 preference shares.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4GR Toowoomba</td>
<td>Gold Radio Service</td>
<td>Nominal capital £5,000 (£1 shares)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>Chandler and nominees hold 728 of 1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>shares issued. J. B. Chandler is a director.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4MB Maryborough</td>
<td>Maryborough Broadcasting</td>
<td>Nominal capital £5,000 (£1 shares)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Co. Ltd.</td>
<td>Chandler and nominees hold 1,560 of 1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4RO Rockhampton</td>
<td>Rockhampton Broadcasting</td>
<td>Nominal capital £10,000 (£1 shares)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Co. Ltd.</td>
<td>Chandler and nominees hold all issued shares.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Findlay Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
<td>License held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7BU Burnie</td>
<td>Findlay Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital £5,000 (£1 shares)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7HG Hobart</td>
<td>Commercial Broadcasters</td>
<td>Findlays hold 279 of 800 issued shares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7LA Launceston</td>
<td>Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital £5,000 (£1 shares)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Findlays hold 290 of 1,000 issued shares,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and 1,250 nominally of remaining 5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nominal capital £10,000 (£1 shares)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3AW Melbourne</td>
<td>The Vogue Broadcasting</td>
<td>Alland and Co. hold 2,000 of 8,000 issued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Co. Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>shares.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3HA Hamilton</td>
<td>Western Province Radio</td>
<td>Nominal capital £10,000 (£1 shares)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>Allan's holds 400 of 4,950 shares.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3HA Hamilton</td>
<td>Western Province Radio</td>
<td>Nominal capital £15,000 (£1 shares) A. Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>group (Symes) hold 1,750 of 4,950 issued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3AW Melbourne</td>
<td>The Vogue Broadcasting</td>
<td>Nominal capital £10,000 (£1 shares). A. Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Co. Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>group (Symes) hold 2,000 of 6,000 issued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3MA Mildura</td>
<td>Sunraysia Broadcasters</td>
<td>Nominal capital £9,000 (£1 shares). All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>issued shares (300 ordinary and 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3ES Horsham</td>
<td>Winmore Broadcasting</td>
<td>preference) held by New Sunraysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Co. Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>Daily Pty. Ltd. or nominees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3AK Melbourne</td>
<td>Melbourne Broadcasters</td>
<td>Nominal capital £3,000 (£1 shares). New</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>Sunraysia Daily Pty. Ltd. holds 935 of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7UV Ulverstone</td>
<td>Northern Tasmanian</td>
<td>1,328 issued shares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Broadcasters Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>Nominal capital £2,000 (£1 share). G. F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5DN Adelaide</td>
<td>Humo Broadcasters</td>
<td>Palmer and Harrison each holds 1,000 of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>2,000 issued shares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5RM Renmark</td>
<td>River Murray Broadcasters</td>
<td>Nominal capital £2,000 (£1 share). G. F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ltd.</td>
<td>Palmer and Harrison each holds 1,000 of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2HD Newcastle</td>
<td>Airways Broadcasting</td>
<td>2,000 issued shares</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Co.</td>
<td>Nominal capital £2,000 (£1 share). G. F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5KA Adelaide</td>
<td>Sport Radio Broadcasting</td>
<td>Palmer and Harrison each holds 1,000 of</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Co.</td>
<td>2,000 issued shares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2GB Sydney</td>
<td>Theosophical Broadcasting</td>
<td>Theosophical Broadcasting Station Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Station</td>
<td>Holds licence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5DN Adelaide</td>
<td>Humo Broadcasters</td>
<td>Nominal capital £20,000 (£1 share). Theoso</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pty. Ltd.</td>
<td>phical Broadcasting Station Ltd. and A.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2GZ Orange</td>
<td>Country Broadcasting</td>
<td>Bennett hold 7,000 of 12,405 issued shares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Services Ltd.</td>
<td>Holds licence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2ZX Narrabri</td>
<td>Country Broadcasting</td>
<td>Approval granted for issue of licence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Services Ltd.</td>
<td>Approval granted for issue of licence to</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Northern Broadcasters Ltd.</td>
<td>Country Broadcasting</td>
<td>Company to be formed</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2AD Armidale</td>
<td>Services Ltd.</td>
<td>Approval granted for issue of licence to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Country Broadcasting</td>
<td>Company to be formed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2LV Inverell</td>
<td>Services Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Services Ltd.</td>
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Source: CPD, 3 December 1935.
APPENDIX E

Three Possible News-Obtaining Schemes Suggested by Dixon to Moses
18 February 1936

In my opinion there are three courses open to the Commission in improving its news services. I will deal briefly with each one:

(1) Depend on the daily newspapers as at present for the bulk of the local, interstate and cable news, and supplement the local service in each capital city, where it was deemed necessary, by appointing a News Editor who would organise the collection of news from recognised sources such as government departments, weather bureau, police, etc. There would be a limit to the amount of additional news that could be collected in this way, but a "live" man could effect an appreciable improvement in the present volume of news available from the metropoli­tan papers, and there would be no restriction on the time of broadcasting such news. The Commission has so many thousands of listeners behind it that there should be no difficulty in securing the co-operation of the departments mentioned, in making news available at least as soon as it is released to the daily newspapers. The cost of this scheme would be small, and the Commission might consider undertaking it, with a view to working up its own extended service a year or two hence.

(2) Employ a News Editor and two or three experienced journalists in Sydney, Melbourne and any other capital city it was desired to cover, and collect the maximum amount of news possible, for broadcasting at specified times. The city and suburbs could be covered fairly well by telephone, but there would be no country coverage. To provide this it would be necessary to arrange for members of the staffs of newspapers in practically all country centres to telegraph direct to the News Editor any important items of news immediately they became available. This news would have to be paid for on a basis to be arranged, and there would also be the telegraphic charges to meet. I presume the Postmaster General would agree to transmit such messages at ordinary press rates. The cost of No.2 scheme would be considerably greater than No. 1.

(3) Appoint a News Editor and arrange to buy a service of city, country and interstate news from a recognised news agency such as Australian United Press, assuming it is willing to sell such a service at a reasonable price and without restriction as to the time when the news could be broadcast. At least one other journalist would be required in addition to the News Editor, to ensure that the news, which is flowing in during the greater part of the day and night, is prepared for broadcasting without undue delay. I am of opinion that if No.3 scheme were undertaken it would give the maximum amount of satisfaction at a limited cost. I assume, of course, that the News Agency would be willing to sell its service at a reasonable price. In that event a greater coverage would be assured than the Commission could hope for unless it employed a large staff of reporters, and the cost should be a great deal less. As an example, the "Daily Mercury" gets a very much better cover of news than it could hope for even if it maintained, say, three reporters in Sydney, but the cost is less than the cost of ONE reporter. It would be better for the Commission to pay £1000 per annum to a News Agency than maintain three additional reporters, whereas it would cost that amount to employ two experienced news gatherers in Sydney.
The cable news is largely a matter of policy for the Commission. I am not in a position to say what services are available outside of Australian Associated Press, but I have no doubt that if the Commission is prepared to pay the cost of an independent service, one could be arranged. It might be that if an arrangement were made with Australian United Press for a service of Australian news, that organisation would be willing to co-operate in arranging an independent cable service. Confidentially, I can say that all our papers are dissatisfied with the existing service (A.A.P.) and A.U.P. is seriously considering arranging its own service.

(Signed) M.F. Dixon
Maitland Daily Mercury
APPENDIX F

First Release of News in ABC Broadcasts
(20 August 1941)

The following list mentions some of the "first releases" of important Australian and Overseas news through the Commission's service, in 1940-1941. It is contained in memo from Dixon to Bearup, 20 August 1941, SP286, Bundle 6.

AUSTRALIAN NEWS

1940
11 January Finding of Flying Doctor near Cloncurry.
31 " Announcement by Prime Minister of proposed production of cars in Australia.
7 February Name of Rhodes Scholar for 1940
23 " Resignation of Minister for Customs (Mr Lawson).
2 March Corio by-election progress results.
3 " Death of Lieutenant-General Squires in Melbourne.
7 " Satisfactory basis for Coalition Ministry agreed upon.
8 " Death of Archbishop Kelly.
14 " Names of members of new Commonwealth Ministry.
20 " Statement re coal strike.
23 " Statement re coal strike.
26 April Statement re coal strike.
27 " Statement re coal strike.
28 " Statement re coal strike.
29 " Statement by Mr McEwen re Norway campaign.
2 May Result of conference of mining unions.
7 " Result of miners' meeting.
8 " Result of miners' voting.
9 " Restrictions on gas and electricity.
20 " Restrictions on gas and electricity.
31 " Passing of Motor Car Bill.
7 August Details of water restrictions.
10 " Tamworth by-election progress results.
13 " Air disaster at Canberra, in which 10 people were killed, with statements by Prime Minister and Mr Curtin.
20 " Announcement of date of Federal Elections.
29 " Mr Justice Evatt's resignation from Bench to contest Parliamentary seat.
7 September  Full list of nominations for Federal Elections.
         Croydon by-election progress results.
         Ryde by-election progress results.
         Arrival Australian air trainees in Canada.
         Crash of two R.A.A.F. planes near Albury.
         Full coverage of announcement by Prime Minister of conference between Party leaders.
7 October  Statements following above conference.
         Names of delegates to represent Australia at Delhi Conference.
         Important resolutions carried by Federal Labour Party.
         Progress of negotiations at Canberra for formation of National Government.
         Formation National War Council. Composition of same and brief statements.
         Appointment Major-General H.D. Wynter to Command of 9th Division of A.I.F.
         Names of new Cabinet members.
         Personnel of new War Cabinet.
3 November  Landing of British troops in Greece.
         Loss of American ship off Victorian coast.
         Import ban.
         Progress results Barwon and Kalgoorlie by-elections.
         Sinking of minesweeper off Victorian coast.
         Summary of Federal Budget.
         Prime Minister's denial Australian troops in Greece.
         Details of new Federal taxation plan.
         Sinking of two ships off Australian coast by enemy raider.
5 December  Settlement of crisis re Federal Budget.
         Extension of term of ABC Commissioners to 30 June.
         Australian forces in action in Middle East.
         Settlement of coal strike.

1941
4 January  Entrance of Australians into Bardia.
         Air Force accident at Narrandera.
         Ban on Jehovah's Witnesses.
         Arrival of Australian air trainees in Canada.
         Appointment of Mr S.J. McGibbon as Commonwealth Business and Financial representative abroad.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 February</td>
<td>Arrival of Australian Prime Minister in Middle East.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 March</td>
<td>Resignation of Admiral Sir Ragnar Colvin from Australian Naval Board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 March</td>
<td>Handing over of Dutch hospital ship to Australia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 April</td>
<td>Gasworks stopwork meeting and subsequent strike.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 May</td>
<td>State elections to be held 10 May.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 May</td>
<td>Identity of Australian troops in Greece.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 June</td>
<td>Completion of withdrawal of troops from Greece.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 July</td>
<td>Appointment of Sir Frederic Eggleston as Australian Minister to China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 July</td>
<td>Name of new Chinese Minister, Dr Hsu-Mo, to Australia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 August</td>
<td>Statement by Prime Minister regarding abolition of petrol cartel and taking control of petrol stocks and importation by Commonwealth Government.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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* * * * *

OVERSEAS NEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 January</td>
<td>Resignation of Mr Hore-Belisha and Lord Macmillan from Cabinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 February</td>
<td>&quot;Altmark&quot; incident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 March</td>
<td>Finland's agreement to Russia's peace terms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 April</td>
<td>Resignation of Daladier Government in France.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 May</td>
<td>Germany's invasion of Denmark.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 June</td>
<td>Result of House of Commons voting in which Government won by 281 to 200.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 June</td>
<td>Germany's invasion of Holland (not broadcast until next BBC session)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 June</td>
<td>Resignation of French Government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 June</td>
<td>Sinking of &quot;Niagara&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 October</td>
<td>British ship &quot;Ajax's&quot; sinking of three Italian destroyers (not broadcast until next BBC session)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 November</td>
<td>Further details received and full story given in our 7.45 a.m. session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 November</td>
<td>Italy's ultimatum to Greece (not broadcast until next BBC session)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 November</td>
<td>Landing of Australian troops in Greece.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 December</td>
<td>Capture of &quot;Side Barrani&quot; (not broadcast until next BBC session). Dealt with at length in our 7.45 a.m. session.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1941
22 January
Fall of Tubruk.
Withdrawal of British forces from Benghazi.

4 April
Outbreak of war between Germany and Yugoslavia.

6 "

13 May
Hess's landing in Scotland.

25 "
Sinking of H.M.A.S. "Hood" (not broadcast until next BBC session).

19 June
Pact between Germany and Turkey.

22 "
War between Germany and Russia.
APPENDIX G

OBJECTIVES OF THE ANC, 23 JANUARY 1936
Quoted in McCay, Evidence, Gibson Committee, 20 October 1941, p.307

1. Not denying nor opposing the Commission's right to broadcast a service of news. Affirming that such a denial or opposition has never been expressed or implied.

2. Recognizing particularly the needs of listeners in remote or inaccessible regions.

3. Prepared to restore the friendly relations and practical working arrangement with the Commission which existed for years up to October last.

4. Not abating their astonishment and resentment caused by the unfounded statements in the Commission's ultimatum of 12th November, but prepared to sink that aspect in the public interest.

5. Maintaining the right of the newspapers to control the dissemination of the news gathered by their own far-reaching and costly organizations.

6. Determined the resist the broadcasting of their property - i.e., the newspapers' news - at times and in ways unfair and injurious to their legitimate rights.

7. Remembering that even up to the conversation at the Commission's rooms in Melbourne on 3rd October, the Commission had expressed satisfaction with the news service except as to certain times for broadcasting.

8. Re-affirming that no agreement was reached at that meeting nor during subsequent discussions by representatives of the respective organizations, and that no interstate newspaper delegates returned home satisfied that agreement had been reached.

9. Repudiating as baseless and unjustifiable any suggestions of monopolistic objectives.

10. Ready to apply all possible checks and controls to B class broadcasting, but not to accept impossible responsibilities.

