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②
THE CASE FOR A QUEBEC POLICY
ON COMMUNICATIONS

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JEAN-PAUL L'ALLIER
MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS

MAY 1971
WORKING PAPER

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"Quebec has the primary responsibility for the cultural environment of its society as a whole. By the same token, it must be recognized that this responsibility extends into the life of each individual through what has come to be known as continuing education.

...Quebec is better placed than any other government to interpret the social and cultural situation of its people."

Robert Bourassa
Chicoutimi
September 26, 1970

The document we are presenting today is not a White Paper. We have neither the time nor the resources to produce one, and it seemed to us that in any case Quebec's communications policy should be based on the broadest possible consensus.

This is a working paper largely based on studies, surveys, research and reports made in Quebec or elsewhere on the vast and complex field of modern communications. It also takes into account the opinions already known or expressed by those in this province who are alive to the importance of communications to our people.

Starting from the present situation and proceeding to discuss a minimum of essential reforms and consolidations in the Department of Communications, this paper sketches the general outline and main

features of a communications policy and offers a plan for achieving it.

This paper should prompt as many Quebecers as possible to get involved in guiding and shaping what may then become a genuine instrument for achieving our identity and our cultural, social and economic development.

With this goal in mind, as progress is made in defining and completing the various stages of our task, we intend to consult private citizens, organizations and administrations who are conscious of the importance of such a policy for the future of Quebec and who are capable of making a worthwhile contribution in the interests of all.

Responsibility for developing a comprehensive communications policy lies first and foremost with Quebec. Such a policy cannot be dissociated from the development of its system of education, its culture and all of those things that belong to Quebec alone. Although this policy must be co-ordinated with those of other governments and must fit into the North American context, the first requirement is that it should embody Quebec's priorities. Thus it will serve to guarantee the continued normal development of Quebec society as a vigorous member of the Canadian and North American community.

A communications policy is not merely a useful thing for Quebec to have: it is vital, more vital every day. It is the aim of this study to make that policy possible.

"This decade will bring two revolutions--one in telecommunications, using satellites, among other things, and the other in information, brought about by the fantastic development of a new science: data

processing. This two-fold revolution will upset our conception of the world, of life, of management techniques, and the very structures of organizations."

.....

"If Quebec should decide for reasons of self-defence to stand aloof and not join the data processing consortium, it would be relegated to the rank of a modern tribal society, the unenviable lot of all societies that turn away or are prevented from following the path of modern progress."

"L'avenir des Québécois", by Léo Dion,
Sept Jours, Nov. 15, 1970, pp. 11-12.

INTRODUCTION

A phenomenon of modern life and an adjunct of industrial, and especially post-industrial societies, communications are developing at a dizzy pace. There is an infinite variety both of equipment and applications, and because they permeate our social fabric, communications are becoming important factors in bringing about fundamental changes not only in our environment and living conditions, but above all in the basic elements that make up the personality and character of individuals and peoples, of citizens and societies.

The importance of communications in economic life is obvious, so much so that some enterprises depend on communications for their very existence. Communications media are already among the chief preoccupations of scientific and industrial research. Often they are even the reason behind basic changes in industry which directly or indirectly affect every employee.

The public service and the administrations of public bodies such as governments, schools, hospitals, municipalities, etc. are at least as dependent on communications for their operation and for the quality of the services they must provide.

The impact of communications is tremendous, and while the benefits may be great, so are the risks and dangers.

The communications media are factors which affect the grouping of individuals; they are also factors in technological lag, and they do much to continually widen the gap between those who have them and those who don't, between those who can use them and those who do not have access to them, those who control them and those who are subject to them.

"The information that the government gives to the people must be relevant to what the people require in order to be bright and critical and constructive in affairs of state; the information that the people give to the government must be relevant to what the government requires in order to do what the people want done."

To know and Be Known I, Report of the
Task Force on Government Information,
p. 43 - 1969

While communications media are factors for development and progress, they may also become means of enslavement and domination.

As vehicles of the culture and individuality of a majority or of a people, will they be able to avoid causing the suffocation and death of other majorities or peoples who are weaker or smaller?

Thus by new and almost undreamed of means the fundamental rights of individuals and societies are joined together.

Communications are and will become a source of strength or of weakness, an instrument of growth and development or an agent in the breaking-up and erosion of societies.

Quebec and Quebecers, perhaps more than anyone, are facing this dangerous challenge. It cannot be avoided and we must not fail. That distinctiveness and individuality which set us apart within the Canadian fabric are conditional on and guaranteed by a Quebec communications policy.

Out of concern for the public interest and in order that

Quebecers may have the assurance that they can "be themselves" in their own province, the general goals of the Communications Department are conceived along three main lines:

1. With Regard to Private Citizens

The Department of Communications must ensure the inalienable right of Quebec citizens to a communications system that is adapted to their cultural, social, economic and political needs.

"As the speed of information increases, the tendency is for politics to move away from representation and delegation of constituents toward immediate involvement of the entire community in the central acts of decision."

Marshall McLuhan
Understanding Media - 1970

The right to communicate or the right to information is not set out in any provincial, federal or even international legislation. When we speak of "Quebec citizens", the term of course includes the French majority and the Anglo-Saxon, Indian, Eskimo or other minorities. A pluralistic society has a duty to guarantee the right of all groups of citizens to communicate, taking all their needs into consideration, in accordance with the goals and priorities for development of its territory.

2. With Regard to the Government

The Department of Communications must provide the government and its agencies, directly or indirectly, with an up-to-date communications system that will enable them to assume their full

responsibilities toward the people of Quebec.

Taking the economic situation and available resources into consideration and the need to ensure maximum investment now and in the future, the Department must maintain and create the technical systems required to handle government communications.

In order to assume all the government's responsibilities in these this field, multi-purpose systems will provide all communications (telephone, data transmission, etc.) between the different branches of the public administration. They will be responsible for distributing a steady flow of government information to the public and providing for "feedback" from the citizenry to the decision-makers, so that all the population may become actively involved in the control and direction of public affairs.

"The government's role in co-ordinating and planning is one of the main questions that would be settled if we had a clear and consistent policy. On the basis of studies we have made, we are inclined to believe that the government should take the lead in this sphere, taking an attitude of active encouragement rather than rigid control."

Instant World, Report on Telecommunications
in Canada - Telecommision - 1971

3. With Regard to the Community

The Department of Communications should promote and maintain a Quebec communications system, integrated with other Canadian or

international systems. This will contribute to general development and the achievement of Quebec's goals.

We in Quebec understand that the Quebec Department of Communications will have to co-operate in a Canadian communications policy, and chiefly in the orderly development of the radio frequency spectrum. Such co-operation is in no way incompatible with a Quebec policy on communications.

Moreover, in the field of software, it is essential if we are to ensure the development of all Quebecers to keep windows open on the world. Nothing could be more tragic than the intellectual isolation of a people or racial group that has withdrawn into its shell.

To encourage and speed up the industrial and technological development of Quebec in the area of communications and telecommunications equipment, it would be a good idea to promote co-operation between Quebec and other countries, especially France.

The three major objectives mentioned above have been our guide in preparing this working paper. These may be supplemented however by a number of sub-goals, particularly the following:

- _ Planning for the development of a modern, public communications system for Quebec, incorporating the latest technological advances.
- _ Recognition of the public service character of the communications systems vital to Quebec's existence as a society.
- _ Treatment of all aspects of communications in relation to the values of Quebec society and to social change.
- _ Planning and development of an up-to-date system of government communications to make information accessible to all citizens.

- _ Co-ordination of all agencies producing and distributing government information.
- _ Accessibility of government services to members of the public wishing to make inquiries or to express their own views or those of their social class.
- _ Maintenance of full-time external communications for Quebec.
- _ Determination of the function, rights and obligations of public service undertakings in the field of communications; their status as a territorial monopoly or non-monopoly, as private or public bodies.
- _ Incentives for the creation of a production capacity in communications goods and services, consistent with the aspirations of all Quebecers.
- _ Promotion and democratization of communications research (hardware and software).

The mere stating of these goals points up the weakness and inadequacy of government action in the face of the challenge posed by communications. Yet it is here that a start must be made if we are to reach the first goal quickly, which is to provide the best services possible to every citizen or group of citizens.

It is time to re-think the communications activities of the main government agencies around the concepts of production, distribution, marketing, analysis and research, etc. The organization of the government's internal communications must be reviewed and steps taken to set up and operate regional services. There must be constant

reviews of the government's information and publicity efforts. *

* "The swift development of technological resources made available to the mass media has changed not only Quebec society but also the forms of government action and even its administrative process."

Robert Bourassa
Chicoutimi, Sept. 26, 1970

Finally, the reorganization of communications services and activities within the government will enable the specialists and technicians in this field not only to be administrators but also advisers to the departments and agencies to which they belong.