11. Rejecting unworthy suggestions of bad faith in the newspapers' repeated offers to confer.

12. Willingness to pass over many pin-points of controversy rather than provoke further acrimony by quashing them.

13. Reserving absolutely the right of the press to comment on the conduct of all public utilities, and declining to allow resentments felt by members of the Commission against criticism to be factors in determining matters of broad national policy.

14. Desiring without reserve, except as to vital principles, to discuss and adjust details in a spirit of honest friendship towards the great national implement of broadcasting.
APPENDIX H

WINKLER'S "STUNT"

Memo from Warren Denning (Federal Parliamentary Correspondent, of the ABC, Press Gallery, Parliament House, Canberra) to Mr Dixon. (dated 27 August 1941) - in SP286, Bundle 6.

Last night there was a considerable amount of manoeuvring inside the Government as a result of the political position that had developed during the past few days.

The possibility seriously developed of Mr Menzies being asked to resign the Prime Ministership in favor of another UAP or a Country Party Prime Minister, in the expectation that another such Prime Minister would be acceptable to the Labor Party and avert the threatening crisis.

The pro-Menziesites were very busy trying to establish the fact that the Labor Party wanted the Government out of office and was not prepared to support any (non-Labor) Prime Minister.

From the viewpoint of immediate politics within the Cabinet, the effect of establishing this viewpoint would have been to weaken any move to displace Mr Menzies.

Shortly before 9.30 p.m. Mr J. Winkler, who was acting as the Prime Minister's publicity officer in the temporary absence of Mr Dawson, came to me and said he wanted me to work a "stunt"; that I should broadcast a story saying the Labor Party would not support any non-Labor Prime Minister; the idea being that Mr Menzies would contrive to have Ministers "innocently" gathered around the wireless in his room, and possibly be influenced by this public indication of the Labor Party's attitude.

I told Mr Winkler that apart from any other consideration, we had just missed one news session, and there would not be another until 11.15.

Then he suggested that we should put a special news session on the air at ten o'clock containing this story.

I told him I did not think there was the slightest possibility of our being able to do this, for purely mechanical reasons apart altogether from other considerations.

However, as the matter was potentially a difficult one, I thought I should telephone and consult you, which I did, and wherein you confirmed for me that we would not do such a thing.

I consequently informed Mr Winkler that we could not arrange a special news session.

However, in the course of these discussions, I could not overlook the fact that important news had been conveyed to me which, if properly confirmed and substantiated, was of a character that our listeners were entitled to know.
I had been shown by Mr Winkler the notes of an interview which he had just had with Mr Curtin at Mr Menzies' behest, and in which Mr Curtin said categorically that the Labor Party would not support any other non-Labor Prime Minister.

So that I might have entirely independent corroboration, I then interviewed the deputy leader of the Labor Party, Mr Forde, who did in fact confirm the Labor Party's refusal to make Mr Menzies the scapegoat. Mr Forde is the "Labor member" referred to in the item attached.

I considered that the information which had come to me in the course of these talks should be used, and for 11.15 I wrote a national item the text of which is attached.

In fact the Cabinet meeting had adjourned for the night before this item was used, and it could have had no influence on the immediate Cabinet position.

(Signed) Warren Denning

Ps. It should be clear that Winkler was the intermediary throughout and that I had no direct contact with Mr Menzies on this particular matter.
Extract from 11.15 p.m. News - 26/8/41

The Commission's Federal Roundsman reports from Canberra that the political position is still in a state of high tension following the Labor Party's rejection of the Prime Minister's proposal for an all-Party Government.

In rejecting the proposal and asking Mr Menzies to resign his Commission, the Labor Party has passed the responsibility back to Mr Menzies of deciding the next move. Cabinet sat again to-night, but there is no indication that a solution of the political problem has been found. It is generally assumed, however, that at least the Government will refuse the Labor request for the Government's resignation.

Some efforts are being made to-night to induce Mr Menzies to resign from the Prime Ministership. These are based on the belief that the Labor Party would be prepared to see the present Government carry on if there were another Prime Minister.

The Roundsman says, however, that Labor spokesmen indicated to-night that their objection is to the Government as a whole, and that they are no more prepared to support a Government under another Prime Minister than the present Government under Mr Menzies. One Labor member said the Labor Party had no desire to make Mr Menzies the scapegoat in this difficult Parliamentary situation.

There is no authoritative indication to-night of what course the Labor Party will take if the Government refuses to resign. Some Labor members think there should be an immediate move in the House, but the concensus of opinion seems to be in the direction of withholding a serious challenge until the Budget is brought down.
APPENDIX J

THE SPENDER/WARD/FADDEN AFFAIR

Memo From M.F. Dixon
To: The Acting General Manager
Dated 2nd February 1942.

WEEK-END HAPPENINGS:

Here is a summary of what happened over the week-end concerning our broadcasting of statements issued by Messrs Ward, Cameron, Spender, Menzies, Fadden and Ashley.

About 9.45 on Saturday night Mr Hamilton telephoned me from Canberra to say that he had received from Melbourne statements issued by Mr Ward, replying to Mr Spender, and Senator Cameron, replying to Mr Menzies. (Mr Spender's statement had appeared in the press on Friday and Mr Menzies' statement had been made in a commercial broadcast on Friday night. We did not use either statement.) Mr Hamilton read both statements to me. Mr Ward's statement was very strong. Hamilton said that Denning had told him that the statements had been issued earlier in the day and that Dr Evatt was inclined to be annoyed when we did not use them in the 7.10 p.m. Canberra session. Evatt then insisted on them being used at 10.15. I told Hamilton that in the circumstances he had no option but to use them. I told him to use them unless he heard from me to the contrary before 10.15. I then telephoned the Chairman of the Commission (Mr Cleary) but was told that he was not available. I then telephoned Mr Holman and told him of the circumstances. He agreed with me that we had no option but to use the statements. Accordingly they were used at 10.15 p.m. Hamilton then telephoned Mr Spender and asked him if he wished to reply. Spender thanked Hamilton for his courtesy, said he had heard the broadcast and intended to reply to it immediately. Spender then sent the reply to our news room at Market Street and a few lines were used in the State session at 11.20 p.m.

Shortly after 6.30 on Sunday morning, Mr McGill (who is doing our Australian news) telephoned me to ask what he should do with Spender's statement. He said it was a very strong reply to Mr Ward. He said he had not up till then referred it to the Censor. I told him to refer it to the Censor at once and unless he heard from me to the contrary, to use it in the first session, provided the Censor agreed. I then telephoned Mr Holman and told him of what had happened. I asked him to get Mr Boyer to listen to the first session and then make a decision as to whether the item should be rebroadcast at 9.10 a.m. A few minutes later Mr McGill telephoned me to say that the Censor (Mr White) had said that he wished to refer the item to the State Publicity Censor (Mr Rorke) and therefore asked if it could be held out of the first session. This was done. In the meantime Mr Holman took a copy of the item on the telephone and read it to Mr Boyer. Mr Boyer then telephoned me and said he thought the responsibility for the item should be placed on Canberra. He recommended, therefore, that I telephone Mr Denning in Melbourne and get a decision from him. I then asked Mr McGill to telephone Mr Denning and ask him whether or not the Government wished us to use Spender's statement. McGill told me at this time that the Censor had passed the statement. Shortly before 9 o'clock McGill telephoned to say that he had spoken to Denning and Denning urged that the statement should be used. He (Denning) had told Evatt the previous night that Ward's statement was bound to bring a reply. Evatt said he recognised this and did not mind the reply being used. Accordingly we broadcast Spender's reply to Ward, in full, at 9.10 a.m.
Shortly after lunch, Mr Denning telephoned me from Melbourne to discuss the whole position. He said he was very worried over the way things were shaping. I told him that as far as any future statements were concerned, we intended to put the responsibility on Dr Evatt and Mr Beasley. If they insisted on the statements being used, we would use them. We did not, however, wish to be placed in a position where they would not give a definite "yes" or "no" but leave the decision to us. Mr Denning said that he would take care that this did not happen. He said that Ward was preparing another strong statement in reply to Spender and that this would be broadcast from Canberra at 7.10 p.m.

During the afternoon, Hamilton telephoned me to say that he had received Ward's statement. He said it was particularly strong and he was worried over one portion of it which said that Spender had been instrumental, while Minister for the Army, in getting his (Spender's) brother-in-law - a man named "Hentze" - released from an internment camp. Hamilton said that he was under the impression that Spender had explained that this man was not his brother-in-law, and that he (Hamilton) was afraid that if we used it in the form in which it was issued, we might be sued by Spender. He said that the Chief Publicity Censor (Mr Bonney) was also doubtful about whether Hentze was Spender's brother-in-law, but was not prepared to take any responsibility in the matter. I advised Hamilton to telephone Denning and check upon that point. He said he would do this.

Hamilton also told me that Mr Fadden was issuing a statement, and, amongst other things, intended to attack the ABC for broadcasting political propaganda. He said that Senator Ashley's Secretary had told him about this and had stated that Senator Ashley intended to issue a defence of the Commission in reply to Fadden's attack. He said he had telephoned Menzies during the day and invited him to reply to Senator Cameron's attack of the previous night. He said Menzies was not in a very amiable mood and remarked that "it was just like the ABC to broadcast long statements from the Government and only a few lines from the Opposition". Hamilton said he told him that he was prepared to take a statement from him and use it. Menzies then gave him a brief statement in reply to Cameron. This was used at 7.10 p.m.

Still later in the afternoon, I telephoned you (Mr Bearup) and outlined what had happened up till then. About 6.45 p.m. Mr Hamilton telephoned me again and read Fadden's statement, which he had just received. He said he wished direction as to whether he should use the portion attacking the ABC for broadcasting political propaganda. I told him that I would refer the matter to you (Mr Bearup) and that he should also seek Denning's advice about it. (You will recall that I telephoned you and that you spoke to Mr Boyer and subsequently telephoned Mr Hamilton, advising him to use the statement. Later, you advised me of what you had done. I agreed that it was good policy to use Fadden's attack on the Commission).

Our 7.10 p.m. broadcast lasted for about 15 minutes and contained a summary of Ward's and Spender's early statements and Ward's latest reply to Spender. I noted that Hamilton had omitted direct reference to Spender's brother-in-law and had merely said that Spender had been instrumental in getting a man released from internment. Fadden's statement attacking the Commission was included in the broadcast. Later you telephoned me to say that Mr Boyer was pleased that we had used Fadden's statement.
At 10.45 p.m. Mr Hamilton telephoned me to ask if I had heard the 10.15 p.m. broadcast - I said I had not; I was tired and had gone to bed. He said the broadcast had lasted about 17 minutes and had included still another reply by Spender to Ward. He said he (Hamilton) had telephoned Spender after 7 o'clock and asked him if he wished to reply to Ward. Spender said he had not heard the 7.10 p.m. broadcast but thanked Hamilton for telling him about it. He asked Hamilton if we had broadcast a statement that he (Spender) had had his brother-in-law released from an internment camp. He said that if we had, he would issue a writ against the Commission. Hamilton told him we had not used this direct statement. Spender then dictated another reply to Ward, and, as already stated, this was broadcast in the 10.15 p.m. session. Hamilton said he had taken it upon himself, after consultation with Denning, to delete the allegation that the man released was Spender's brother-in-law. He said, however, that shortly after the 7.10 p.m. broadcast, Dr Evatt and Mr Beasley had telephoned the Chief Publicity Censor (Mr Bonney) and complained about the deletion of the name of Spender's alleged relative and had also expressed dissatisfaction with the reading of that session - they said it was gabbled. Hamilton then asked me what he should do about all the controversial statements on Monday morning. I told him to scrap them all unless he received a specific direction to use them. I said it did not matter if the 8 a.m. Canberra session ran to only 2 minutes - we would not rehash any of the Sunday night controversial matter unless directed to do so. I told him I would direct Mr McCarthy in Sydney that there was no reference to the controversy in the early morning Australian news from Sydney. This direction was carried out in both Sydney and Canberra.

I should explain here that Senator Ashley's defence of the Commission in reply to Mr Fadden's attack, was used in the 10.15 session on Sunday night. Although we had it in hand earlier we could not use it before then because it was a reply to Fadden's attack, which was not broadcast until the 7.10 p.m. session.

P.S. The question as to whether or not we would have been open to legal action had we said that Spender had used his influence to secure the release of his brother-in-law, is an open one. I attach copy of an extract from "Hansard", in which Spender explains that the man concerned is married to his wife's sister. Whether or not that makes him Spender's brother-in-law is a matter for argument.
Draft Agreements for Overseas News and Australian News

Appendices 1 and 2 of PSCB's 4th Report: "The Broadcasting of News"
13 April 1944.

Draft Agreement for Overseas News

(1) The Australian Broadcasting Commission agrees to pay Australian Associated Press the sum of £5,000 a year for the Australian broadcasting rights of its full overseas cable service, which shall include the right to rebroadcast any overseas transmissions which include Australian Associated Press matter.

(2) The Australian Associated Press messages, if the Commission so desires, shall be conveyed from the Australian Associated Press office to the address or addresses supplied by the Commission in the same manner as to newspaper members, the Commission paying to Australian Associated Press the internal transmission charges of the Postmaster-General or beam service involved. The Commission shall have the right to teleprinter service when available, on the same terms and conditions as newspaper members.

(3) The Commission shall permit commercial stations to take relays of its overseas news bulletins compiled in Australia from Australian Associated Press material, and the Commission shall be entitled to charge commercial stations a maximum of 50 per cent of the total amount paid by the Commission to Australian Associated Press provided that -

(a) if the commercial stations desire to confine their use of the Australian Associated Press material to rebroadcasts of the British Broadcasting Corporation, the total charge shall be £1,500 a year; and

(b) if commercial stations desire to take relays of Commission services based on Australian Associated Press messages in addition to rebroadcasting British Broadcasting Corporation transmissions, such stations shall pay the Commission through the Federation of Commercial Broadcasting Stations an increased amount to be agreed between the Commission and the Federation.

(4) In any arrangement it may make with the commercial stations the Commission shall be entitled to impose such restrictions as it may deem necessary to ensure equality of treatment in broadcasting as between itself and the commercial stations.