Accordingly, it will be necessary to train or retrain the staff required to implement this permanent change brought about by modern communications in the government and semi-public administrations.

In Part I of this paper we intend to describe the situation as it now exists in the government, to define the goals of each sector and state the short, medium and long term courses of action that are being proposed with a view to making Quebec's communications policy an instrument for the reform, renewal and improvement of the public service.

The actions undertaken or described in Part I will of course have a direct influence on every citizen and group of citizens.

In Part II we shall analyze the nature of the new services which may be provided to the public, as well as the way in which

we intend to go about providing these services in the shortest possible time. The urgent necessity for Quebec to assume its full responsibilities in the field of cablevision lies in the fact that the development of cable is closely bound up with our stated objectives. Experiments are being carried on that will enable individual citizens and groups to make fuller use of modern communications media.

In Part III we shall examine the consequences of a communications policy for Quebec society, as well as the legislative or administrative action required for translating policy into reality.

This working paper does not claim to be exhaustive. It cannot deal thoroughly with each of the main questions but must confine itself to a more general approach. We intend to publish papers or monographs dealing specifically with certain questions in order to explain the government's action in putting its policy into effect. In due course, the department will announce details of its policy for television, cable TV or educational cable systems, and more particularly the Multi-Media Project.

PART ONE

THE GOVERNMENT AND ITS ADMINISTRATION

I. PRESENT SITUATION

In our study of the various government agencies and their affiliated organizations we do not have to look far to see the piecemeal fashion in which the infrastructure of government communications, information and publicity services has developed. From a casual inspection of the Public Accounts reports and the government's estimates, we estimate very conservatively that a budget of about \$24 millions (1971-72) and more than 1100 persons are allocated directly to these activities.

For the purposes of this paper, I thought it would be useful to draw particular attention to the existence and activities of bodies whose chief areas of responsibility involve the use of communications. However, almost all departments and organizations, both official and semi-official, have funds and staff earmarked for communications, information and publicity. In this connection, it is common knowledge that the semi-official organizations in particular, such as institutions in the fields of education, social affairs and health, have been investing heavily in communications equipment during the past few years.

A. PRINCIPAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Certain agencies in the fields of communications, information and publicity, whose activities are closely linked with communications, should be regarded as some of the government's chief tools in this domain:

1. Public Service Board

After replacing the old Public Service Commission in 1939, this Board, whose establishing legislation was completely overhauled in 1949 (1964, R.S.Q. ch. 229) ^a come under the Minister of Transport and Communications until the creation of the Department of Communications in 1969. Since then, it has reported to the Minister of Communications.

This administrative tribunal, which over the years was responsible for the establishment of many quasi-judicial bodies, which subsequently became autonomous, has retained up to the present a twofold mandate:

- to settle disputes arising from application of the various expropriation procedures available to government departments and agencies, for *example*;
- and to set operating standards and rates for organizations providing public communications services (supervisory and inspection powers).

Staff:

- at 31-3-1969	26
- at 31-3-1970	25
- at 31-3-1971	24
- authorized in 1971-72 budget	41

Budget:

1968-69	\$287,200
1969-70	287,200
1970-71	275,90
1971-72	440,000.

2. Official Publisher

The Queen's Printer, which since January 1st, 1969 has been known as the Official Publisher, was attached to the Provincial Secretariat until the repeal of that department's legislation in 1969; it now comes under the president of the National Assembly. In addition to being responsible for printing and distributing the Official Gazette and the Statutes of Quebec, the Publisher is responsible among other things for sales of government publications. Free distribution of other publications however does not come under its jurisdiction.

The Publisher has only an office in Quebec City and a sales outlet in Montreal. Its publications are also available in various bookstores and may be procured by mail.

The Publisher also operates a graphic arts service which is available to government departments, and its staff sits on various interdepartmental committees that have been formed to ensure greater consistency in government publications.

Staff:

- at 31-3-1969	38
- at 31-3-1970	42
- at 31-3-1971	43
- authorized, 1971-72 budget	49

Budget:

1968-69	\$350,800
---------	-----------

1969-70	416,000
1970-71	439,400
1971-72	1,621,700

3. Duplicating Service

The Duplicating Service assumes routine or rush printing jobs for government departments or agencies. It maintains a branch at Montreal, but the bulk of its work is done at Quebec City, where it has nearly \$1 million worth of equipment.

Staff:

- at 31-3-1969	105
- at 31-3-1970	88
- at 31-3-1971	86
- authorized, 1971-72 budget	107

Budget:

1968-69	\$ 799,800
1969-70	983,200
1970-71	901,900*
1971-72	1,046,300

4. Translation Service

Since the dissolution of the Provincial Secretariat in 1969, the

* Included in the budget of the Official Publisher

Translation Service has come under the President of the National Assembly. It consists of three sections -- French, English and Foreign Languages -- which are at the disposal of the different departments and agencies of the government.

However, some departments have parallel translation services, and freelance translators are occasionally hired on a fee basis.

Staff:

- at 31-3-1969	13
- at 31-3-1970	20
- at 31-3-1971	19
- authorized, 1971-72 budget	24

Budget:

1968-69	\$ 83,800
1969-70	126,100
1970-71	152,700
1971-72	360,500

5. Quebec Broadcasting Bureau

By availing itself of the Quebec Broadcasting Bureau Act (Quebec Statutes 1945, ch. 56) which is carried into effect by allocating a budget and appointing a board of directors, the government activated its broadcasting organization in February 1968.

In October 1969 a new Act was passed (Quebec Statutes 1969, ch. 17) replacing the 1945 legislation. Under this new Act, a Quebec Broadcasting Bureau was constituted with a mandate to produce radio programs, wired broadcasts and audio-visual material for educational purposes and to co-ordinate the production and purchase of audio-visual material for educational purposes by government departments and services and by bodies affiliated with them.

However, Radio-Québec's mandate, which was inherent in its co-ordinating and advisory role, remained inoperative for want of suitable regulations and especially after the creation of the Department of Communications in December 1969. This department assumed responsibility for the Audio-Visual Development Bureau which had been in existence since November of 1967. Moreover, once the Department of Communications came into being, the ORTQ (Quebec Broadcasting Bureau), like the OIP (Information and Publicity Bureau) and the BDAV (Audio-Visual Bureau), came within the jurisdiction of the Communications Department.

Although most of the material produced by Radio-Québec up to the present has been for the Department of Education, this share is bound to decrease in proportion to orders anticipated from the various government departments and agencies and in view of the versatility of the technical facilities and equipment (\$2.5 millions) at its disposal.

Staff:

- at 31-3-1969 not available
- at 31-3-1970 249

- at 31-3-1971 314
- authorized; 1971-72 budget 444

Budget:

1968-69 \$5,095,000
1969-70 7,000,000
1970-71 5,948,000
1971-72 4,758,000

6. Film Board

When the Provincial Secretariat Act was repealed in 1969, the Quebec Film Board came under the jurisdiction of the Department of Cultural Affairs. The functions of this body are, among other things, to co-ordinate, direct and control film work done for other than educational purposes by government departments and services.

Accordingly, in 1968 the Board supervised the production of seven documentaries or administrative films, besides filming material for all government departments and agencies. The same year, over 150,000 screenings were arranged by its distribution branch.

Staff;

- at 31-3-1969 not available
- at 31-3-1970 76
- at 31-3-1971 72
- authorized, 1971-72 budget 75

Budget:

1968-69	\$ 853,600
1969-70	830,100
1970-71	930,000
1971-72	1,037,300.

7. Information and Publicity Bureau
(Office d'Information et de Publicité - OIP)

In its present form the Bureau came under the Provincial Secretariat in 1966. On July 20, 1966 (Order-in-Council 1146), it was placed under the control of the prime minister. In 1969 the National Assembly passed legislation clarifying the role of the Information and Publicity Bureau (Quebec Statutes 1969, ch. 26), making it responsible for information issued by government departments and services and any organization responsible to them.

When the Department of Communications was created, its Minister was given responsibility for the Bureau.

Since April 1st, 1971, under the terms of Order-in-Council 1388) the Information and Publicity Bureau has been attached to the Government Communications Branch. With its own specialists in every government department, the Bureau plays a major role in planning, co-ordinating and developing government communications. Lately, the Bureau has attached great importance to regionalization of its services to ensure not only

accessibility of information at the regional and provincial levels, but also distribution in the regions. Therefore the Bureau has offices in eight administrative regions.

The Bureau has also prepared a television program service which is transmitted free of charge via cable in various regions of Quebec. This program service is prepared by the Bureau or by Radio-Québec.

Besides these activities, the Bureau maintains central information, publicity and public relations services.