(5) The Australian Associated Press material may be broadcast by the Commission without restriction as to form, quantity, length or frequency of broadcasting periods.

(6) Acknowledgment of Australian Associated Press as the source of overseas news in bulletins prepared in Australia shall be broadcast twice daily in the transmissions carrying the news.
(7) The Commission shall be entitled to employ news observers whose news activities shall be confined to actual broadcasting or recording for broadcasting except that -

(a) they shall be entitled to submit to the local managers of the Australian Associated Press any items which they consider worth cabling or telegraphing, and if the local managers of Australian Associated Press reject the material, the Commission news observers shall be entitled to cable or teletype such items at the Commission's expense, and the items shall be offered to the Australian Associated Press in Australia for distribution among members, and if published shall be acknowledged to the Commission; and

(b) when a broadcasting or telephone channel is not available, the Commission news observers shall be entitled to telegraph or cable scripts for recording and rebroadcasting in Australia.

(8) Subject to the law permitting transcripts of all news broadcasts in Australia by Commission overseas news observers shall be made available to the Australian Associated Press when requested, and if published in full or in part shall be acknowledged to the Commission. Publication shall be confined to newspapers.

(9) This agreement shall be terminable upon six months notice by either party, to be given only in the following circumstances:-

(a) immediately upon the expiration of two years from the commencement of the agreement; or

(b) at any time after the expiration of four and a half years from the commencement of the agreement.

* * * *

Draft Agreement for Australian News

(1) The Australian Broadcasting Commission agrees to pay the Australian Newspaper Proprietors Association the sum of £2,700 a year for the broadcasting rights of a service of Australian news comprising -

(a) a cover of federal political, departmental and parliamentary news from Canberra;

(b) war communiqués and other news from general head-quarters;

(c) drop copies of messages from war correspondents (selected by mutual arrangement) in operational areas, capital cities or elsewhere.

(2) In addition to the services provided for in clause (1) the Commission shall have the right to select and broadcast Australian and New Zealand news published in all or any of the newspapers of members of the association and shall not be bound to broadcast the news contained in such items in the form in which it is published in the newspapers, provided there is no alteration in the substance of the news.
(3) The Commission shall make arrangements for the service referred to in (1)(c) through the Secretariat of the Australian Newspaper Proprietors Association.

(4) In addition to the services provided for in (1) and (2), the Commission may request a cover of events of national importance by arrangement with a member or members of the Australian Newspaper Proprietors Association provided reasonable notice is given, and the Commission meets the extra expense incurred. Such requests shall be made through the Secretariat of the Australian Newspaper Proprietors Association.

(5) Costs of transmission in connexion with all the services aforementioned shall be borne by the Commission.

(6) The news material available from the services covered by this agreement may be broadcast by the Commission without restriction as to form, quantity, length or frequency by broadcasting periods.

(7) The Commission shall be entitled to employ observers and commentators (as distinct from reporters or news gatherers) whose activities shall be confined to actual broadcasting except that when a broadcasting or telephone channel is not available they shall be entitled to telegraph scripts for recording and rebroadcasting.

(8) In addition to the special services provided for in clause (7) the Commission shall be entitled to collect and receive information for the broadcast of routine services such as weather, stock exchange and market reports, sporting events and elections.

(9) Nothing in this agreement shall preclude the Commission from broadcasting statements or announcements supplied to the Commission by governments and/or government departments and/or fighting services in Australia.

(10) This agreement shall be terminable upon six months' notice by either party, to be given only in the following circumstances:-

(a) immediately upon the expiration of two years from the commencement of the agreement; or

(b) at any time after the expiration of four and a half years from the commencement of the agreement.
APPENDIX K

Memo to All Commissioners dated 9th April 1943

PROPOSED NEWS AGREEMENT

REPORT ON VISIT TO CANBERRA BY THE CHAIRMAN,
GENERAL MANAGER AND MR DEAMER (25 March 1943)

The Chairman, the General Manager and Mr Deamer met the Postmaster-General in his office at Canberra at 10 a.m. on Thursday, 25th March, and discussed with him the proposed agreement with the newspapers. In spite of all arguments put forward in support of the agreement, Senator Ashley made it clear that he was opposed to the signing of any agreement which did not leave the Commission completely independent of newspapers insofar as Canberra is concerned. He stated that it was immaterial to him from what source the Commission got its news in any other part of Australia, but it must have its own news gathering staff in Canberra.

At about 10.20 a.m. Mr Beasley came into his office and joined in the discussion and immediately adopted a somewhat aggressive attitude, his opening remark being "Well Mr Cleary this is a snide sort of thing you have tried to put over us." After some brief discussion he became very heated through a misunderstanding over a comment made by Mr Deamer. The discussion interrupted(sic) when Mr Beasley left to attend a meeting of the War Cabinet, and it was arranged that we should meet Messrs Chifley, Evatt, Beasley and Senator Ashley during the afternoon.

The second discussion took place at 5 p.m. in Mr Beasley's office, and again the strongest opposition came from Mr Beasley, supported by Dr Evatt, the former being especially unreasonable in his attitude. It soon became obvious that the Government would never agree to the Commission drawing its Canberra news from any other source than its own news gathering staff, no matter what safeguards it might make to ensure the completeness and impartiality of its coverage. Realising the situation, the Chairman said that he would reopen the question of the agreement with the newspapers on a basis of the Commission retaining complete independence in Canberra.

Mr Beasley kept stressing the importance of the Commission sending its sub-editorial staff back to Canberra and in this connection mentioned that he had had discussions with members of our News Staff on this subject. It was pointed out to him that to do this would necessitate the Commission having two sub-editorial staffs, one for overseas news and Australian interstate news, the other for Canberra news; also that this sub-division of the news staff would make it impossible for the Commission's News Editor to give the necessary personal supervision to news bulletins, or to make decisions as between the relative importance of various items of news coming from different sources.

Mr Chifley made it clear that he was not interested in the question of the return of the sub-editorial staff to Canberra, and he would be satisfied as long as the Commission retained its independence with regard to Canberra news. Dr Evatt too, said that he was content to leave such matters of administration to the Commission, and eventually Mr Beasley ceased to press this point though he insisted that attention should be paid to the acknowledging of Canberra as the source of official Australian news.
One item of interest was that Dr Evatt stressed the importance of retaining "Advance Australia Fair" as the theme for the 7.45 a.m. and 7 p.m. bulletins, and suggested that other orchestral arrangements of this theme might be made.

The General Manager stated that he was discussing with the Commission's Programme and News Staffs the possibility of preparing a "composite" 15 minutes bulletin of Australian and overseas news in place of the present straggling 25-minute bulletin. Dr Evatt said that he would be glad to see the "State" news session eliminated as he thought this was usually of a very poor standard.

The meeting broke up amicably at 5.50 p.m. after the Chairman had indicated we would confer with Mr Henderson of the A.N.P.A. to discuss a revision of the agreement. Senator Ashley stated that he would like to be present at this conference.

Mr Henderson was contacted by telephone and arrangements were made for a meeting in the Postmaster-General's Sydney office at 3 p.m. on Monday, 29th March.
APPENDIX L
FORDE's COMPLAINT

Extract from 7 p.m. News - 20 March 1944

"Men of the Australian Ninth Division will be given extra leave to place them on the same basis as other troops returned from the Middle East. Ninth Division men got practically no leave for a long time before they returned to Australia. Those men already on leave will be given more days at home, and those returning to their units will get the extra leave credited to them. They will be allowed to take it at the first opportunity."

Extract from 9 p.m. News - 20 March 1944
(after a complaint by Forde)

"The Minister for the Army, Mr Forde, announced to-night that extra leave will be given to men of the Australian Ninth Division in order to place them on the same basis as other troops who have returned from the Middle East. The Ninth Division men got practically no leave for a long time before they returned to Australia. The men already on leave will be given more days at home. Those now on the way back to their units will be credited with the extra leave they are entitled to and will be allowed to take it at the first opportunity."
AGREEMENT dated this Day of One Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty Six between AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATED PRESS PTY. LTD. of the first part AND the AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION, a body corporate under the Australian Broadcasting Act 1942 (hereinafter called THE BROADCASTER) of the second part, WITNESSETH the parties hereby mutually agree as follows:

(1) A.A.P. hereby bargains and sells to the Broadcaster the full right and privilege of broadcasting in the National Broadcasting Service radiation from Australia A.A.P.'s full overseas cable service without restriction as to form, quantity, length or frequency of broadcasting periods, which right and privilege shall include the right to rebroadcast any overseas transmissions which include A.A.P. matter.

(2) Full A.A.P. cable service shall be delivered to the Broadcaster in the same form as that in which it is delivered to member newspapers. It shall be conveyed from the A.A.P. office to the address or addresses supplied by the Commission

(a) by teleprinter if and when the teleprinter is available at no extra cost to the Commission other than the rental of the teleprinter.

(b) by drop copy at the Commission's expense until the teleprinter is available.

(3) The full A.A.P. service shall consist of a complete cover of the factual news of the day.

(4) The Broadcaster agrees to pay to the said A.A.P. in respect of the A.A.P. service the sum of Twelve Thousand Five Hundred Pounds (£12,500) for one year from payable quarterly on the days of the months of

and PROVIDED THAT A.A.P. shall refund to the Broadcaster any portion of the above amount which exceeds 5/8ths of the highest amount paid by any member newspapers in accordance with the Articles of Association of the A.A.P. and for this purpose the accounts of the A.A.P. shall be submitted at the end of the year covered by this agreement to a person mutually acceptable for a report thereon (to be added in the event of the agreement covering a year that does not coincide with the accounting period of the A.A.P.: "The amount of the charge for the overseas A.A.P. service for the purpose of the qualification of 5/8ths of the highest payment of any member of the A.A.P. shall be calculated by taking the proportion of each accounting period determined by the ratio of the currency of the agreement in each period to a year of time"), ALSO PROVIDED THAT if there is a departure by the Broadcaster from the existing practice of the Broadcaster by more than 10% of wordage used by the Broadcaster or frequency of broadcasts by the Broadcaster, either of the parties may apply to a mutually acceptable person sitting as a private arbitrator for a review of the rate for the news concerned, and the decision of such Arbitrator shall be adopted by the parties. Existing practice in connection with overseas news shall be taken to be approximately 40,000 words, including repeated news, per week, used by the Broadcaster in the Broadcaster's Overseas News Sessions emanating from the Broadcaster's Studios and excluding any B.B.C. rebroadcasts, but the Broadcaster shall have the right to give news flashes or to extend its wordage of broadcasts to cover some important world event, and such last mentioned wordage and broadcasts shall not be included in calculation or wordage or number of broadcasts.
(5) The Broadcaster shall have the unrestricted right to collect and use in such manner as it thinks fit news and information relating to current events in any part of the world and to subscribe to News Agencies and News Services.

(6) The Broadcaster shall supply A.A.P. at the office of the Broadcaster with a copy of each of the Broadcaster's overseas news broadcasts.

(7) A.A.P. overseas cable service shall include news drawn from the following sources:

- Reuters
- Associated Press of America
- Exchange Telegraph
- Press Association of Great Britain
- "The Daily Mirror"
- "The Daily Telegraph"
- "The Times"
- "The Manchester Guardian"
- "The News Chronicle"
  etc.
  etc.

If at any time during the currency of this contract A.A.P. ceases to enjoy the right to supply the Broadcaster with any of the following cable services -

- Reuters
- Associated Press of America
- Exchange Telegraph
- The Press Association of Great Britain

the Broadcaster shall have the right to cancel this agreement on giving one month's notice in writing or to negotiate a variation in the terms thereof.

DRAFT AGREEMENT FOR AUSTRALIAN NEWS

AGREEMENT dated this day of One Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty Six between AUSTRALIAN NEWSPAPER PROPRIETORS ASSOCIATION of the first part AND THE AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION, a body corporate under the Australian Broadcasting Act 1942, (hereinafter called THE BROADCASTER) of the second part, WITNESSETH the parties hereby mutually agree as follows:

(1) A.N.P.A. hereby bargains and sells to the Broadcaster the full and unrestricted right and privilege of broadcasting in the National Broadcasting Services radiating from Australia, the local news services supplied by A.N.P.A., in such form as the Broadcaster deems fit, and shall make available to the Broadcaster or its representatives from time to time as required by the Broadcaster at the offices of member newspapers Australian news in copy or proof as requested by the Broadcaster or its representatives for which purpose the Broadcaster or its representatives will be provided with suitable accommodation, telephone and other facilities in the newspaper offices aforesaid and full access at all time to Australian news in copy or proof which Australian news may be used by the Broadcaster at any time without restriction as to amount or frequency of broadcast.
(2) The Broadcaster agrees to pay to the said A.N.P.A. in respect of the A.N.P.A. service the sum of Seven Thousand Five Hundred pounds (£7,500) for one year from payable quarterly on the days of the months of . . . . . and . . . PROVIDED THAT if there is a departure by the Broadcaster from the existing practice of the Broadcaster by more than 10% of wordage used by the Broadcaster or frequency of broadcasts by the Broadcaster, either of the parties may apply to a mutually acceptable person sitting as a private arbitrator for a review of the rate of payment, and the decision of such arbitrator as to rate of payment shall be adopted by the parties. Existing practice shall be taken to be approximately 21,000 words, including repeated news, per week, of Australian news, and broadcast on National relay, and with respect to news restricted to State broadcasts, the following approximate wordages represent existing practice -

- N.S.W. 17,000 words
- Victoria 21,000 "
- South Australia 16,000 "
- Western Australia 21,000 "
- Queensland 17,000 "
- Tasmania 17,000 "

but the Broadcaster shall have the right to give news "flashes" or to extend its wordage of broadcasts to cover some important event, and such last mentioned wordage and broadcasts shall not be included in calculations or wordage or number of broadcasts.

(3) The Broadcaster shall have the unrestricted right to collect and use in such manner as it thinks fit news and information relating to current events in any part of the world and to subscribe to News Agencies and News Services.

(4) This agreement shall have no bearing whatsoever on the Broadcaster's sporting sessions.

(5) The metropolitan newspapers from which the news may be taken include the following papers:

- **SYDNEY:**
  - Morning: Sydney Morning Herald; Daily Telegraph
  - Evening: The Sun
  - Sundays: Sunday Telegraph; Sunday Sun

- **MELBOURNE:**
  - Morning: Argus; The Sun
  - Evening: Melbourne Herald

- **BRISBANE:**
  - Morning: Courier Mail
  - Evening: Telegraph
  - Sundays: The Mail

- **ADELAIDE:**
  - Morning: Adelaide Advertiser
  - Evening: News
  - Sundays: The Mail

- **PERTH:**
  - Morning: West Australian
  - Evening: News

- **HOBART:**
  - The Mercury

- **LAUNCESTON:**
  - The Examiner

- **NEWCASTLE:**
  - Morning: Newcastle Morning Herald
  - Evening: Newcastle Sun

If at any time any of these sources are no longer available to the Broadcaster, the Broadcaster shall have the right to cancel this Agreement on giving one month's previous notice in writing, or to open negotiations for a Variation hereof.
SPOKEN TRANSMISSIONS:

In general, the Commission regards its charter as a national broadcasting instrumentality as laying upon it the responsibility of aiding citizenship, in addition to providing entertainment and information. By "aiding citizenship" is meant not the diffusion of any particular point of view, but the stimulating of independent judgments on the problems of life -- social, political, philosophic -- and of independent appreciation of cultural values. It is this purposeful educative function, aimed at developing an informed and critical citizenry, which should basically distinguish National from Commercial broadcasting.

For this reason, the canons of judgment as to both form and content of national talks and commentaries cannot be thought of as necessarily running parallel to those employed in proprietary networks. While broadcasting technique as an interest-arresting and interest-retaining weapon is as vital in our system as in others, this in itself must be brought within the framework of the general purpose of the national objectives. Popularity, entertainment value, personality-building, for example, the cardinal and often sole criteria of the advertising systems, cannot, therefore, be the only guides to programming, and indeed may not all be reconcilable with the principles of our charter. In other words, technique and presentation must follow the purpose which is our raison d'être, and not vice versa. Commercial radio and journalistic practice are not necessarily valid for national radio.

In particular, the above expression of principle involves the following considerations:

(a) The Radio "Personality": The Commission is opposed to the practice of "personality building" in its spoken transmissions where matters of opinion are involved. This objection derives from the above-mentioned aim of presenting listeners with the material of thought rather than with a set of second-hand ideas. The continued programming at too frequent intervals of a single speaker or commentator, as the Commission's experience has shown, while it builds up audiences, also standarisces public attitudes. Our aim is rather to present a variety of views, covering as far as possible all major angles so as to acquaint listeners with a broad picture of the issues. The Commission is well aware that in so doing it must performe sacrifice a considerable amount of listener-interest and devotion to our sessions. People, as a whole, prefer the predigested output of a favourite pundit with a good voice and pontifical infallibility on regular sequence, and they are well served in this respect by some networks. Ours is performe the hard way. We must of necessity seek a variety of speakers not all of whom can be stars if we are to meet what is a grave responsibility in democratic nation-building. This does not mean that talks officers should strain the principle just enunciated to the point of programming speakers of indifferent calibre, but the Commission does stress the necessity of continually seeking to widen the range of acceptable and programme-worthy speakers. Nothing in this directive relievehs talks officers of their responsibility to ensure, by their selection of speakers, that the script of a talk and its presentation reaches the standard required for our programmes.
(b) The "Editing" of Scripts: Similar considerations have force in the difficult problem of script "editing". Apart from the requirements of wartime censorship, there obviously are certain broad fields within which some editing of scripts by executive officers is necessary. Libel, gross breaches of good taste, and obscenity cannot be justified by pinning the responsibility on the speaker. As broadcasters, we share the liability common to publishers and other controllers of publicity media to answer for statements offending in these categories. Obviously, too, we are responsible for the general broadcasting value of the matter transmitted, whoever be the speaker (other than governmental statements). These responsibilities necessitate the reading of scripts and the elimination, in whole or in part, of unsuitable matter. Nevertheless, the degree to which an executive officer should actually amend, alter or re-write scripts, and the principles covering these questions call for some definition having regard to the abovementioned general purposes of national radio.

The over-riding consideration governing judgment on these points is the fact that, in the Commission's scale of values, a radio talk is not merely a feature to be judged solely by its interest plus technique value, but is the projection of an individual's own thought and personality and valuable as such. It may be erroneous in argument, distorted in opinion, inadequate in expression, but may be nevertheless of value as typical of some section of our people. The temptation to recase a script by an officer according to his own canons of literary taste, or fact or opinions, for the purposes of creating a better "broadcast" is obviously strong, but in the Commission's view is fraught with much danger. In the first place, it is undesirable that the Commission should assume responsibility for (a) style or (b) the opinions expressed (other than the indecent, libellous or blasphemous). For our officers to alter scripts for these reasons, without the express or willing approval of the writer, is to assume such responsibility. It is necessary to stress "willing" approval of the writer. Approval may be obtained by indicating refusal to broadcast unless the change is approved, but a writer under such conditions would realistically and fairly apportion responsibility to the Commission for the matter and style of his talk.

The Commission feels that excisions, alterations and re-writes for these reasons, while admittedly practised in current journalism and commercial broadcasting for technique purposes, is out of keeping with the nature of national broadcasting acting as a medium of popular expression. In general, it is preferable to refuse the script in toto than to undertake corrections and alterations except of a very minor character. Control over our spoken transmissions should be exercised rather through the choice of speakers than through the editing of scripts. It should be made clear to speakers that the responsibility for the content, the style and the opinions expressed, is theirs alone, but that the Commission reserves the right not of correction but of refusal to broadcast at its discretion. Assistance in presentation, intonation and choice of phrasing is another matter. We should offer such help, indicating suggestions for revision and rewording, and encourage acceptance of it. Departures from demonstrable fact should of course be drawn to the attention of the speaker and he should be urged to check his facts with a view to their correction. In the event of a speaker's refusal to alter his script the talks officer concerned should consider whether such refusal so seriously prejudices the value of the script as to make its rejection advisable. The final draft as broadcast, however, of any talk should be the speaker's own responsibility.
(c) Contentious Subjects: The programming of talks dealing with subjects on which the community may have strong divisions of opinion calls for special attention. Clearly, if our charter as above considered is to be carried out, our responsibility to present significant angles upon matters of contention is probably more urgent than to deal with matters of agreement. The question at issue is not whether these issues should be touched, but the manner of presentation. Hitherto the Commission recognises that the sensitivity of groups in the community towards the broadcasting of views with which they disagree has pressed us either (a) to avoid certain topics altogether; or (b) to put both sides simultaneously in a discussion; or (c) to run a carefully balanced series with equal time to each view. This policy has become general for all really contentious matter, although less explosive views such as may be contained in current commentaries are still programmed without undue regard to balance.

While it is true that as a Commission we have no partiality in matters of controversy, and aim to give to listeners a full presentation of all facets of current issues, the question still remains as to whether the present policy is not unduly restrictive. Many excellent talks of a highly informative character cannot, under this system, be programmed wither for the lack of a suitable "counter" immediately at hand, or a balanced discussion group. The Commission now feels that this policy is too rigid. While over the whole period of our programmes we must continue as far as possible to secure the most balanced presentation of contentious issues, it is hardly flattering to the tolerance and intelligence of our public to assume that it is unwilling to hear any views with which it disagrees unless the contrary opinion is immediately put as a counter. Unfavourable reactions from an intolerant minority should not be allowed to stultify the search for significant and worthwhile broadcasts by our officers. Indeed, the ability to listen to intelligent and earnest criticism of our own views is a major element in citizenship which the Commission hopes to foster. It may, therefore, be accepted that the Commission is favourable to the programming of contentious talks without the immediate counter now thought essential, provided that over a reasonable period care is taken to present alternate views.

(d) Political Talks: Political talks, in the sense of Party political, are a matter of particular concern to the Commission. In general the Commission's policy is that outside specified pre-election periods, talks of a Party political nature are not acceptable to the A.B.C. The sole exception to this policy is when such talks are made in the form of a simultaneous discussion such as the Forum of the Air. This rule must not be contravened without special permission from the General Manager who shall refer proposals for inter-election political talks to the Commission.

NEWS:

General Approach: The Commission's responsibilities in respect to news are peculiar to the national broadcasting service, and it must be appreciated that the habits of news judgment and news expression which operate either in the proprietary press or in a government department do not necessarily apply in our case. This peculiarity arises from the fact that the Commission's charter requires it to select and present news with a degree of objectivity not called for in other organisations. Even the sense of news values should not necessarily follow that of current journalism in which the estimate of news value is often that of circulation-building for its own sake.
The Commission's news bulletins are designed to be in the fullest sense a service presenting the happenings of the day in the order of their importance for a community which wishes to be well-informed. It is therefore an obligation upon the Commission's news staff to approach the selection and presentation of news from this point of view which will necessitate the discarding of much journalistic habit of mind. In other words, the Commission's news service should not merely be press news over the air.

More particularly the Commission's requirements are as follows:-

(1) Selection of News: The terms "news interest" and "news value" are currently interpreted as meaning that quality in news which will attract the greatest degree of interest. In some journalistic practice "news value" on this interpretation leads to giving a priority to items that are startling and sensational; for example, a criminal act by a person is regarded as having more news value than an act of positive beneficience[sic]. While it is impossible to draw any line between the value of a sensational as opposed to a non-sensational item, the objective of the Commission, as expressed above, would dictate that sensationalism for its own sake without other news value in an item would not justify its inclusion in an A.B.C. bulletin. The first principle of selection for the Commission's purposes would be the interest value of an item of news in terms of the question "Is it a service to inform the community of this event?" Then as to items involving opinion on current affairs, political or international, the greatest care must be exercised that the power of selection should not be employed to give greater prominence to one view or policy than to another. For this purpose the selective function should be exercised in the most strictly objective fashion in such manner that by presenting a wide range of views it would be impossible to determine by listening to the news what the attitude of the news selector to the issue would be.

The Commission is conscious that the selection of news is possibly the most potent weapon in the Commission's hands for the forming of public judgments, and it is essential that as far as humanly possible it will be carried out in such a way as to leave the function of judgment entirely with the listener. This objectivity attaches not only to the selection of news but to the priority in which the news is offered in the bulletin and the amount of wordage devoted to any particular item over and above that which the intrinsic importance of the item would justify. Here again the principle must be adopted of giving, as far as possible, equivalent prominence and equivalent wordage to conflicting points of view. For example, the quoting of newspapers should be undertaken with a strict eye to ensuring that the net effect of the bulletin is to leave in the listener's mind a balanced appreciation of the issue referred to.

Most particularly the selection of local or overseas press editorials from one paper alone whose policy is one of strong protagonism defeats the purpose of the Commission's news service.
(2) Presentation of News: The manner in which a news item once selected is presented also requires attention in the light of the foregoing principles. In other words, the presentation of a person's opinion or an event should not be in such a form as to constitute a commentary except where such commentary is essential for the identification of a person or an event. For example, in the report of a statement by Professor Laski, the principle of legitimate identification would be served by describing him as "Professor Laski, Chairman of the British Labour Party". Inadmissible comment, on the other hand, would be - "Professor Laski, the Left Wing Chairman of the British Labour Party". The content of news bulletins should preserve a dignity of expression consistent with a national service. Such dignity is not inconsistent with freshness and brightness of presentation. For example, it is not necessary to quote verbatim statements in Parliament or elsewhere which in themselves are in bad taste. A paraphrase in the third person can be equally effective.

(3) Religious News: The principles enunciated above are of particular importance in the religious field where the extreme sensitivity of varying beliefs within the community and the responsibilities of a national service demand a degree of balance and objectivity greater than in most types of news items.

That the following Addendum be added to the Directives on News and Spoken Transmissions.

A difficulty has always arisen in regard to the varying claims of political persons making statements for transmission over the air as between members of the Government of the day and of the Opposition. It is quite obvious that Ministers actively carrying out the government of the country have more newsworthy statements to contribute than have members in opposition. The relative positions of these two classes of politicians creates a difficulty both for spoken transmissions and for inclusion in news bulletins. As to how far this situation justifies discrimination, two major considerations have relevance in this matter: First, that the position of Ministers undoubtedly gives them an opportunity to contribute much more valuable factual material both for a spoken statement for a news item than members of the Opposition, but secondly there is an equally important consideration in that members of the Government may utilise their positions as controllers of departments to secure unnecessary publicity through these means. This latter consideration has been brought to the attention of the Commission by all parties in opposition since the inception of the A.B.C. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Broadcasting of September 1942 -- October 1943 drew attention to the fact that the mention of a politician's name had political value in itself irrespective of the question as to whether his statements were factual and non-controversial or not. This principle has been admitted by the Commission as one of importance, and the question for direction remains as to what principles should be adopted by the Commission's officers in this matter. While obviously no rigid rule can be laid down, it may be stated as follows:-

(a) Statements by Ministers or Members of Parliament should be judged as worthy either for broadcasting as an individual statement or for inclusion in news bulletins only insofar as the matter contained in the statements themselves is of intrinsic importance and of public interest.
(b) Over-emphasis and too great repetition of a speaker's name are undesirable particularly when a statement is of a purely departmental character and not the individual opinion of the speaker. Experience has shown that journalistic practice in this regard is not suitable for broadcasting technique. Frequent repetition of names is more noticeable and irritating when spoken than when written.

(c) Distinction should be made in respect of talks between the factual account of the carrying out of a settled policy of the Government by a Minister and the enunciation of new policy or a defence of Government policy. In the first case there would appear to be no reason why any effort should be made to secure a balance by Opposition speakers whereas in the latter case a reply would be expected and a balance should be sought.
APPENDIX 0

(1) DRAFT DIRECTIVE ON THE ORGANISATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMISSION'S INDEPENDENT NEWS SERVICES
(in SP724, Box 38, 15/1/2)

Considering the means whereby the Commission's news gathering service within Australia can be organised, it is clear that the problems of origin of news and of the engagement of permanent and part-time news-gatherers, will depend fundamentally upon the obligations imposed by the term "independent" as applied to the Commission's service and the degree to which that principle is implemented by the Commission's staff.