Staff:

- at 31-3-1969	166
- at 31-3-1970	162
- at 31-3-1971	159
- authorized, 1971-72 budget	170

Budget:

1968-69	\$5,683,000*
1969-70	5,250,000*
1970-71	3,350,000*
1971-72	3,133,000*

* Does not include the budget for information campaigns, which dropped from \$900,000 in 1968-69 to \$250,000 in 1970-71 and 1971-72.

8. Department of Communications

Created in December 1969 (Statutes of Quebec 1969, ch. 65), the Department of Communications has the responsibility, among other things, to supervise the communications networks established in the province of Quebec, to promote the establishment, development, adaptation and efficiency of such communications networks, to execute or cause to be executed research studies and inquiries on communications generally, and to establish communications service for all the government departments. It also has the responsibility to prepare a communications policy for the province of Quebec and to propose such policy to the government, to implement such policy and to supervise the application and to co-ordinate the carrying out thereof.

Staff:

- at 31-3-1969	Nil
- at 31-3-1970	19
- at 31-3-1971	81
- authorized, 1971-72 budget	278

Budget:

1968-69	Nil*
1969-70	Nil*
1970-71	\$ 1,200,000*
1971-72	12,323,000

* Not included in the budget of the telephone branch which was transferred from the Department of Public Works to the Department of Communications by Order-in-Council 3158 of August 19, 1970.

Recapitulative Tables of Budgets and Staffs of the
Chief Government Agencies in the matter of Communications

A. <u>BUDGETS</u>	<u>68/69</u>	<u>69/70</u>	<u>70/71</u>	<u>71/72</u>
Public Service				
Board	287,200.	287,200.	275,900.	440,000.
Official Publisher	350,800.	416,000.	439,400.	1,621,700.
Duplicating Service	799,900.	983,200.	901,900.	1,046,300.*
Translation Service	83,800.	126,100.	152,700.	360,500.
Que. Broadcasting				
Bureau	5,095,000.	7,000,000.	5,948,000.	4,758,000.
Film Board	853,600.	830,100.	930,000.	1,037,300.
Inf. & Publicity Bureau	5,683,000.	5,250,000.	3,350,000.	3,133,000.
Dept. of Communications	Nil	Nil	1,200,000.	12,323,000.
Information Campaigns	900,000.	900,000.	250,000.	250,000.
Total	14,053,200.	15,792,600.	13,447,900.	23,923,500.

* Included in this year's budget of the Official Publisher.

B. <u>STRENGTH AT</u>	<u>31-3-1969</u>	<u>31-3-1970</u>	<u>31-3-1971</u>	authorized 1971-72 budget
Public Service				
Board	26	25	24	41
Official Publisher	38	42	43	49
Duplicating Service	105	88	86	107
Translation Service	13	20	19	24
Que. Broadcasting				
Bureau	n/a	249	314	444
Film Board	n/a	76	72	75
Inf. & Publicity Bureau	166	162	159	170
Dept. of Communications	Nil	19	81	278
Total	348	681	798	1,188

B. OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

It is not possible, from the breakdown of the different budget documents pertaining to the public accounts of the government, to determine accurately the amounts appropriated directly, by the other government departments or agencies for communications, information and publicity. However, there are various indicators which enable us to some extent to judge the amounts involved.

Like the department and other bodies mentioned above, whose role is closely linked to the activities dealt with in this paper, nearly all government departments and allied enterprises contribute to the conception, creation, production, distribution and marketing, as well as to studies and research in this field. Staffs are naturally assigned to these duties, but their number would be hard to determine with any accuracy.

Nevertheless, on the basis of research done in this area, we are able to present the following tables showing the sums involved.

TABLE OF EXPENDITURES ON COMMUNICATIONS, INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY, BY DEPARTMENT

(Public Accounts for the year ending March 31, 1970)

<u>Department</u>	<u>Communications</u>	<u>Publicity/Information</u>
Cultural Affairs	35,760.03	560,366.03
Intergovernmental Affairs	37,915.78	55,617.47
Municipal Affairs	13,823.24	63,331.47
Agriculture and Colonization	294,220.11	306,506.88
National Assembly	27,120.89	10,933.60
Executive Council	149,146.89	4,024,693.43
Education	228,484.63	466,340.43
Family & Social Welfare	463,615.96	15,254.35
Finance	18,230.08	5,464.70
Immigration	2,930.52	123,271.36
Industry and Commerce	46,078.48	440,854.09
Financial Institutions, Companies & Co-operatives	6,986.90	2,621.57
Justice	1,838,508.69	13,886.66
Revenue	941,275.71	4,040.60
Natural Resources	63,009.43	114,596.23
Health	223,307.94	26,211.94
Provincial Secretariat	41,364.13	466.78
Lands and Forests	142,986.71	21,116.99
Tourism, Game and Fisheries	124,862.69	1,669,780.14
Transport and Communications	490,997.97	48,715.65
Labour & Manpower	104,543.07	100,362.94
Public Works	* 6,042,115.27	----
Highways	230,801.18	25,540.46
Debt Service	----	59,283.79
TOTAL	11,568,086.30	8,159,237.56

* Includes the budget of the government's telephone system.

Annual Revenue of Certain Public Bodies

	<u>1967-68</u>	<u>1968-69</u>	<u>1969-70</u>
Que. Deposit & Investment Fund	----	35,307,000	55,825,000
Workmen's Compensation Board	68,280,000	80,079,000	88,995,000
Minimum Wage Board	3,726,000	3,962,000	4,744,000
Hydro-Québec	365,703,000	397,828,000	431,108,000
Autoroutes Board	11,539,000	13,131,000	14,018,000
Place des Arts Corporation	1,796,000	1,394,000	1,365,000
Quebec Liquor Board	197,845,000	128,564,000	205,618,000
Quebec Pension Plan	242,095,000	267,323,000	318,861,000

It is obvious that the list of bodies given in the foregoing table is far from complete. Indeed, over 100 bodies could be included, and only by pursuing the research already begun into budgets and staff devoted to parallel services in this field will it be possible to obtain an adequate picture of the resources allocated by the government for communications. This is why the government recently approved the formation of a task force composed of representatives from the Communications, the Civil Service, and Finance departments to make an accurate inventory of these elements.

C. OTHER PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

There are several hundred organizations receiving annual subsidies from the government, which in many cases comprise the bulk of their operating and capital budgets. This is particularly true in the areas of education, social affairs, and health.

Although it is extremely difficult at the present time to ascertain what proportion of their budgets is devoted to the purchase or use of communications equipment, the huge amounts of money and the staff involved make it imperative that we study and analyze them without delay.

In the above two sectors alone, the following tables highlight some very revealing facts.

Amounts paid by the Department of Education
to CEGEPS (Junior Colleges), school boards,
private institutions and universities

	<u>1969-70</u>	<u>1970-71</u>	<u>1971-72</u>
CEGEPS	68,320,000	98,195,000	123,100,000
School Boards	594,525,000	729,538,000	856,092,000
Private Institutions	21,768,000	28,918,000	30,000,000
Universities	120,390,000	123,985,000	170,933,000
TOTAL	805,003,000	980,636,000	1,180,125,000

Amounts paid by the Department of Social Affairs
to hospitals, social agencies, rehabilitation
centres, etc.

	<u>1969-70*</u>	<u>1970-71*</u>	<u>1971-72*</u>
	782,495,000	1,021,736,000	1,240,954,000
TOTAL	782,495,000	1,021,736,000	1,240,954,000

* This amount represents the sums paid by the Department of Health and the
Department of the Family and Social Welfare

Thus we see that the amounts involved, in the para-governmental sector alone (added to monies spent indirectly and in parallel efforts by government departments and organizations) constitute by themselves the greater part of the government's effort.

In other words, the budgets and staffs shown under the principal government agencies operating in this sector obviously represent only the visible tip of a huge iceberg that is growing steadily larger each year. Moreover, this speed-up in growth reflects the speed-up observed during the past decade in private enterprise.

II.

REMARKS AND CONSEQUENCE

A. DISPERSION AND BALKANIZATION

- In Communications

Although the list of government departments and agencies already mentioned is far from exhaustive, it is plain to see that there is a veritable balkanization of communications. Note however the difficulties often experienced in tracing with any accuracy the real allocation of certain funds or staff whose official use appears to have no connection with communications but in fact are used in the same type of activities. In practice, this prevents the pooling of resources which would enable the government to promulgate and carry out a consistent policy in this matter in order to derive a greater return from the resources presently available.

Besides, the absence of accounting and standardization in this field leads to *fragmentation* of the government's purchasing power and prevents it from becoming the powerful lever it could become and fostering the establishment of a communications industry in Quebec. The economic fallout of this industry could do much not only to create some of the jobs we need but also to improve our external trade balance, when we consider that by 1980 communications will be the third largest economic sector in North America.