Basically the term "independent" means that each item of news broadcast by the Commission carries with it the Commission's own endorsement of accuracy, such endorsement being based upon the guarantees of our own staff. Sources of news admittedly are varied and are not necessarily at first hand; for example, government departments and public institutions may be regarded as reliable sources of information requiring no personal check, the bona fides of such institutions being accepted in advance. News of a political and controversial nature will, of course, require first-hand independent coverage, as by its nature it is capable of a variety of interpretations and selections. The major problem before the Commission, however, will be the treatment of news which has neither been obtained at first hand by the Commission's staff nor sponsored by the reliable public organisations mentioned above, but which may first appear in published form in the daily or provincial press. News so published cannot, of course, be ignored, but does not become eligible for the Commission's bulletins until it has been checked either at first-hand or through the reliable media outlined above and thereby bears the Commission's guarantee of accuracy and objectivity. This latter point is of supreme importance both as to the quality and quantity of staff required and as to the duties of staff. It presupposes that an adequate staff will be available to make such checks in a proper and adequate fashion both in the metropolitan and country areas. It may mean, furthermore, that some items of news formerly included in an earlier bulletin when taken as at present from newspaper columns, will require to be held pending checking for a later broadcast. It points also to the consideration that the Commission's country correspondents should be men who are not simply relaying the contents of a local paper but are in a position themselves to check and verify news of whatever origin for the Commission's bulletins.

It is quite clear that reference to the press office in which an item may appear or the the staff of that office could not be considered as in any way complying with the requirements of an independent service, and strict instructions as to the adequacy of checking methods will require to be issued both to permanent and temporary staff in the news-gathering service.

It would seem in implementing the above that country correspondents should not as a matter of principle be members of the staff of existing journals, but that they should be independent persons as detached from the proprietary press as will be our own permanent staff in the metropolitan area. We must, in other words, so organise the service that we shall be able, if challenged, to show that each item broadcast has been guaranteed adequately by the news-gatherer concerned on the above lines.
MEMO ON DRAFT DIRECTIVE ON THE ORGANISATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMISSION'S INDEPENDENT NEWS SERVICES - DATED 14 October 1946.

From: General Manager To The Chairman

As I may not have an opportunity of discussing with you thoroughly your draft directive on the organisation and development of the independent news service I hope you will not mind me letting you have the following comments.

The Directive covers two main questions -

1. The definition of the term "independent"

2. Sources of news under an independent service.

Definition of an independent service (paragraph 2)

The Parliamentary Committee's majority report and the debates in Parliament on the amendment of the Act regarding the news service etc. suggest that the essential point that the Government had in mind in directing the Commission to establish an independent service was that items of Australian news should come direct from the news gatherer to the Commission without being coloured by the policies of other organisations. That is, the persons supplying news for A.B.C. bulletins should be directly engaged and paid by the Commission instead of the Commission securing its news through an intermediate source, such as a newspaper.

May I suggest therefore that the definition of the term "independent" in paragraph two of the draft directive should be amended to read - 'Basically the term "independent" means that each item of news broadcast by the Commission carries with it the Commission's own endorsement, such endorsement being based on the fact that the Commission has itself directly engaged the staff and correspondents supplying the material for its service.'

In order to provide the best possible service I feel it is clear that the Commission must seek to engage the most competent staff and correspondents available from among those who have had training and experience in the news field. 'Independence' relates to the method of securing material by direct engagement by the Commission of the persons concerned rather than, as suggested in the draft directive, to the fact that those persons are or are not already in the news field. The Commission could not contemplate engaging inexpert and untrained persons to provide material for other sections of its programmes - music, drama, etc. and it must look for trained people in the news field also.

In the case of the metropolitan areas, our news will be supplied by trained journalists engaged by the Commission for that purpose.

Paragraph 3 of the draft directive suggests, however, that country correspondents should be "independent persons as detached from the proprietary press as will be our permanent staff in the metropolitan areas. We must, in other words, so organise the service that we shall be able, if challenged, to show that each item broadcast has been guaranteed adequately by the news-gatherer concerned". I feel, however, that there are other considerations which should not be overlooked, especially as some of them might be used to suggest that the Commission is reluctant...
to employ the normal and most effective methods of collecting its news:-

1. That if a country journalist is engaged by the Commission on a part time basis to provide news items he would in fact be supplying a service direct to the Commission. His engagement by the Commission would be an arrangement between himself and the A.B.C. and would not imply that the A.B.C. was securing a service from any country newspaper by which he might also be engaged.

2. That is is a common practice in the news field for journalists who do not hold exclusive contracts with a single paper, to work for several organisations and this is not regarded as affecting the independence of their work for each of those organisations. e.g. Australian correspondents of overseas news agencies.

3. That competent persons who have had training in news gathering will not be available in the country, apart from those who are already connected with country newspapers.

4. That the standard of our service might suffer, both in speed and quality, if our correspondents were not trained in news gathering. Persons not already working in the news field may not be able to supply news as it breaks.

5. That if our correspondents are not trained news men they may be lacking in news sense and may send stories that cannot be used, thus adding unnecessarily to costs.

6. That as to the question of guaranteeing accuracy the fact that a correspondent is not engaged by a newspaper does not necessarily imply that his material would be accurate.

**SOURCES OF NEWS (Second half of paragraph two)**

The directive states that there will be three main sources of news -

(a) Government departments and public institutions which "may be regarded as reliable sources of information requiring no personal check".

(b) Political news which will require first-hand independent coverage.

(c) Other news "which may first appear in published form in the daily or provincial press".

As to (a) would it not be dangerous to state in any directive to the news staff that this does not require checking? Government departments may well issue handouts angled to their particular policies that may not include all the facts.

As to (c) while our news staff will undoubtedly keep an eye on the papers for news items which may have escaped them I feel it would be a mistake to set down in any directive that material seen in newspapers would be a regular source of news.

Perhaps the directive might list the three sources of news as --

(a) Government departments and public institutions.
(b) Political news.

(c) Other news arising from a variety of sources

... and then go on to say that all news must be adequately checked and that if the first information about a particular item is obtained from press sources it must be checked at first hand before being used.

As this directive is intended to apply only to Australian news it would be as well if the word "Australian" were added to the heading.

I notice also that several reference are made to "permanent" and "temporary" news staff. I would suggest that in each case these words should be changed to "full time" and "part time" in view of the implication of the word "permanent" in our organisation.

(Signed) CHARLES MOSES
Dear

We are glad to know that you have accepted the position of our country correspondent for

Your engagement will be for a period of three months from and will continue thereafter subject to one week's notice of termination by either party. During the continuance of this arrangement you will receive a fee for each news item used as follows:

RADIO:
National ........................................... $3.30
State (including Northern Territory) .... $1.65
Radio Australia .............................. $1.65
Metropolitan Regional (i.e. the 6.30 a.m.
News Session) ............................... $1.10
Country Regional ......................... $1.10

TELEVISION:
State and Interstate Networks
(including Northern Territory) .......... $1.65
* Country Television (where item not used
on Radio) ................................... $1.10

For Newsfilm tips which we accept we will pay a fee of ........ $1.65

* One fee only is payable in respect of each item irrespective of the number of times it is used. The rate will be that of the bulletin of the highest classification in which the item is used. To this there is one exception – an item used on State and Interstate TV and on Radio will receive the State and Interstate TV fee and the appropriate Radio fee.

Should a voice insert from a correspondent be used in a National Radio bulletin a fee of $7 per item will be paid or if used in a State or Regional bulletin a fee of $5 per item. In the main these would be voice reports recorded through telephone.

Should you incur any necessary out-of-pocket expenses, these will be refunded monthly on submission of a detailed statement at the end of each month.
Dear

We are glad to know that you have accepted the position of our country correspondent for

Your engagement will be for a period of three months from and will continue thereafter subject to one week’s notice of termination by either party. During the continuance of this arrangement you will receive a fee for each news item used as follows:

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Should a voice insert from a correspondent be used in a National Radio bulletin a fee of $7 per item will be paid or if used in a State or Regional bulletin a fee of $5 per item. In the main these would be voice reports recorded through telephone.

Should you incur any necessary out-of-pocket expenses, these will be refunded monthly on submission of a detailed statement at the end of each month.
We should like your assurance that you will make yourself personally responsible for the accuracy of every item you send us. As you are aware, the ABC places the greatest importance on the accuracy of items, and we obviously cannot contemplate any arrangement with you which does not ensure your responsibility for checking the accuracy of each item you send us.

In lieu of a formal contract we should be glad if you would sign and return the original of this letter to this office, as soon as possible. The other copy which we enclose is for your own records.

Yours faithfully,

ENGAGEMENT ACCEPTED ON ABOVE TERMS: ..............................................................

DATED: ......................................
APPENDIX Q

18th May 1946

GUIDANCE 1

It is obviously necessary that all sub-editors and news writers should work to a broad common policy, and that there should be cohesion between night and day bulletins. To this end it may at times be useful to call a conference, but because of the different rosters on which we all work, it is impracticable to make this a daily event.

Notes such as the following, which I hope to send round from time to time are admittedly inadequate as a substitute for a conference at which all points of view can be advanced, but they may help towards giving a coherent approach to the news.

The last thing I want to bring about is a dull level standard of style. Each of us has his own mannerisms and idiosyncrasies, and often it is this individuality which gives a bulletin vitality. On the other hand, it is inevitable that with sub-editors working on different shifts and with little or no actual contact, there will be a tendency towards divergence in attitude to news and its presentation.

These guidance notes are intended not as inquests, or criticisms of the past, but as a effort to steer the news in one direction. When particular stories are referred to critically I know only too well from experience that these may have been done in such circumstances that we were probably lucky to have them in the bulletins at all. But the listening public doesn't know these things, and it's on the result that a bulletin must be judged.

Every bulletin brings its own problems of precedence, order and length of story, and no hard and fast rules can be laid down beforehand. But as there seems to be some confusion in certain cases on our ultimate objectives, it may be a good idea to remind ourselves from time to time of the aims demanded by our position as a responsible, unsensational and factual news medium.

It may seem pointless, for instance to labour the value of material of urgent global interest (India, the Food Famine, UNO, etc.) but it is very human and understandable to be over-influenced by the more sensational and ephemeral. The newspapers can do as they like about these things: that's their job. It's not ours. We must try and rid our minds of the attitude: "The public would rather read the details of a good murder than all the UNO stuff ever published." That attitude reveals that we are unaware of, or have forgotten the functions of our news services.

The very fact that we are constricted in our approach to news, in that we must discard the sensational and must not "play up" or "colour" material throws on us an onus that newspaper writers don't have. But it's at the same time an exciting challenge. We've got to make our bulletins at once authoritative and attractive sober yet interesting. It's a formidable job, but it can be done. If we can persuade our listeners that "if it's the A.B.C. then it's true," we'll have gone a long way towards fulfilling our ambition.
That's why we can afford to make mistakes less than other stations, or the newspapers, and why minor errors, such as in grammar, assume a seemingly disproportionate importance.

My stress on international news must not be interpreted as meaning that we should always lead with it. There are times when little has developed overseas to justify such a lead; then is the opportunity to devote more space to domestic happenings. Big industrial stoppages, for instance, are in their way, of world significance, affecting as they do economy on an international scale, and justifiably take a high place. So does the infantile paralysis story, for another reason. By giving the facts (and taking care not to stampede our listeners) we are doing them a service which we would NOT be by presenting the details of a divorce case.

THE WORLD FOOD SITUATION. We have been giving this a good run, and rightly so. With the great deal of space that has been devoted to it in the past, and the fact that we in Australia are luckier than in most other countries, there may be a natural inclination to drop it at times or keep it down. The war could not be dropped in this way, and many millions more are affected by the food situation than were directly involved in the war. Therefore we have the grim duty of presenting the truth, but in such a way that we do not bore our audiences with statistics or platitudes. It is not length that is needed so much as the punching home of the seriousness of the situation by a well-placed paragraph or so in an appropriate context.

We don't want to enter into any acrimonious or spiteful questions on which countries are doing their part and which are not. But of course, we must give such facts or opinions if they come from reputable authorities such as Herbert Morrison. We handled the question of Russia with absolute correctness by giving first the fact that Truman would not disclose Stalin's reply and then quoting Moscow on what Russia has done for Finland, France, etc.

PRESS QUOTATIONS. In themselves quotations from the press (I'm thinking of the foreign papers) are NOT news, and should be used only to illuminate points that are not clear from the cables. They are certainly worth using as a follow to big announcements such as India, in order to indicate British reaction. But extreme care must be taken to obtain a balanced picture. For instance, it is wrong to say: "The British Press favours the new plan," and quote in support of this statement, say THE DAILY MAIL, THE SKETCH, THE TELEGRAPH, & EVENING NEWS, for it is 10 to 1 that on all major issues these papers will think alike. If, however, the HERALD, THE TIMES and THE NEWS-CHRONICLE also support whatever plan it may be, then you are justified. BUT you must quote the usually opposed camps equally to convince your listeners. Also be careful of "unanimous" in this connection, for if the entire British press except the DAILY WORKER speaks with one voice, then it is still not unanimous.

In using a story such as "Scrutator's" opinion of the Big Four conference we are laying ourselves open to charges of partisanship. The observations of the SUNDAY TIMES or THE OBSERVER may be the fairest summing-up, but those papers have a very definite political line, and after all, what they say is not news, and can quite justifiable be ignored.

We must, as far as possible, draw a line between news and comment.
HEADINGS. In the past, I feel we have been apt to overdo our headlines both in length and number. These should be as simple as possible, so that the listener can understand their import without undue thought, and yet piquant enough to invite him to listen to the 'follow'. Only the main points of the news should be given, and these in as economical a way as possible. Keep out dependent clauses.

ORDER. The sequence of stories should be given as much thought as possible. Natural sequence according to content or an easy 'follow-through' or geography will often keep an item higher than would ordinarily be the case. This helps to give a bulletin 'rhythm'; but don't let the comparatively frivolous come before a serious item, even if it is fresher news -- the latest snooker results or Mollison's arrival, for instance, before the Big Four. On the other hand if the Big Four or any other 'serious' story is stale, or in its essence, dull, there should be no hesitation in dropping it.

"JOURNALESE" is raising its ugly head here and there. I'm not so much concerned with purists' criticism as with the valuable time these phrases waste if they're allowed to multiply. Here are a few I've noticed in the last few days: "Prior to" (before): "with a view to (to): "as from" (from): "with the object of ascertaining if (to find out if). Note: "Advise" and "warn" take an object: "feature" is a very dubious verb.

LEICESTER COTTON
I must draw attention once more to the much vexed question of quotations from the press. My notes on this subject a fortnight ago do not appear to have made clear the extreme care which must be taken over such tendentious subjects, for instance, as the French elections.

I can only repeat that quotations from the British press are not news and should be used sparingly, and then only to illuminate a point not made clear from the cables. It is not our job to comment on news; that's the prerogative of the Talks Department.

The fact that the BBC Pacific Service used such a spate of comment today on the elections does not sanction our repeating material so obviously ill-balanced. The BBC's Home Service seldom, if ever, uses press comment and as a National station we should also avoid it.

Let's examine today's 1.30 p.m. bulletin. Headlines -- "London newspapers describe the French election results as a vote for stability." To support this we have 15 lines from the "Daily Mail"; 4½ from the "Sketch"; 4 from the Telegraph; 6 from the Times and 2 from the News Chronicle. Now this is a completely lop-sided sampling of the London newspapers, as you will see by referring to the chart which I laid out last week. It may be true that these comments were indicative of the general trend of press opinion, but our story does not bear it out. Our listeners, particularly if of 'Leftist' tendencies, would be quite justified in dubbing us one-sided. We cannot afford giving hostages to either camp.

It may be true that France will achieve stability as a result of the swing to the Right. On the other hand, it may reasonably be argued by the impartial observer that the mere fact that the MRP has achieved a majority, does not necessarily constitute a really working majority, for the Communists and the Socialists between them (if they like to work together) still have the whiphand.

I would like to see our cable staff examine all such contentious material with an open and critical mind, rather than rely on ready-made opinion.

In any case, please first apply the test of "is it news or is it comment?" and use your judgment accordingly.
APPENDIX S

MISTAKES IN BULLETINS - A SUBMISSION TO COMMISSION MEETING,
16 October 1946. By J.S. HANLON

No.1. On July 19, the 7 o'clock a.m. news bulletin said that the
Postmaster-General in the House of Representatives said that 80,000
people were on the waiting list for telephones, etc.

This was repeated in the 8 o'clock a.m. bulletin.

Senator Cameron, the Ministerial head of the Broadcasting
Commission, is not a member of the House of Representatives.

A paragraph in the Sydney Morning Herald of the same day stated
that the Minister for Information, Mr Calwell, representing the
Postmaster-General, gave this information to the House of Representatives.

No.2. On the same day the bulletin stated that the Wheat Industry
Stabilisation Bill "is still held up in the Canberra House of
Representatives".

It was not "held up" but was still under discussion when the
House adjourned.

The bulletin also stated that Opposition speakers, led by the
Leader of the Country Party, attacked one clause after another, and
mentioned that "other important points" called for by the Opposition,
were not acceptable to the Government, or words to that effect.

"Important points" obviously is comment which is against the
directive given recently to the news staff.

No.3. On July 20, the 7 o'clock p.m. bulletin said that the nominations
for the Federal elections would close on September 3. This date was altered on the 11 o'clock bulletin to September 23.

The following morning the 7 o'clock and 8 o'clock bulletins
repeated the information that nominations would close on September 23.

This was a serious mistake, which calls for explanation, and, if
I may say so, some disciplinary action.

No.4. On Sunday, August 4, at 8.45 and on Sunday, August 11, in the
8.45 bulletins, two items were repeated in almost identical forms; the
one concerning the introduction of Frequency Modulation on the second
occasion was read immediately after the first.

This reveals a lack of supervision and apparently a complete
absence of editorial or sub-editorial control.
No.5. On Wednesday, August 14, the 7 o'clock p.m. bulletin announced that the Sydney Morning Herald had received a verdict of £3,000 odd damages against the Railway Commissioner for refusing to handle their composite paper during the 1944 newspaper strike.

The same item was used in full in both the 7 and 8 o'clock State news sessions the following morning, making three broadcasts of the same item on three consecutive sessions without any additional facts.

No.6. I understand that the Premiers' Conference in Canberra, which had considered and determined several matters of national importance, was completely ignored by the A.B.C. News Services, and some of the Premiers were very caustic because there was no mention of their meeting, but there was quite a deal broadcast about an offer being made by John Wren to Bill O'Reilley of £3,000 to enable him to play in the Test Matches, and that some tennis player had also received considerable publicity in regard to the Davis Cup.

No.7. Our National News Bulletin also stated on the 7 o'clock bulletin on Saturday that "rationing was being continued next year, and new coupon books were being printed for distribution on expiry of the present books in December."

The Prime Minister on Monday stated that no decision had been made, or could be made with respect to rationing until after the elections, Parliament having been dissolved, but as a matter of routine, ration books were being printed as a precautionary measure.

It was apparent that the A.B.C. news service, presumably after a check-up, could inform listeners that Wren's offer to O'Reilley had not yet been received by him, etc., etc., but apparently those in control did not think it worth while contacting the Prime Minister or the Minister in Charge regarding the continuation of rationing before the misleading statement was broadcast.

No.8. One of the news bulletins on Monday also stated that the Duke of Gloucester had left Canberra that morning for Central Australia.

The Duke and Duchess had been in the Northern Territory for several days, and it was obvious that he had left Darwin and not Canberra, as stated in the bulletin.

No.9. On August 5, the 7 o'clock news State session gave an account of the funeral of a gangster in Sydney who had been found dead some days previously on a vacant allotment, and that the funeral was attended only by his mother and a number of vigilant detectives.

No reference of any kind, however, in this bulletin was made to the important story featured in the same afternoon's papers that a shipment of prize cattle worth over £20,000 from overseas had reached Sydney that afternoon.
Another slip - in the middle of our driest spell and the worst drought in Australia since 1902, a news service recently said that on account of heavy rain the River Murray was overflowing its banks.

The phenomenon might have been due to the melting of the recent heavy snows on the Southern Alps rather than the non-existent rains.

A phone call to the Weather Bureau might have established the fact and provided a very interesting news item.

On August 28, in the morning bulletin it was stated that the Second Security Loan would open in three weeks' time, a week before the elections, but according to the daily press the date fixed is approximately October 15.

COTTON’S REPLY

Attachment to resolution of Commission meeting of 16 October 1946

1. There was no mention of the subject in the morning bulletins of July 19th. At 11.00 p.m. that night, however, one item said that 77,000 people were on the waiting list for telephones. The actual phrase used was: "In answer to questions by Mr Cameron (Liberal, South Australia), in the House of Representatives, the Postmaster General said that some time would elapse before the lag was overtaken ..." The words "Mr Calwell for" were omitted for reasons (mistaken) of brevity.

2. The term "still held up" was not used in the story of the Wheat Industry Stabilisation Bill. The actual text was:-

"The Wheat Industry Stabilisation Bill is still making slow progress through the House of Representatives. The House sat yesterday for the longest session for many months -- from half past ten in the morning until after midnight. Despite this, the Wheat Bill is still in the Committee stages.

Opposition speakers yesterday, led by the Deputy Leader of the Country Party (Mr McEwen) made repeated attempts to amend one clause after another. Most of the amendments followed the second reading speeches by the Opposition and aimed at the exclusion of the 1945-46 wheat harvest from the stabilisation scheme. Other important points asked for by the Opposition were that wheat should be paid for at country rail sidings, instead of at ports, and that changes of the guaranteed price should be permitted to correspond with changes in production costs.

Opposition speakers also strongly resisted any amendments put forward by the Government.

At one stage, three hours were spent debating a single Government amendment for the insertion of a few words which would give the Minister final say in directing the Wheat Board in certain cases.
Finally, the Prime Minister (Mr Chifley) applied the gag and the House divided twice in quick succession -- first on the closure motion and then on the amendment.

Both were carried by 37 votes to 16.

When the debate was finally adjourned, the House had dealt with little more than half the Bill.

The House rose after midnight.

To-day's session will begin at half past ten this morning."

This resume I consider a fair one and the use of the word "important" in conjunction with the rest of the story admissible.

3. This was a mistake. The proper date, September 3rd., was given in the 7.00 p.m. Bulletin and was incorrectly given (apparently owing to a typing error) at 11.00 p.m. on July 20th. The mistake was carried through on July 21st.

4. There is no record of any duplication in these bulletins and the reader (Sanderson) has no recollection of them. If such were the case, the reason would be either that

(a) the typist pinned two copies of the one story together. This is unlikely to remain unnoticed by the chief sub-editor or the reader, unless the bulletin were so late as to preclude adequate checking.

(b) The announcer became confused in turning over.

5. It is a common practice to carry stories through from the night to the morning bulletins. This was treated as any other -- on its interest value.

6. This bears no relation to fact. Over a week, more than two hundred lines were devoted to the matters discussed by the Premiers' Conference -- that is, a total of nearly half an hour. The one decision omitted was on immigration, but the proposals had been given a very full coverage earlier.

7. The actual statement, which was an official "hand-out" and came from both Melbourne and Canberra, read: "On present indications, it is expected that rationing of meat, butter, sugar, cotton and other clothing materials will be continued next year. However, the final decision will be made by the Commonwealth Government".

8. This was a definite slip on our part.

9. On August 6th, in the 7.45 a.m. bulletin, it was reported that a cargo of stud stock valued at £20,000 had arrived in Sydney and also that a large cargo the day before had arrived in Melbourne. Naturally, this would not be carried nearly 32 hours later. On 7th August, mention was made of the funeral of the gangster Flaherty.

10. This was not "another slip". The facts were as stated -- the River Murray was flooded owing to rains, not melted snow. The Weather Bureau is telephoned both here and in Melbourne several times a day and it is, in fact, the source of virtually all our weather stories.
The possibility that the cause of the floods might have been melting snow had, in fact, occurred to the news staff, who took particular care to check on this point.

11. This was a mistake.
APPENDIX T

NEWS ITEM DEALING WITH DEBATE ON COMMUNISM

Wednesday, April 23, 1947
1.30 p.m. bulletin:

Mr Abbott (Country Party, N.S.W.) secured an adjournment of the House of Representatives this morning to discuss, as his motion stated, "the danger of Communistic influence on the Commonwealth Public Service, including the staff of the C.S.I.R."

After speaking for about a quarter of an hour he was refused an extension of time by 37 votes to 20.

Mr Abbott was twice called to order by the Speaker, Mr Rosevear, who told him that he was "off the track" and that unless he kept to the subject of his motion he would be asked to resume his seat.

Amidst heckling by Government members, Mr Abbott named 21 alleged Communists and said that the list was far from complete. He said that Communists were wielding such influence that the Government was afraid to act against them.

Mr Abbott stated that in June 1940 Mr A.W. Rudkin, now of the C.S.I.R., had been sentenced to four months imprisonment in Western Australia for publishing information which might be of advantage to the enemy.

The Minister in charge of the C.S.I.R. (Mr Dedman) said that when Mr Rudkin was convicted in 1940 there was a feeling of near hysteria abroad and many proceeded against should not have been convicted at all.

After the debate had proceeded for an hour the Vice-president of the Executive Council (Mr Scully) moved the closure. This was agreed to by 36 votes to 20.
APPENDIX U

EXTRACTS FROM BULLETINS DEALING WITH THE QUEENSLAND RAIL STRIKE

12.30 Bulletin dated 17 March 1948

There were sensational developments in the 7-week's old QUEENSLAND strike this morning when police took strong action to enforce the HANLON Government's anti-picketing law.

In a serious disturbance outside the BRISBANE Trades Hall, severe injuries were inflicted on MR FRED PATTERSON, Communist member for BOWEN in the QUEENSLAND Parliament.

PATTERSON is in BRISBANE Hospital with a probable fracture of the skull and possible injury to the brain. A few minutes ago his condition was reported to be satisfactory.

Another man, MR JACK GRAYSON, is being treated for concussion and a torn scalp.

The disturbance began when police clashed with about 150 strikers who were carrying placards attacking the HANLON Labour Government of QUEENSLAND.

The strikers' procession which began at the BRISBANE Trades Hall, was led by two men carrying the AUSTRALIAN flag and the EUREKA flag, followed by a group with a coffin bearing the words "Trade Unionism" on its sides.

At an overhead railway bridge, about 200 police advanced on the marchers in close formation. Police drew their batons and the strikers fought back with the staffs of their placards, but within about 10 minutes were driven back into the Trades Hall.

Police then cordoned off the building while strikers shouted slogans from the balconies and windows.

During the demonstration, five men were arrested, including the Secretary of the QUEENSLAND Labour Council, Mr M. HEALY, and the barrister, MR MAX JULIUS.

Heated scenes followed in the BRISBANE police Court when the five men were charged with obstructing traffic and taking part in an illegal procession.

Counsel for the accused men - MR MURPHY - said that police, including plainclothes men, had used their batons in a brutal manner. One detective had seriously injured Mr PATTERSON, M.L.A., and another man - MR SYDNEY BOYD - had had his face mercilessly knocked about and his nose broken. Altogether, Mr MURPHY added, the scene had been a most disgusting display of police brutality.

MR MURPHY said that the accused men would not plead because they had committed no offence. However, the Magistrate replied that MR MURPHY must either plead for the men or be dealt with.
The Magistrate said, however, that BOYD, who appeared in Court with his face covered with blood, should be given medical aid at once.

MR JULIUS, the accused Barrister, attempted to lay a charge against detectives, but the Magistrate ordered his removal from COURT.

Finally, all five accused men were remanded until tomorrow.