Furthermore, the special advantage which this almost unlimited field offers for Quebec is all the more understandable because Quebec has not

lagged behind in communications and should, given prompt encouragement in the right direction, be able to move into this field and progress in it on an equal footing with all other societies, including our powerful neighbours to the south.

- In Information

The government information services, in spite of recent serious efforts at consolidation, are still a welter of confusion at certain levels. Persons working directly in information are often referred to as "research officers" or are described in some other fancy term, while the audio-visual services will often refer to scenario writers as "idea men" or "educational editors".

- In Publicity

Nor can government publicity service entirely escape the charge that they occasionally pursue contradictory goals. We have even seen in the same publication an advertisement inviting the Americans to come and see Quebec' covered bridges, while in another advertisement the Department of Industry and Commerce described Quebec as a people in the forefront of modern technology. We cannot put a stop to this sort of thing for good until much-needed co-ordination is achieved between the Department of Tourism and certain semi-official bodies.

- In the Printed Word

Anyone venturing into the world of publications is reminded of teeming

wildlife. All sorts of printed matter is created, distributed, proliferated, revived and multiplied ad infinitum. A partial survey recently listed 680 different publications put out by the government services, and this included only those sold to the public. To this must be added vast quantities of folders, free magazines, and bulletins published at irregular intervals.

- In Reception and Inquiries

A citizen seeking information sets out on a journey without knowing where it will lead. There is no policy covering inquiries by the public; each department keeps to itself, with the result that citizen John Doe has no idea where to apply for information about the Waterworks Department, the Social Welfare Court, trade schools or what have you. The civil servant is no better off in this regard, because internal communications are to all intents and purposes only a replica of what every citizen has to face every day.

- In Exhibitions

When Quebec takes part in a regional exhibition or even an event of greater importance, its effort all too often lacks rhyme or reason. We have seen as many as eleven different departments or agencies set up booths cheek by jowl with one another, with no thought of co-ordinating them and with no apparent objectives.

- In Translation

In spite of the palpable need for translation, this service has not

developed at a normal rate within the government. Yet there is a considerable need for translation throughout Quebec and particularly where there is a population mosaic like that of Montreal.

- In Reproduction

The equipment needed for printing and duplicating is scattered all over, and no one can ever make an inventory, assess the usefulness of the equipment or bring system into the purchasing and output of such equipment.

B. CONSOLIDATION OF PRODUCTION
AND CONCENTRATION OF PURCHASING POWER

This is why the objectives set forth in this paper, which should be the first phase in implementing the communications policy, deserve immediate attention. Among the hundreds of examples already considered, the following example of co-operation whereby the operations of the Quebec Official Publisher could affect the information and publicity budgets in the section dealing with calls for tenders, with the following beneficial results:

1. The Quebec Official Publisher would publish calls for tenders in the Official Gazette, which would cause the suppliers to subscribe to it.
2. There are 15,000 suppliers accredited to the General Purchasing Department, and the subscription to the Official Gazette costs \$20.00 a year. This would mean a healthy profit for the government, with no harm to private enterprise.

3. The Information and Publicity Bureau would cease publishing calls for tenders in the daily press at an annual cost of \$350,000 to \$400,000 and could use this sum for real industrial promotion.

...and 4 Anticipated Effects

In short, it is fair to say that just by eliminating the duplication which everyone deplures, sufficient money would be saved to finance many of the new projects being demanded by the departments involved.

In addition, considerable revenues could be earned through systematic marketing of the government's output of information material.

It may be possible, by using the obvious impact of government purchasing power, to step up and give massive support to measures designed to stimulate investment which have already been prepared at various levels.

Finally, it seems evident that the efficiency of the Public Service will be materially increased as a result.

"As we stand on the threshold of new advances, should we plunge recklessly into the round of wonderful machines without regard for the human environment and -- at a more mundane level -- for the budget limitations of individuals, governments and business firms? The stakes are promising, because the new technology can bring within the reach of everyone an almost unbelievable wealth of information. If we take the optimistic view, it may also foster the development

of a society where there is constructive consultation and effective participation by the people at the local, regional, provincial and national levels."

"Univers sans distances", Report on Telecommunications in Canada - Telecommission - 1971, p. 5 (French version only)

III. OBJECTIVE AND MEANS OF OBTAINING IT

A. OBJECTIVE

The purpose in rationalizing the government's effort should be to develop without delay a modern, efficient system of administrative communication. This includes co-ordination and production of the means used to disseminate government information.

B. MEANS

1. Consolidations

All government communications services and facilities will be gradually brought under the control of a single departmental authority.

The services of the Information and Publicity Bureau were attached to the communications branch of the Department of Communications by Order-in-Council 1388 dated April 7, 1971.

In addition, the Official Publisher, its duplicating service and the translation service, which formerly came under the Provincial Secretariat and are now controlled by the President of the National Assembly, will

shortly be transferred to the Department of Communications.

In addition, the Technical Instructional Media Service of the Department of Education, has just been grouped together with other services and is now called the Instructional Media Branch.

Close co-operation is quickly being organized between the departments of Education and Communications for the purpose of co-ordinating audio-visual production.

The Quebec Film Board, the Cinema Supervisory Board and the Committee on drive-in cinemas continue to come under the jurisdiction of the Cultural Affairs department, to assist in developing a policy on the motion picture industry, since they have a vital contribution to make. However, the Communications and Cultural Affairs departments are working closely together to co-ordinate those technical services which may be common to both departments.

2. Reorganization of the Department

Because of the various regroupings carried out or proposed for the immediate future, as well as the implementation of the next phases of the communications policy it is necessary for the department to adopt an appropriate organizational structure.

Immediately after it was created, the Department set up an administration branch, which will become one of the key departments. The personnel division in particular, besides being responsible for routine personnel matters, will be primarily responsible for designing and conducting various training and refresher courses for officers in the various job categories that will

exist in the Department. In our efforts to implement the proposed policy, we will start with persons now in the Public Service. However, new staff will have to be recruited, by competition and in accordance with Public Service standards. The department will try to attract to these new jobs our young university graduates, as well as Quebecers now taking specialist training in communications outside the province. To this end, an imaginative publicity campaign will be mounted, and contacts have already been made with the Quebec Department of Education.

The Engineering Branch, established by Order-in-Council 1388 of April 7, 1971, is responsible for the standardization, preparation, regulation and technical studies relating to government and semi-official communications equipment as well as for related accounting procedures.

Order-in-Council 3158 of August 19, 1970 established an Operations Branch whose primary responsibilities will be to gather, assess and co-ordinate all government communications requirements, to systematize the ways of meeting those requirements in accordance with the technological and financial resources available, and, in co-operation with the government's general purchasing department, to serve as sole spokesman with all suppliers of communications services.

A Government Publishing Branch, to be created very shortly, will gradually take over the present functions of graphics production and writing now performed by the Quebec Official Publisher, by the duplicating service attached to it, by the Information and Publicity Bureau and by the translation service. Moreover, its function will be to continue the work

begun the publications committee of the Treasury Board and take over its mandate. The Official Publisher will retain its present status within this new branch. Its powers will even be changed so that it can use these services as a basis for organizing a complete, integrated network for distributing and marketing materials produced by government or semi-official bodies.

Another body that will come under the Publishing Branch is the audio-visual service. This service will combine the functions of audio-visual production now handled by the Information and Publicity Bureau and, generally, those of all other government units producing audio-visual materials. It will be responsible for co-ordinating production for government purposes and will assign this production to the ORTQ (Quebec Broadcasting Bureau), the Film Board, or even to private firms, depending on the production capacity of the public bodies and the profitability standards that are set.

Proposals will be made for amendments to the Quebec Broadcasting Bureau Act to enable that body to fully assume its privileged role of government producer in the audio-visual field as an integral part of communications policy.

A Research Branch will also be set up. Essentially a multi-disciplinary body, it will work in conjunction with the universities and will co-ordinate all government communications research. A protocol agreement covering communications research has already been signed between the Communications Department and the University of Quebec. However, the existing engineering branch will have the task of co-ordinating research in communications technology and it will be responsible for advising the department and the

government in allocating public lands for communications purposes.

3. Government Communications Branch

The purpose of this most important branch is to set up in each department, under the department's responsibility, communications divisions combining all communications services, media and functions, including particularly:

- information
- telephone
- exhibitions
- publicity
- telecommunications
- radiocommunications
- radio broadcasting
- television broadcasting
- information or educational films
- still photographs
- records
- cassettes
- printed matter
- translations
- duplicating
- teleprocessing
- databank

(a) Departmental Communications Divisions

Each of these communications divisions will come under the department in which it is located. However, they will be co-ordinated by the Department of Communications through its government communications branch. Hiring and operating standards will be laid down and enforced by the Department. Thus in each department these communications divisions will act as advisers on all aspects of communications. Although it is clear that all information planning must originate with the departments, nevertheless it is the Communications Department that will act as co-ordinator and adviser. The Communications Department will also provide or obtain the professional services required to meet the communications needs and objectives of each department.

Whereas traditionally most information services in the departments acted more as executants carrying out requirements expressed by the different branches of the departments, every effort will be made to ensure that the new divisions will act primarily as advisers on communications and information. Of course, they will subsequently be responsible for carrying out the programs or projects of each department.

b) The Regional Divisions of Government Communications

The second, and equally important, function of the government communications branch is to set up government communications services in each administrative region and any other designated region in Quebec, with the necessary powers to use, under the authority of the Branch, all

communications media such as regional cable TV, mobile information centres or local production units, to disseminate government information in those regions and to enable the people to express their views on any matter of public interest.

These regional divisions will resemble those in the departments as to their specific functions, except that by definition they will concern themselves with a much wider range of activities. Since they report directly to the Department of Communications, they will each enjoy a degree of autonomy.

4. Co-ordination with para-government agencies and the semi-public sector

The government communications branch will also be responsible for normalizing communications relationships between the government and its agencies. It is particularly in the semi-public sector (colleges, universities, hospitals, etc.) that the heaviest investments in communications and more especially audio-visual materials are made. It is important that the use of public funds in these sectors should be co-ordinated, not only in order to standardize our equipment and derive the maximum use from it, but also so as to be able, on occasion, to give guidance to the industry.

This co-ordination will be easier to achieve once the General Communications Council referred to later in this paper is set up.

5. Government Reference Service

Owing to the great strides made in the science of information, the

role of libraries, and more particularly the role of the government libraries, will certainly have to be redefined. Owing to the special nature of the National Library of Quebec and the Library of the Quebec Legislature, they are not included among government libraries but are governed by special legislation.

Being a source of information and documentation, the Library should be part of a system if it is to fulfil its objectives more effectively. These include not only the acquisition of documents but above all the handling and distribution of those documents. At present there are 48 libraries in operation, of which 31 have been founded since 1960. The combined collections of these libraries total some 350,000 documents, while the budget for acquisitions amounts to about \$300,000. On the basis of this figure, the total annual budgets for government libraries are estimated at over \$1,320,000. These figures point up the absence of a clear demarcation between a library and a reference centre.

The absence of co-ordination at all levels is a stumbling-block to the operation of the present system. The first thing that will have to be done, under the authority of the government communications branch of the department, is to consolidate all government libraries except the Quebec National Library and the Library of the Legislature, which, by definition, are excluded from those we are concerned with here. Within this general grouping, certain special libraries will have to be grouped together for administrative purposes, according to departmental or geographical criteria.

A libraries division will have to be set up within the government communications branch. This division will be responsible for the joint and individual libraries already referred to.

6. Data Bank

Little has been done thus far within the Quebec public administration to co-ordinate the general information needed for its own operations or to make government services accessible to the regulations of the various departments or agencies. And computers are coming into use for analyzing and compiling various laws and statutes.

If parliamentarians, civil servants and journalists are to do their jobs properly, there is an urgent need for Quebec's laws and regulations to be accessible for instant reference. In this way, they will be better able to weigh the meaning and importance of actions taken or proposed and to assess their relative worth.

With its studies and research, as well as its staff of experts, the Department of Communications will do everything possible to hasten the development and establishment of these banks within the administrative services.

7. Closed-Circuit TV

It would appear highly desirable to have the legislative buildings, or at the very least the new buildings now under construction, linked by cables so that the chief administrative units and sub-units could be

interconnected via closed-circuit TV. Such a system can be used in any number of ways to improve management and administration. The same information henceforth becomes immediately accessible to all departments and to all officials who may have a use for it. It is distributed instantly from its original source, without distortion or delay.

With such a system, administrative reform could be speeded up in certain special areas like financial and accounting administration, the co-ordination of identical services which exist in several departments, information as to what administrative actions are being taken by the various quasi-governmental agencies and boards, and so forth.

Such an internal closed-circuit TV system could later be extended to the Montreal area, then to the other administrative regions of Quebec.

8. Standardization of Visual Identification of Government Stationery

The government has begun the standardization of its visual identification. This will result in sizable savings and enable the government to project a more dynamic image of its administrative presence throughout Quebec.

9. Standardization of Government Publications

Of all the short-term measures which should be taken by the Department, surely one of the most important is the standardization of government publications.

The work already begun in this direction should be speeded up so that all government publications, whether put out by the departments or their

agencies, should have a modern, convenient format. By concentrating its human resources in the areas of creativity, production and distribution, the government will be able to save considerable amounts and, consequently, to offer further services of this kind.

For too long, the government's publishing practices have sorely needed updating. This would be accomplished by holding a permanent, public inventory of its publications, combined with a thorough reorganization of the reference and distribution centres, and a continuous reappraisal of its publications. This will do much to improve internal communications in the administrative services, and audio-visual materials could then be used to advantage as a supplement to the printed work in establishing and maintaining the permanent links which should exist among the administrators themselves and with the public.

If these short- and medium-term goals are achieved, the result will be the formation of an internal communications system which should guarantee better co-ordination not only in strictly communications matters but also in all aspects of administration. This system will play a key role in administrative reform, and by breaking down internal barriers, will rejuvenate and increase the efficiency of the Public Service, government departments, boards, agencies, and so forth.

Moreover, this will enable all public bodies to develop their programs in terms of both manpower and equipment in the light of an overall policy based, not on arbitrary control by the Department of

Communications, but on planning designed to ensure that the equipment of each group will dovetail with the common pool of equipment, with a view to serving the needs of the community.

PART TWO

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE CITIZEN

Present Situation

I. Up to the present, eight regional information offices have been set up in Quebec by the Information and Publicity Bureau. These are located in

Montreal	Chicoutimi
Hull	Sherbrooke
Rouyn-Noranda	Quebec City
Trois-Rivières	Rimouski.

In addition, more than 740 offices are maintained by various government departments and agencies in 163 towns and villages throughout Quebec. For example, there are

17 in Chicoutimi
59 in Montreal
71 in Quebec City
19 in Sherbrooke and
18 in Trois-Rivières.

Many of these government offices have information services, but unfortunately there are so many of them and they are so scattered that they cannot claim to offer adequate information in all cases, and all too often the public do not know where to apply for prompt, accurate information.

"The Government has an obligation to provide full, objective and timely information; the citizens have a right to such information."

"To Know and Be Known I" , Report of the
Task Force on Government Information,
p. 49 - 1969.

"One of the greatest developing tragedies of our times involves the lack of imaginative information for people who wish to participate in democratic action."

Ibid, p. 3

A - AN EFFORT TO BE CONTINUED

It is vitally important that the public administration should continue its efforts to establish regional structures, more particularly in the sphere of information. However, it must also be realized that neither the structures nor the communications and information facilities can be identical for the larger urban centres and the outlying areas of Quebec. The department will have to make an effort to find satisfactory solutions to the problem of transmitting administrative information to both the urban and rural populations.

B - CITIZENS' DIFFICULTIES IN COMMUNICATING

The trials and tribulations of the citizen trying to communicate with the public authorities have become a cliché. The studies and measures that have been undertaken in order to analyze and correct the situation should be vigorously pursued. We must reach the point where the public are thoroughly informed about the information and services they can and should obtain from the government. Every citizen of Quebec in his dealings with the government and the bureaucracy should be assured that he will be able to speak to qualified persons who can guide him in his inquiries until he has obtained a satisfactory answer.

*in a mass -
stable / least
of time*

"It seems to me that one of the essential duties of government bodies is to provide information to the general public. This information should deal not only with the

rights, privileges and obligations of citizens under the laws entrusted to the administration, but also with its internal organization and procedures, while also taking into account the extremely wide range of comprehension in the people for whom the information is intended."

"The Public Protector" - First Annual Report - 1969

C - ILL-ADAPTED SERVICES

If we look at the present situation, we see that the public's information and communications requirements are greater than ever. We also see that the effort being made by the government, the energy expended and the sums of money devoted to meeting those requirements are also greater than ever. Government services primarily designed to communicate directly with the people have mushroomed in the past few years. However, these bodies are often ill-adapted to this relatively new function.

D - LACK OF CO-ORDINATION

But the most obvious thing to the experienced observer is the lack of co-ordination between the various decentralized public services. This lack of co-ordination is itself often due to the public's lack of knowledge about the structures and hence to a lack of permanent, well-used internal communications.

To successfully provide to individuals and groups the services

they are entitled to expect from their government and its agencies, the Department of Communications must give priority to the task of co-ordinating and standardizing the services now available to the public.

No restructuring can be fully successful until a careful study has been made of the existing services. There must also be an all-out effort to organize the services in such a way that, besides meeting the needs of their particular sectors, they go as far as possible towards meeting their objective of communicating directly with the people.