7 p.m. dated 17 March 1948

Police action during a charge against strikers in BRISBANE this morning has brought protests from labour organisations representing hundreds of thousands of Australian unionists.

Late this evening in SYDNEY, a meeting of ten Federal Unions, representing 200-thousand workers in the metal, mining, rail waterfront and shipping industries, condemned what it termed "the savage treatment of peaceful demonstrators in BRISBANE." This meeting called for the resignation of PREMIER HANLON, and the dismissal of the QUEENSLAND Chief of Police, and members of his force who were responsible for today's incident.

The meeting also called on its 200-thousand unionists to resist in every way the anti-strike legislation of the QUEENSLAND and VICTORIAN GOVERNMENTS. It will ask the A.C.T.U. or organise a nation-wide campaign against the legislation.

The meeting produced a Manifesto to be issued to all trade unions, declaring that unionists will use their industrial and financial strength to protect their traditional right to strike. This Manifesto goes on to say that the political beliefs of individual trade unionists are unassailable; and that any move to ban the COMMUNIST PARTY would be regarded as the first step towards suspension of political and religious liberty.

Mass meetings in all States are being organised to support the QUEENSLAND Strikers.

In MELBOURNE today, Interstate Executive of the A.C.T.U. unanimously carried two resolutions on the QUEENSLAND trouble. The first described the HANLON Government's anti-strike legislation as a direct attack on the Trade Union Movement and went on to demand the immediate withdrawal of the anti-strike laws. The second condemned today's police action, describing it as a "Savage attack on trade unionists."

In NEW SOUTH WALES, the Western Miners Federation decided to protest by calling the first strike in another State in sympathy with the QUEENSLAND strikers.

All Western mines will be idle tomorrow, and the Western Miners have called on their Federal Executive to organise general action through the A.C.T.U. and the NEW SOUTH WALES and Labour Council. The President of the Western Federation, MR MARA, said he did not know whether the protest would develop into a general strike.
The Seamen's Union Executive decided this afternoon to instruct ships crews in all Australian ports to telegraph immediate protests to the QUEENSLAND Government, and to include a threat that if brutal police methods continue the Seamen will continue their boycott of QUEENSLAND ports after the rail strike is settled.

Earlier today, the A.C.T.U. Interstate Executive decided to send a delegation to CANBERRA, and later to QUEENSLAND, to discuss the QUEENSLAND situation with National and state leaders.

For those who missed earlier bulletins, here is a brief account of this morning's incident in BRISBANE.

About 150 strikers began a procession, carrying placards in Saint Patrick's Day Green, attacking the HANLON Government. They were led by two men carrying the AUSTRALIAN Flag and the EUREKA flag.

As the procession reached a narrow railway bridge about 100 yards from their starting point at the Trades Hall, some 200 police moved in to break up the march. Scrimmages began immediately; many of the police drew batons, and some strikers used their placards as weapons. The out-numbered strikers were driven back into the Trades Hall, and the police cordoned off the building.

The State COMMUNIST Member for BOWEN, MR FRED PATTERSON, was taken to BRISBANE hospital, suffering from probable fracture of the skull, and possible brain injuries. His condition was described this evening as "satisfactory." Other men were treated for head injuries.

Five men were arrested, including the Secretary of the QUEENSLAND labour council, Mr M. HEALY, and a barrister, Mr MAX JULIUS.

When the men appeared in BRISBANE Police Court, there were heated scenes their counsel first refused to plead and then said that the police had given "a disgusting display of brutality".

Union protests against police action in BRISBANE this morning when strikers attempted to stage a St Patrick's Day march, reached a peak when an unofficial meeting of ten Federal unions in SYDNEY this evening condemned the HANLON Government's activities.

The meeting represented 200-thousand workers in the metal, mining, rail waterfront and shipping industries. It called today's police action "savage treatment of peaceful demonstrators;" demanded the resignation of Premier HANLON and also the dismissal of QUEENSLAND's Chief of Police and any members of his force responsible for today's incident.
The meeting went on to call for united action throughout the country against the Anti-strike laws of QUEENSLAND and VICTORIA. It issued a manifesto declaring that unionists will use their full strength to protect the traditional right to strike; and that any move to ban the COMMUNIST PARTY will be regarded as the first step towards suspension of political liberty.

In MELBOURNE, interstate executives of the A.C.T.U. decided to send a delegation to CANBERRA, and later to QUEENSLAND to discuss the situation. Later on, the A.C.T.U. executive carried resolutions condemning the HANLON Government's anti-strike laws and today's action by BRISBANE police.

The first sign of direct action outside QUEENSLAND in sympathy with the QUEENSLAND strikers appeared in NEW SOUTH WALES when the Western Miners' Federation called a 24-hour strike as a protest against the BRISBANE incident. It's expected that a large number of northern and southern mines in NEW SOUTH WALES will also be idle in sympathy.

Many telegrams of protest have been sent by unions and union members to the HANLON Government; and a number of others, expressing solidarity and sympathy with Queensland workers, has been received at the BRISBANE Trades Hall. Most of the latter demand an open enquiry into today's clash, which is described as a "Brutal attack" on QUEENSLAND workers.

The incident which started the wave of protest began this morning when 150 workers started out from BRISBANE trades Hall, carrying placards in St Patrick's Day Green, with slogans attacking the HANLON Government. At the narrow bridge about 100 yards from the Trades Hall, some 200 police closed in to break up the procession. Scuffles began immediately; many of the police drew batons and strikers used their placards as weapons. After the strikers had been driven back to the Trades Hall, the State's Communist Member for BOWEN (MR FRED PATTERSON) was taken to BRISBANE Hospital, suffering from a probable fracture of the skull and possible brain injuries. Other men were treated for head injuries. Late this evening, MR PATTERSON'S condition was said to be 'satisfactory.'

This morning's trouble - and particularly the injuries to MR PATTERSON - were mentioned several times in the QUEENSLAND Parliament today. The Premier, MR HANLON, said he would give Parliament full details as soon as he had the information. One Member (Mr AIKENS - an Independent) repeatedly tried to speak on the disturbance, but was cut short.
APPENDIX V

NEWS ITEM DEALING WITH DEBATE ON THE SOVIET UNION

AUSTRALIAN NEWS 7.45 a.m. - 25/9/47.

During the debate on foreign affairs in the Australian Parliament last night, Mr ABBOTT - Country Party, NEW SOUTH WALES - accused RUSSIA of disregarding the ethics of diplomacy. He referred to the recent speech by the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister - Mr VISHINSKY - and said that the Soviet was threatening, brow-beating and bullying GREECE and TURKEY.

The only way to stop RUSSIA, Mr ABBOTT went on, was for the democracies to present a solid front and tell her that if she did not end her policy of aggression they would make war.

Mr FRASER (Labour, NEW SOUTH WALES) said that Mr ABBOTT's speech and the one made earlier in the debate by Mr SPENDER (Liberal, NEW SOUTH WALES) were a disservice to world peace.

The Opposition Leader (Mr MENZIES) backed Mr ABBOTT's statement saying the time had come when the democracies should say to RUSSIA: "Thus far and no further". He said RUSSIA had spread her domination by taking things first and arguing later.

Mr MENZIES forecast that some day AUSTRALIA would regret having sponsored intervention in the Indonesian dispute. The time might come when AUSTRALIA would have to ask BRITAIN to use her veto to prevent similar meddling in what AUSTRALIA regarded as her own affairs.

During the debate, Mr SPENDER (Liberal, NEW SOUTH WALES) was suspended. While Mr DEDMAN was speaking, Mr SPENDER interjected, and the speaker threatened to name him if he interrupted again. Mr SPENDER did so, and was named.

The House divided on the motion for Mr SPENDER's suspension, which was carried by thirty-six votes to twenty-four.

The debate was adjourned at half-past-ten, and the House rose until this afternoon.

Mr MENZIES also referred last night to the resignation from the External Affairs Department of Mr PAUL HASLUCK. He said that despite the claim by Dr EVATT that this was for personal reasons, Mr HASLUCK disclosed that he had resigned for reasons of high policy. Mr HASLUCK's resignation had confirmed that AUSTRALIA had a one-man Foreign Policy.

The Minister for Defence, Mr DEDMAN, said it should be recorded that Mr HASLUCK had resigned five times for what he termed "personal reasons". Mr DEDMAN denied that AUSTRALIA's foreign policy was the policy of one man.
APPENDIX W

Membership of the Commission 1932-61

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C.L. Jones (Chairman)</td>
<td>1932-34</td>
<td>Company director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.R. Brooks (Vice-Chairman)</td>
<td>1932-39</td>
<td>Manufacturer and pastoralist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.B. Orchard</td>
<td>1932-39</td>
<td>Jeweller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.S. Wallace</td>
<td>1932-35</td>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Couchman</td>
<td>1932-42</td>
<td>Women's Organisation Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.J. Cleary (Chairman)</td>
<td>1934-45</td>
<td>Businessman/Civil Servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.W. Kitto</td>
<td>1935-39</td>
<td>Civil Servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.C. Rigby (Vice-Chairman)</td>
<td>1940-42</td>
<td>Solicitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Richard Boyer (Chairman from 1945)</td>
<td>1940-61</td>
<td>Pastoralist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.J. McGibbon</td>
<td>1940-42</td>
<td>Chartered Accountant/Company Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.G.J. Foley (Vice-Chairman)</td>
<td>1942-44</td>
<td>Unionist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ernestine Hill</td>
<td>1942-44</td>
<td>Author/journalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir John Medley</td>
<td>1942-60</td>
<td>School Teacher/Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.R. Dawes (Vice-Chairman)</td>
<td>1944-67</td>
<td>Unionist/Politician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivy M. Kent</td>
<td>1944-61</td>
<td>Women's Organisation Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.S. Hanlon</td>
<td>1945-49</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.W. Netto (Treasury)</td>
<td>1949-62</td>
<td>Civil Servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.E.R. Vanthoff (PMG's Dept.)</td>
<td>1949-56</td>
<td>Civil Servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.W. Anderson</td>
<td>1949-52</td>
<td>Unionist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dame Enid Lyons</td>
<td>1951-62</td>
<td>Politician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.W. O'Donnell (Treasury)</td>
<td>1952-56</td>
<td>Civil Servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.C. Stewart</td>
<td>1952-56</td>
<td>Civil Servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsie F. Byth</td>
<td>1956-60</td>
<td>Women's Organisation Representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.B. Halvorsen</td>
<td>1956-67</td>
<td>Chartered Accountant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.G. Lowndes</td>
<td>1956-74</td>
<td>Businessman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhoda M. Felgate</td>
<td>1960-72</td>
<td>Speech and Drama Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.T. Reid</td>
<td>1961-67</td>
<td>Company Director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX X

News - Mechanisms of Communication

Up to 1943, there was a considerable degree of informality in the News Department's communications with management and with other departments. Dixon wrote direct to the General Manager on many issues, such as the newspaper agreements. He also communicated directly with other departments, such as Programmes. Letters from listeners concerning news were answered either by Dixon or the General Manager. However, the general impression received from ABC files is that the flow of information, and the level of consultation was not good. There were complaints about alterations to news broadcast times and durations without advice being received by the Department.

With the decline of Commission confidence in Dixon and his staff, a new period of greater supervision was ushered in from 1943 when Deamer was created Controller of Public Relations and Dixon's Department placed under him. Henceforth communications with other departments was not made direct but through Deamer, and his successor, McCall. Dixon did not however relinquish his right to communicate directly with the General Manager and frequently did so on major policy issues, particularly those in which he was in dispute with management. Noticeable at this time, was Dixon's growing belief that he would get a fairer hearing from the Commission than from management, and he made many attempts to obtain permission to see the Commission. Such requests had to be approved by the General Manager and then by the Commission itself. Dixon did secure this on several occasions. On others, requests were turned down. The Commission became particularly anxious to keep him at arms length from 1946 onwards.

The period 1943-46 saw a decline in status of News because of the reorganisation, and a reduction in contacts with other departments, thus helping to isolate News from programme and technical developments taking place. Dixon was not anxious to have many dealings with either Deamer or McCall, whom he regarded as basically hostile to him and he kept correspondence with and through them to a minimum. There were however informal office gatherings, described by Dixon in Inside the ABC and at a formal level he attended the annual meetings of the Managers and Federal Officers. These meetings could and did discuss any programme or technical matter affecting any department. Many of their resolutions went to the Commission for discussion and/or approval. Dixon was frequently on the defensive at these meetings when news was on the agenda. Other departments resented the heavier demands on time made by the News Department, because of the Government's wartime insistence on more bulletins.

From 1943, copies of all Dixon's correspondence went to the Controller of Public Relations. All inter-departmental correspondence was by memorandum. Dixon at all times seems to have been a very conscientious reader of all material received, and usually replied almost immediately. He read a number of overseas journals about broadcasting and distributed articles on radio news style and radio developments to his staff. He at times sought and received comments on the grammar and syntax of bulletins from 'authorities' outside the Commission. There is no suggestion that he failed to pass on to his staff instructions received from Commission or management, but the
manner in which they were passed on sometimes made it clear that Dixon himself was not in agreement with the decision. Memos from Dixon to his staff, containing these decisions, often contain the inference to his personal disagreement. This 'formal' issuing of instructions, as distinct from any 'practical' efforts to implement them, weakened Commission authority and preserved the solidarity of the news staff.

The Chairmanship of Boyer and the increased responsibilities of the News Department as a result of the 1946 legislation brought about major changes in the News Department's relationships with others in the ABC. From his appointment in 1945, Boyer sought to involve the News Department more in major decisions concerning them. This was partly because he felt a new type of approach was necessary to sort out his major problem area, and also because of Hanlon's influence within the Commission. The debate by senior news and programme officers over the 1946 News Policy was quite unique for the ABC and was intended to usher a new era of cordial relationships. The institution of the annual News Editors' Conferences in 1946, provided the News Department with a means of influencing both management and the Commission. It also enabled the Chairman and the General Manager who invariably attended some of the conference sessions, with an opportunity of clarifying and explaining Commission policy. Other senior officers representing programmes or finance also appeared if issues concerning them were brought up. All resolutions from these conferences were submitted to the Controller of Programmes and the General Manager for comments. Some were approved at this level and others which were the subject of disagreement or which involved some major policy area were referred to the Commission for decision. It is noteworthy that the conferences rarely however involved themselves in major issues of style of content. They rather tended to be concerned with the practical problems of news-gathering and presentation. They were used to put pressure on programmes for extended or different bulletin times and became a useful counterpoise to the Managers and Senior Officers Conferences which frequently urged the Commission to cut back on news output. They continue to this day, but since 1950 have not been held annually, but usually at three or four year intervals.