II. Objective and Means of Obtaining It

A - OBJECTIVE

To obtain information or to express his own point of view or those of his fellows, a citizen should have access to all communications media in order to contact the government services. An up-to-date, public system of communications incorporating the latest technology should be planned and developed in Quebec.

B - MEANS

1. Consolidation of Decentralized Services and Information

Most government departments have decentralized services, either in the administrative regions of Quebec or even in several of the larger towns. It is not the aim of the Communications Department to effect a physical consolidation of government services in Quebec towns. However, it is possible, with better communication facilities and electronic links between departments, to ensure that a citizen

is not given the run-around when he comes with a problem or an inquiry.

The main function of the government communications branches will be to weld the scattered services of the various departments and agencies into a coherent system by means of electronic communications.

2. A System of Technological and Human Communications

Such a consolidation, if carried out properly, will lead to the creation of a system of technological and human communications which will have to be connected to central units specializing in production, distribution, analysis and research. This role will be assumed by the Department of Communications. Provision must be made to ensure a consistently high standard of technical services both at the regional and departmental levels. Care must be taken to see that specialists in communications and information can move from one department, agency or region to another, or even outside Quebec, without interrupting their careers. This should all be done in accordance with a career plan and with a view to the logical development of the specialist's experience and knowledge.

3. A Two-Way System

"Timely two-way information of good quality is an essential element in the fostering of participation and in the improvement of the government's social effectiveness."

"To Know and Be Known II" - p. 23 - 1969

It is essentially the government communications branches as well as their related distribution centres or sub-centres that will handle the distribution of government information, of the printed

or audio-visual production of the Communications Department or of the government's production agents. It is also the regional branches that will guarantee the public's right to use modern communications media, enabling them to participate individually or collectively in carrying out or criticizing government aims.

4. Citizens' Inquiry Services

For a variety of reasons, citizens find themselves increasingly unable to go in person to obtain the information they need about a government service, to express a point of view or make a relevant comment on a particular administrative action. Modern communications techniques will soon make it possible for the provincial authorities to develop services to handle telephone or mail inquiries, and to the extent that these services are linked to central data banks, it will be possible for any citizen to obtain in a few hours accurate information about all government or semi-government services and, as the need arises, about all available and useful statistics.

Studies now in progress in the Department of Communications will be speeded up and pilot experiments should be conducted shortly in certain parts of Quebec so that government requirements can be assessed.

5. Reception and Inquiries

The Department is also studying the feasibility of setting up reception and inquiry services for the public which could be available to the administration through the government communications branches.

The training of special staff for this purpose who are perfectly familiar with the workings of the bureaucracy will facilitate contacts between the public and the government services.

6. Fairs and Exhibitions

Although Quebec's presence at various exhibitions or similar events is becoming more and more noticeable, the various presentations of the government or its agencies are too often uncoordinated.

It will be the task of the Communications Department to advise the government on a comprehensive plan for participation in exhibitions or similar events. The government will then be able to increase its participation in these popular gatherings and give the public a chance to meet the government employees who deal every day with matters of concern to them.

7. Mobile Information Units

The Department will have to continue the experiment begun by the OIP (Information and Publicity Bureau) by sending "Communications Québec" trailers out into the province and by meeting the special needs of certain groups of citizens in the various regions such as Ste. Scholastique and Bécancour.

These mobile units, equipped in ultra-modern fashion, enable the members of the public to communicate directly at the local level with authorized representatives of the principal departments involved in local or regional matters. These representatives are in constant touch with their departments in Quebec City and can always answer inquiries from the public, if not immediately at least in a few hours.

With these mobile units it is possible not only to meet the needs of the population but also to listen to their comments and "beefs" with a view to improving the quality of service to the public.

8. Multi-Media Project (UHF)

Of all the technical projects now under consideration in the Department of Communications, multi-media is still the most important. While the project comes under the Department of Education, the Communications Department, as part of a project management committee, is responsible for designing and setting up the technical infrastructure required for distribution.

It is now an established fact that the regular television channels, whether publicly or privately owned, are no longer sufficient to meet requirements.

As the government seeks to obtain more air time for educational TV, the time available during suitable hours is decreasing. Moreover, it is not possible with the existing cable systems to reach the intended objectives or audience.

Consequently, ways and means must be considered of creating a new distribution structure--by UHF broadcasts. Installation of the technical facilities for this project in the Montreal area, where the multi-media project will be applied, could be the beginning of a complete, integrated UHF system of TV distribution for educational purposes. This system is dependent however on studies that are not yet completed or even begun, and above all on the analysis of

what the different Quebec departments require.

A precise plan of action covering this whole question will be announced by the Department of Communications when the government decisions have been made.

PART THREE

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMUNITY

I. Present Situation

A» REGULATION

In the matter of communications, Quebec has acted through its Public Service Board for more than 40 years (except in matters coming under the Cinema Supervisory Board and the Committee on Drive-In Cinemas).

The Public Service Board exercises jurisdiction over more than 50 public telephone companies in Quebec. Two other companies under federal jurisdiction account for the other half. Thus it has not been possible to establish a uniform, consistent policy for all Quebec. Note that 7 out of 10 provinces fully control the telephone companies in their territory.

The Public Service Board exercises its powers of control and supervision and its quasi-judicial functions

- over the entire telephone industry and its range of communications services (apart from the 2 exceptions already noted). In general, it lays down the standards and conditions for installation and for service and sets ceilings on rates and returns on investment; it has been responsible for the introduction of community arrangements better adapted to the socio-economic realities of this province and has initiated programs of activities specially suited to Quebec.

"Since the telephone is an essential public service, the Quebec government should have a right to supervise them, and for this purpose every telephone company doing business in Quebec

will come under the control of the Quebec Public Service Board in all matters affecting rates, connection points, cost of equipment, and relations between companies. Quebec will take whatever steps are necessary to obtain the powers it requires."

Quebec Liberal Party Platform, 1966, p. 19.

B. JURISDICTIONAL MATTERS

The federal government, on the other hand has gradually moved into the communications field and has continued to widen the scope of its jurisdiction. It even indicated until quite recently that it firmly intends to define its activities in this field more precisely and to increase them. Through the operations of CN-CP, of the only three telephone companies under its jurisdiction (out of more than 1,200 in Canada, two of them operating in Quebec), and of Telesat, the federal government, using its power to co-ordinate the allocation of frequencies for radiocommunications, has gradually extended its regulatory authority over radio broadcasting, then over television, and finally over cable television.

II. Objectives and Means of Obtaining Them

A. OBJECTIVES

The public service character of the communications systems vital to Quebec society must be recognized.

All aspects of communications must be dealt with in relation to the values of the population as a whole and of the social changes

appropriate to them.

Incentives must be provided to stimulate production of communications goods and services in Quebec and the development of the Quebec communications industry.

Continuous communications links must be maintained between Quebec and other parts of the world.

B. MEANS OF OBTAINING THEM

1. Amendments to the Quebec Public Service Board Act

This board must become a genuine Communications Board.

In a first legislative step, which is imminent, its powers will be considerably augmented and its resources increased accordingly in terms of staff and budget. Its jurisdiction will be extended over the public agents of communications services recognized as "public services", and particularly the cable-TV industry, so that the public may be able to enjoy as soon as possible and at the lowest cost the fruits of technological progress and the benefits of government regulation of services deemed essential to the life of the community. Various legislative measures will be introduced to give the Board resources appropriate for carrying out its mandate, for flexibility and speed of operation and for bringing its activities into harmony with the general communications policy of Quebec.

In a second legislative step, to be taken later, the Board will vacate the expropriation field, leaving it to another body. In this way, it will be able to concentrate exclusively on the vast field of communications and devote more of its energies to

translating the demands of the on-going social development into terms of public interest. The Board, being a meeting place for the different publics (who express their requirements in a sometimes confused manner) and the producers of communications goods and services (who claim they are providing adequate solutions), will strive to achieve a fairer representation of the collective wills concerning communications. It will of course take into account the economic imperatives to which the producers of equipment and suppliers of service are subject; but above all, it will keep in mind those social values to which we attach priority.

2. Amendments to the Communications Department Act

The powers of the Department will be spelled out to permit co-ordination of all government agencies engaged in carrying out Quebec's communications policy. The minister is chiefly responsible for developing this policy, for presenting it to his colleagues, and then implementing it and supervising its application.

In view of the fact that the Department has only been in existence since December 1969 and that it was preceded by a number of government bodies, it goes without saying that its role of prime mover in the communications field calls for institutional adjustments in the interests of efficiency and consistency in the government's operations. Legislation will be proposed to this effect.