When, in 1946 news was placed under the control of the Assistant General Manager, it was directed that he and the General Manager sight all news correspondence, both internal and external. This was assiduously done, particularly during the disputes between Dixon and Cotton. Both Moses and Finlay frequently commented to Dixon after perusing his correspondence files. Cotton's memoranda were also viewed in this way. This period of close supervision seems to have ended soon after Hamilton's appointment. In ushering in a period when, to use Oakley's words, "news seemed to be a law unto itself", Hamilton, while continuing to work to the Assistant General Manager apparently managed to divest himself of much of the red tape that Dixon and Cotton had to contend with. The General Manager and the Assistant General Manager took less and less interest in routine news letters and memoranda and allowed Hamilton much more of a free rein. This resulted from increasing confidence in News generally and the high standing of Hamilton himself. He quickly established himself on an equal footing with the other heads of departments, and had a good reputation in the eyes of Boyer and Moses.
His 'man of principle' image served him in good stead in his dispute with Boyer over the inclusion of film in TV News. Although feelings ran high, in the middle of this period, his Department was elevated to Division status, and he became Controller. This put him on an equal footing for the first time with the Controller of Programmes and superior in status to such departments as Talks. This reinforced the independence of action of the news staff and accentuated its insularity.

This seemed to confirm the 'rightness' of the approach taken to news since 1949 and made much less likely any marked changes.
APPENDIX Y

EXAMPLES OF ABC NEWS BULLETINS BEFORE AND AFTER THE START OF THE INDEPENDENT NEWS SERVICE, 29 MARCH 1944 AND 7 NOVEMBER 1947

2FC........................6.55 a.m. COMPILED BY: W. McCARTHY

Wednesday, 29th March, 1944...... ............... ............

HERE IS THE AUSTRALIAN NEWS:

More than one-sixth of the first Victory Loan has been subscribed already. The Commonwealth Loans Director (Mr. G. Sanfield) says reports from all over Australia indicate a splendid reception everywhere.

The New South Wales drive will be opened today by the Minister for Navy and Munitions (Mr. Johnstone), following a march of Australian and American troops. The New South Wales Premier has ordered all flags to be flown on Government buildings to mark the occasion.

The Minister for Air (Mr. Drakeford) says that in three Lancaster weeks time, the RAAF's four-engined bomber will begin a tour of Queensland to stimulate interest in the Loan.

...etc...
The Federal Treasurer (Mr. Chifley) — following an attack of bronchitis — was unable to attend Parliament yesterday. He expects to resume his duties before the end of the week.

...000...

The Anglican Bishop of Newcastle (Dr. de Witt Billy) says Rome should be declared an open city by the belligerents to spare it from bombardment. His Grace continued: "If Germany refuses to dismantle Rome's fortifications, and withdraw her garrisons, Christians will have to succumb in an allied attack on the city, but everyone who realises the significance of Rome to the world, will share the fervent hope that it can be spared the dangers of attack."

...000...

The Director of RAF recruiting (Group Captain A. Chadwick) says two-thousand men, and an equal number of women are needed by the Air Force immediately, for work in vital equipment and stores branches. Valuable business training in the custody and accounting of equipment and stores will be gained by the men and women who join these branches. Opportunities for promotion and wider experience will occur as the branches expand.
The Directors of the Australian Iron and Steel Limited announce that the Company's works at Port Kembla are anxious to resume normal activity at the earliest date on which it is safe to do so. Steps had been taken by the Company to reduce the operating rate of the coke ovens for safety reasons, following the shortage of coal.

The Director's statement expressed the hope that the coke oven would be brought back to normal by Tuesday week.

Australia's sugar production amounted to five-hundred and sixty-eight thousand five hundred and fifty tons for last year, is the lowest for seventeen years. In 1927, the output was five-hundred and eight-thousand, 602 tons.

That is the End of the Australian News:

(Times Come.)
The House of Representatives after passing the Entertainments Tax Bill and two other measures through all stages yesterday, adjourned until today at noon. The Senate discussed the Income Tax Assessment Bill until eleven o'clock last night, and adjourned until this morning at half past ten.

The Leader of the Opposition (Senator Maclean) supported the principle of the pay-as-you-earn Taxation, but indicated that he would move amendments later with the object of eliminating the 25-per cent clause.

Senator Spicer (W... VictoriA) - who was a member of the Joint Committee - which made recommendations for the recent Bill - said he agreed with the Measure generally, but was opposed to the clause dealing with the 25-per cent.

Senator Arnold (Labour, New South Wales) said taxpayers had a deferred liability for 1943-1944, and that this liability must be met before pay-as-you-earn was introduced. Three-quarters of this deferred liability would be given back to the wage-earner.
Discharged ex-soldiers who have served overseas, and are under twenty-one, will be able to vote at the forthcoming State elections. An amendment to permit this was carried on the voices in the New South Wales Parliament yesterday.

Two Bills were discussed in the State Parliament last night. One will provide for the employment of four hundred more firemen, at a cost of one-hundred-and-forty-five thousand pounds a year.

The Chief Secretary (Mr. Baddeley) says some of the Bills proposals may be introduced earlier, if the manpower position improves.

The second Bill deals with the education of吏itter disabled physically-handicapped children. The Minister for Education (Mr. Wyatt) said most of the children who would be cared for under the Bill, were blind and deaf. At the present, only about fifty-percent of these children were getting a proper education.
Cattle slaughtermen at the Homebush abattoirs have agreed to increase beef production by one-hundred-and-forty-five carcasses a week. This is announced by Mr. Justice Cantor, Chairman of the Meat Industry Reference Board. He says the men have reserved the right to go back to their former practice of killing and dressing not more than ten-over per team when not enough cattle are yarded. Yesterday, sheep slaughtermen killed more beasts than on any working day since January.

When the Sydney campaign for the first Victory Loan opens during the lunch hour today, Mr. Alan Goad will sing "The Victory Song," which was specially composed for the Loan. The composer is the pianist and War Loan Organiser - Mr. John Allison.

Speakers will include the Premier - Mr. McKell.
Lady Wakehurst, wife of the Governor of New South Wales, laid the foundation stone of a big new hostel to accommodate forty members of the Women's Land Army at Batlow yesterday. She said it was the first building in New South Wales to be named after her. Lord Wakehurst officially opened a new canteen and recreation centre at the main Women's Land Army camp in the district.

Mrs. Rodney Dunbar, who died at her home at Edgecliff last Sunday, was a well known worker for charity. She was on the Committee of the Children's Hospital and the Sydney Day Nurseries. Among her other interests were the Bush Brotherhood Movement, and the Bush Book Club.
Taxpayers who need the deductions made from their pay in the last few days of this month to settle their income tax assessments, will be allowed a few days' grace, even if payment is due on or before next Friday. A spokesman for the Taxation Department says people who have not yet received assessments should not worry.

NATIONAL BULLETIN.

FRIDAY, 7th NOVEMBER, 1947.

Compiled by: G.H. CLAY.

(Order Sheet).

1. VICTORIAN ELECTIONS.
2. MOTOR CHASSIS IMPORTS.
3. THORNTON TO PARIS.
4. STOLEN HICK CAR.
5. SPEEDWAY.
6. MR. EVATT'S PEACE PLEA.
7. WARD'S SPEECH.
8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMPETITIONS.
9. CONSENT WORKERS STRIKE.
10. POSTAGE CLERKS STRIKE.
11. FOURTH SECURITY LOAN.
12. WEATHER.
13. YOUTH BADLY BURNED.
2FC................ 11 p.m.  Compiled by: G.L. CLAY.

FRIDAY, 7th November, 1947.

THI' IS THE AUSTRALIAN NEWS FROM THE ABC.

READ BY:

DON SANDERSON.
VICTORIAN ELECTIONS.

7/11/47. 11 p.m. AUSTRALIAN. (CAMPBELL/CLAY) GJ

The people of VICTORIA will go to the poll tomorrow in one of the most important elections in the State over many years.

The fate of the CAIN Labour Government will be decided by the voting for a new Legislative Assembly.

The polling hours will be eight o'clock in the morning to eight in the evening, and voting will be compulsory.

Results will be broadcast in VICTORIA through 3-UK and regional stations. Special summaries of progress results will be given on the national network at a-quarter-to-nine, and on the interstate network at a-quarter-past-nine, ten minutes to ten, half-past ten, seventeen-minutes past eleven, and ten minutes to twelve.

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11.
Additional import cuts may be necessary in AUSTRALIA to cope with the dollar famine and to relieve the strain on the Empire dollar pool.

Our CANBERRA roundsman says the position is still being examined in the light of a further deterioration in the past few weeks.

It is expected that large numbers of BRITISH motor-chassis will be arriving in AUSTRALIA in the coming months. Motor-body builders in AUSTRALIA who have been building bodies for AMERICAN chassis may have to switch over, and build bodies for BRITISH chassis. There are already large numbers of AMERICAN and BRITISH chassis in AUSTRALIA.

Our roundsman says prospects of increasing petrol imports from sterling areas, especially the N.E.I., are being examined.
The alternative AUSTRALIAN delegate has been called to attend the meeting in PARIS of the Executive of the World Federation of Trade Unions.

He is Mr. ERNEST THORNTON, National Secretary of the Ironworkers' Union, who is flying to PARIS tonight.

The Chief AUSTRALIAN delegate, Mr. ALBERT MONK, Secretary of the A.C.T.U., will fly from NEW DELHI, where he has been attending an I.L.O. Conference.

The two AUSTRALIAN delegates are attending the Executive Meeting because it will discuss matters affecting the FAR EASTERN and PACIFIC areas.
A man charged with stealing the Buick Sedan Car, which disappeared from General Motors Testing Course at Erskine Park, Sydney, some weeks ago, is being brought back to Sydney from Darwin.

The man, Lex Carby, was before the Darwin Police Court today, and was remanded to Sydney in the custody of Detective Fraser. He is expected to leave Darwin by Sunday's plane.
At the SYDNEY Sports Ground tonight, it was officially announced that three ENGLISH speedway riders—DEAN OLIVER, DICK HARRIS, and OLIVER HART, had signed contracts to race at the SYDNEY Sportsground. They arrived a few days ago, with JACK HARRER, the ENGLISH Captain, as free-lances.

About 20-thousand people attended the SYDNEY Sports Ground speedway tonight.

The SENIOR SOLO SCRATCH RACE was won by the Australian International VIC LUGGAN, who defeated the Wimbledon Captain, NORMAN PARKER. AUR LAWSON (Australia) won the INTERNATIONAL SOLO MATCH RACE over 2-laps, from NORMAN PARKER (ENGLAND).

The final of the OPEN SOLO HANDICAP over 4-LAPs resulted: J. TAYLOR (New South Wales) first; L. MITCHELL (South Australia) second; DON LAWSON (New South Wales) third.
Attacks on RUSSIA were condemned tonight by the
NEW SOUTH WALES Minister for Housing, Mr. CLIVE EVATT, speaking
in SYDNEY, at a gathering of the AUSTRALIA-RUSSIA SOCIETY held
to mark RUSSIA'S National Day.

Mr. EVATT said Australians would refuse to be persuaded
into a feeling of hatred for RUSSIA. Nor would they allow
themselves to be drawn into hostilities against the SOVIET.
7/11/47. 11 p.m.  STATE.  (Beaumont/Clay)  GJ

WARD'S SPEECH.

Twelve-hundred people packed PADDINGTON TOWN HALL tonight to hear the Minister for External Territories, Mr. E.J. WARD, speak on the Federal Government's scheme to Nationalise the Trading Banks.

Apart from occasional interjections, most of which were drowned by applause, Mr. WARD was given a good reception.
The first day of the annual Local Government competitions was held at KATOOMBA today. Tomorrow, tennis finals and the golf championship will be decided.

Winners of the pairs competition in the bowls today were:

L. ALLEN and F. MILLER, of Penrith Municipal Council, who defeated H. GORDON and F. LAKE, of the Blue Mountain City Council, ten to five.
Five hundred starch and condiment makers in Sydney decided at a mass meeting today not to return to work until they were granted a weekly wage increase of one pound and better working conditions. The men directed their union officials to confer with the employers on these demands.
The sit-down strike by 35 despatch clerks employed at FARMERS Limited, came before MR. JUSTICE WEBB this afternoon. He asked the Union to recommend a return to work until the men's application came before the Court. At a later meeting the men decided they would go back in the morning if they did not lose any pay and if the Company would not oppose their application...
The present spell of pleasant weather over the State promises to last until Saturday night. It's expected that unsettled conditions with scattered thunderstorms will then develop in the West reaching coastal areas later on Sunday.
The latest country returns in the FOURTH SECURITY LOAN reveal some rather spectacular results.

CAMBERRA, with a quota of 70-thousand pounds, already has nearly 99-thousand in hand. COOGA, with a 15-thousand pounds quota, has more than trebled that amount; and at ARMIDALE, the quota of 40-thousand pounds has been exceeded by nearly 18-thousand.

In the Sydney area, HURSTVILLE, VAUCLUSE, LIVERPOOL, STRATHFIELD, PARKFAIR, KOGALAN, CONCORD, WEXFORD and FAIRFIELD have all exceeded their quotas.
An 18-year old youth was critically injured at MANLY, SYDNEY, tonight when he made contact with a wire carrying 2-thousand volts of electricity.

The boy, JOHN PATTERSON, who was clearing scrub, became tangled in wire, which somebody had thrown across a high tension cable in the nearby street. He was found by neighbours badly burned, and rushed to MANLY HOSPITAL in a serious condition.