3. Amendments to the Quebec Broadcasting Bureau Act

The role of the Quebec Broadcasting Bureau as a producer of audio-visual material for radio and television is confirmed and even

strengthened. To enable the Bureau to direct all its activities towards this basic and vital task, legislation has been enacted assigning to the Department (which was created since the last Act respecting the Quebec Broadcasting Bureau) some functions which are marginal to the activities of the Bureau and which the Department will be in a better position to assume with regard to the co-ordination of production and distribution, as well as the procurement and use of communications equipment.

Furthermore, the role of adviser to public bodies on these matters is more the job of the Department. Various legislative measures will be proposed to this effect, establishing the correlations necessary for harmonizing the various communications functions for the government agencies.

4. A Communications Council

In the preparation and continual development of its communications policy, Quebec must establish uniform, harmonious relations with its population and particularly with the groups of communications users and those who produce the necessary goods and services.

In the light of these objectives, a Communications Council will be the very body that can offer the required representativeness. Under its eventual terms of reference and powers, the Council will be able:

- (a) to advise the Minister of Communications, either at his request or on its own initiative, concerning any matter within his jurisdiction, with the object of continually

improving Quebec's communications policy;

- (b) to foster fruitful, harmonious relations among the Department of Communications, the users, and the producers of communications goods and services.

III. Jurisdictional Matters

The Davey Report, and in particular the Report of the Telecommission to the federal minister of communications, stresses the absolute necessity of a comprehensive policy for communications. The Introduction and the body of this report emphasize the vital importance of such a policy.

The unparalleled development of communications media and technology, and also of their use in everyday life, leads us to believe that it is not realistic to try to settle the problem of jurisdictions and powers in the communications field without innovations and clarification both in Quebec legislation and in the Constitution.

The uniqueness of communications lies in the fact that they are surely one of the chief guarantees of those things that are specific to a society, like language, culture, manners, life-style, and so on. In short, a government's communications policy shows what its fundamental choices are. It is both an agent of change and a tool for governing relations in a human society, depending on how it is used. It clearly establishes a government's attitude towards the way in which the community for which it is responsible expresses itself.

It is Quebec's responsibility, first of all, to develop a communications policy. Such a policy is inseparable from the development of its educational system, its culture and everything that is essentially Quebec. Although it must be co-ordinated with the policies of the other governments and be fitted into the North American context, the first requirement of such a policy is that it should make Quebec's priorities its own and thus guarantee the continued development of our society as a dynamic part of Canadian and North American society.

Quebec is not the only province that attaches great importance to communications. The objectives outlined in the Ontario government's Throne Speech in April 1971 are not so different from ours.

Consequently, the governments concerned should enter into bilateral or multilateral discussions. But such discussions will not be allowed to put off or delay the exercise by Quebec of its responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

This working paper is not conclusive; rather, it is a starting point from which a number of projects must be developed and carried out as part of a policy of service to the people of Quebec.

As the studies and consultations made by the Department, and later by the general communications council, are completed, the Department will make available to all concerned the details of the concrete actions it intends to take, particularly in the following areas:

1. technical infrastructure with a view to distribution of the multi-media project and generally of educational TV in Quebec;
2. a Quebec communications and broadcasting system for educational, administrative and cultural purposes, particularly in accordance with the development and extension of the multi-media project;
3. government publications and productions;
4. scientific research and the training of communications specialists;
5. Quebec participation in Canadian satellites and in the France-Quebec project for satellite communications;
6. general government regulation of communications.

This list of subjects for study and government decision is not exhaustive and reflects neither their priority nor chronological order. But it contains the main questions about communications that will occupy the attention of the government in the months ahead.

APPENDIX

QUEBEC POLICY ON CABLE TV

MAY 1971

The communications sector is basic to the development of the Quebec community, just as much as education or social policy. Thus it can be regarded as one of the "cultural" manifestations of the Quebec personality.

Accordingly, the Quebec government is fully alive to the importance of providing this sector with everything it needs for its fullest development. It then becomes obvious that a worthwhile communications policy will give a prominent place to the cable industry.

Without any special effort on its part, Quebec has become something of a trail-blazer in this field. One of the first cable companies in Canada was formed in Montreal in the early 1950's.

Although it is barely 20 years old, the cable industry has some 140 to 175 separate undertakings in Quebec (according to our information sources) and reaches more than 17 per cent of Quebec homes, mostly in the urban areas.

The industry seems destined to grow rapidly, especially in centres where conditions for its introduction are more favourable. The size of the individual companies is surprising--20,000 to 92,000 subscribers each-- as is the industry's wildfire spread in geographic terms. The areas of heaviest use, in descending order, are: the St. Maurice region, Eastern Townships, Ottawa Region, Montreal and Quebec. However, the Gaspé Peninsula, the North Shore, Abitibi and Lake St. John are not "deprived" areas as far as cable-TV is concerned.

Originally these "community antenna TV" companies, as they were known, were merely a substitute for the private TV antennas on houses and their single antenna distributed the off-air signal via a system of one-way cables connected to the receivers in each subscriber's home.

As the industry has grown, it has discovered new possibilities in itself and, what is more, it has found out what it is basically suited for. Under the pressure of the community's needs, it is increasingly generating its own production or reproduction, both locally and regionally. The relative importance of the original antenna is fading with the advent of closed-circuit telecommunications. Independent programming is being fed by a new production centre, by videotape, and by delayed films. In short, cable is less and less dependent on live TV; it is gradually changing and revealing a style of its own. More and more, it is referred to as CATV. The phenomenon of this growth is extremely important for the future.

In view of this situation and the prospects of CATV development, we might well wonder what Quebec's policy is, what it will be, and what it should be.

Telecommunications technology must above all be the servant of human communication. It is the government that lays out and plans the road system in its territory, thus controlling the directional flow of transportation and, in the long run, relations between cities. It is all the more important that the government (and not some other authority) should plan the general development of communications. In this challenge of a new democracy, the very future of

Quebec and the fate of its society are at stake.

In physical terms, Quebec has a highly developed system of communications--telephone, cable, radio, TV, the printed word, audio-visuals, computers--whose rate of use is one of the highest in the world. This array of facilities already in service is huge, not to mention what is yet to come.

CATV: A Public Service

By the fact of its existence and the service it provides, the cable industry must be regarded and therefore regulated as a "public service".

Indeed, to the extent that cable has become or is preparing to become a necessary instrument to give the citizen access, among other things, to education, social and cultural exchanges, social and animation, /information of all kinds to which he is entitled at the municipal, local, regional and provincial levels, it is the responsibility of the State, from which all these fundamental rights derive, to recognize the true "public service" character of cable and to control it accordingly.

Although the basis for this recognition as a public service is sociological, its practical manifestations take a variety of forms.

Economic Considerations

CATV, whatever the economic result today, is a highly speculative industry operating on empirical lines. On the one hand, it must consider the actual investment per subscriber and on the other hand the return on the investment. Therefore when one of these firms is sold, it is not surprising that the overriding consideration in

assessing a CATV system is its earning capacity, while scant attention is paid to the real values it represents.

The telephone industry already has public utility status. It is generally restricted to planning its gross revenues on the basis of a 25 to 33 per cent yield on the investment required in order not to exceed the rate ceiling, after the usual deductions, in terms of net revenue set by the public utilities boards.

This does not hold true for cable, where some firms draw 100 per cent of their original investment in gross revenue every year. This laxity in the rate structure naturally allows total operating costs to soar and thus add to the long-term instability of the whole industry in relation to the real needs it must satisfy.

An economic and industrial phenomenon in Quebec that is worth noting is the telephone. In the past, there have been more than 350 telephone companies in Quebec; now only about 40 remain. In all likelihood it will be possible in five years to count them on the fingers of both hands. The reasons for this decline are many: some were family firms, some were hit by succession duties, others lacked the managerial and technical know-how to keep up with the development required by the increasingly high standards of service, and so on.

What is the situation with regard to cable? After 20 years, there are more than 150 separate companies serving about 17 per cent of Quebec. If the present trend continues at the same rate, how many will there be in the end? 10, 20? It is a costly

process and there is no point in going through it again as with the telephone. In the interests of all Quebecers, the government wants to avoid another boom and bust cycle. Without creating hardship for businessmen, the State refuses to make the people of Quebec pay twice what they need to in order to obtain the same service in the long run. For depending on the plan adopted for cable, the economic burden inflicted on the people could increase as much as twofold.

Plan for the Industry

There is no question of nationalizing the cable firms. But society demands that in future there should be greater consistency in the organization of its public services. This is why the government is strongly urging a plan for the industry that will take both economic necessities and social needs into account.

It could be a system in which the cable companies are better organized and financially strong, but with fewer of them covering larger territories. Such a system would be owned, in the final analysis, by the people of Quebec through their institutions which serve as reservoirs for the people's savings, for example the Quebec Deposit and Investment Fund, Quebec-controlled insurance companies, caisses populaires (credit unions), our own financial institutions, and the like.

Application of the public service principle brings with it a change in the outlook of a cable company in many respects. Thus, from the economic point of view, what it loses in speculative

prospects, it gains in stability of revenue and growth. It is in a better position to plan its expansion and has easier access to capital. The type of investment changes: it becomes safer and, while the returns are less spectacular, they are steadier and less exposed to risks. The firm moves in a larger community of investors and it is easier to plan its contribution in social terms.

When CATV companies have the status of a public service, they are obliged to provide their service to the largest number of people at the lowest cost. The locomotive effects are not negligible: in view of the sociological factors already referred to, greater value is attached to the use of cable and more people become subscribers. Expansion is facilitated and revenue comes easily.

It is true that the federal government has stolen a march on the provinces in regard to cable TV by a *dé facto* occupation of this field of jurisdiction. Quebec on the other hand has been content until now to state somewhat vaguely and too timidly that this is a field of provincial jurisdiction, without however really equipping itself with the necessary instruments for exercising that jurisdiction.

If Quebec is to have a consistent policy on communications, this question must be settled quickly and Quebec must take action without delay.

Cable TV will therefore have to be brought under the control of the Quebec government through its Public Service Board. Since the cable companies are nearly all constituted as territorial

monopolies with exclusive rights, the State will then be able to call upon them to assume their full responsibilities towards their "captive" audiences by providing their service to all citizens according to predetermined standards and terms as circumstances permit, such as population density, technical feasibility, profitability, etc.

The Quebec Public Service Board must therefore formulate and establish a comprehensive policy covering the use of cable. These regulations will be based on the principles contained in the Quebec government's general policy on communications. As a result, cable TV will truly serve the people and not the other way around.

The Board will therefore have to take the following steps:

1. set "just and reasonable" rates proportionate to actual investment, as is done for the telephone. Besides protecting the consumer from excessive rates and terms, it defuses all speculation, which is out of place in a public service. The present monthly rates of \$5.00 to \$8.00 could be lowered or the service improved.
2. in co-operation with the federal authorities, set technical standards such as quality of signals and equipment, while the federal government would lay down standards and specifications of a national nature.
3. promote the expansion and the introduction of the service and terms designed to bring cable to the vast majority of Quebec homes. If the present trend were allowed to continue, it is estimated that it would cost nearly \$1,000 million to reach 85 per cent of the Quebec population instead of \$500 million. It is clear that our society

could not bear such an economic burden!

4. encourage and promote a quality program service and exercise the necessary controls for the purpose. Indeed, we believe that the community should have just as much responsibility for programming as the owner of the company. Local groups must also take an active part in developing the program content, because the industry exists primarily for their benefit.

5. plan and co-ordinate technological changes. Cable as we now know it is doomed to rapid obsolescence. Plans must be made as soon as possible for multi-use coaxial cables which could provide all the services that are necessary or available to every Quebec home, such as: telephone, cable TV, meter monitoring equipment (to read the Quebec Hydro meters, for example), data processing, access to various information banks in schools, universities or public libraries, remote controls for the household "brain" activating the household plant, and so forth.

A Realistic Solution Possible Now

It is a fact that the telephone companies already own nearly 80 per cent of the major TV cables. ^{only} The cable firms lease the lines from them and only connect the terminals of the branch lines to them, which they supply to every subscriber's household.

A stronger cable industry would be in a better position to negotiate a more favourable leasing charge with the telephone companies, the main consideration being to find the most economical solution. If need be, the CATV firms would own the cables themselves, if it would mean lower costs.

Should do a close study into the feasibility of doing this
Coaxial cable may not be the most economical way of providing these services

There is no question of the telephone companies becoming cable TV undertakings. The "content" is no concern of theirs. But they can absorb the technical side of cable TV; they already have the necessary infrastructure, access to cheap capital, penetration into a maximum number of homes and a concept of rates that already meets the requirements of the public interest: a tradition of "public service" that makes the government's regulatory task easier.

Since the telephone industry plays such a large part in the technological development of cable systems, it is clear that it should come under the control of the Quebec Board.

Out of more than 300 telephone companies in Canada, all except three are under provincial control. Therefore it seems essential that the telephone companies required to participate in this way in the development of CATV should come under the control of the Quebec Public Service Board as far as their operations in Quebec are concerned.

Existing Cable Programming in Quebec

Each CATV owner in Quebec decides, to all intents and purposes, what programming his firm will distribute. He chooses the television channels that are carried by the cable and controls the local or regional programming that is produced directly by cable, without the use of material picked up off-air or retransmitted.

Encouragement of local programming is extremely important. This is the level at which the people can make themselves heard,

the level that is closest to their daily lives and that has a bearing on their real concerns. It is here that freedom of speech takes shape.

It is in local production that cable finds its true calling and reveals its true nature. In this sense, cable is virtually a municipal enterprise and therefore a matter of provincial concern. Similarly, it makes an original contribution to communications and is perceived and used as the chosen instrument of local communities.

Original local production increases costs and calls for equally original revenue. Sooner or later, some thought will have to be given to this type of revenue. It should be remembered that when radio first made its appearance, the press did all it could to bar its access to advertising revenue; and it was the same when television arrived, but look at what we have now. Cable also needs revenues in so far as it produces its own original programs. We cannot prevent this production; on the contrary, we must encourage it.

In point of fact, it is essential that Quebec should assume as soon as possible its jurisdiction over all communications in its territory.

Broadcasting Must Adapt

The backbone of the Canadian television system comprises two French networks, the second of which comes into operation in the fall of 1971, and two English networks, which share the audience with the neighbouring networks in some areas. This universe covers the whole field of entertainment TV, and it is difficult to see,

in view of the human and financial potential, how it could grow to any great extent in the next few years.

People have a right to have this entertainment TV in their homes, but they are also justified in demanding other public services, such as school telecasts, community TV and various data services. If cable is integrated with telecommunications systems rather than broadcasting, it will not compete with existing services but will be able to promote other services that have been in demand for some time. This is why a sharp line must be drawn between the functions of production, broadcasting (with the resultant programming) and transmission.

This is in agreement with the findings of the Royal Commission on Mass Media (Vol. II, pp 356 ff), notably on the future of cable, its scope as shown by the federal bureau of statistics, and on the division of ownership between the public utility service (coaxial cable) and the operator (rest of the facility).

Legal and Constitutional Notes

The radical switch that is inevitably taking place from broadcasting to cable distribution, instead of being artificially checked for a time for the benefit of interests with a stake in the past, must be carried out gradually and harmoniously.

Through a major change in direction by technology, the "principal recommendations" of the Aird Commission speak to us once again loud and clear. Although we must agree with the authors of the 1929 report that "Canadian radio listeners want Canadian broadcasting", a broadcasting system that is essentially separate

from that of the United States, we must also add in all honesty the commissioners' unequivocal recommendation:

"(a) That broadcasting should be placed on a basis of public service and that the stations providing a service of this kind should be owned and operated by one national company, that provincial authorities should have full control over the programs of the station or stations in their respective areas." (1) /

Closer to our time and with direct reference to CATV, the Committee on Broadcasting, in its report submitted to the federal government in 1957^(s/c), felt constrained to state that

"Our terms of reference specifically excluded community-antenna television (CATV), but we inevitably found ourselves drawn into consideration of this complex subject because of its actual and potential effects on television generally." (2)

It is no less revealing that the very first sentence of this report stated categorically:

"The only thing that really matters in broadcasting is program content; all the rest is housekeeping." (3)

(1) ROYAL COMMISSION ON BROADCASTING, Report (known as the Aird Report), Ottawa, King's Printer, 1929. "Principal Recommendations" (a), (c), (d) and (e).

(2) COMMITTEE ON BROADCASTING, Report (Fowler Report II), Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1965, page 251, English version.

(3) Ibid., page 3.

That is a fundamental proposition which illustrates the glaring contradiction in the federal government's attitude, when it seeks to sanction at the legislative, administrative and institutional levels the merits of the fundamental and universally acknowledged distinction between broadcasting and telecommunications while at the same time rejecting the validity of this distinction in its dealings with the member governments of Canada.

At all events, it is apparent that the federal government's jurisdiction over radiocommunications, recognized by the Privy Council, does not carry with it a similar jurisdiction over radio broadcasting, much less TV.

Broadcasting and telecommunications are interdependent as regards equipment, but separate in their functions. The relationship is rather like that which exists between the newspaper and the printing press.

It follows from all this that the Quebec government is firmly resolved to exercise its full jurisdiction over cable TV in order to serve the basic, specific needs of Quebec society. We will equip ourselves with the tools to carry out this policy. What is more, we have everything we need in Quebec to make our own original contribution to the modern world of communications.