

# Radio and TV Evaluation

By Ethel McCandless

**A** NATIONAL evaluation of Radio and Television programmes by the Women's Institutes has just been completed. Seven provinces took part including Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

According to Mrs. George Wilson, Public Relations Officer, Federated Women's Institutes of Canada, who compiled the reports from the provinces, television has replaced radio as the centre of entertainment in 90% of the homes reached by this survey. Reports indicate that an average of six hours a day is spent viewing television. It behooves us, therefore, as members of an educational organization to be concerned with the programmes being presented to our Canadian listeners and viewers, stated Mrs. Wilson. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and private stations are to be commended for their effort to present programmes of interest. Their co-operation with the Women's Institutes all across Canada is highly valued.

Reports show that while television is more popular for entertainment, radio still has a definite place in the home. It is turned on first thing in the morning for the news and weather and during the working hours the homemakers enjoy the musical programmes. There are areas in Canada that still do not have television and here radio is a friend of the country woman.

Women's Institute members across Canada think along the same lines as the members of Ontario. Less crime and violence, especially in the programmes during children's viewing hours, were requested and "commercials toned down." Mothers were unanimous in complaining about "child persuader" advertising (appeals to children for enclosed gifts or premiums). Women's programmes, religious programmes and those on agricultural topics were, on the whole, highly rated; and in general, news coverage was commended. A variety of tastes was recorded in entertainment but all approved of programmes providing an outlet for talented young Canadians. Country "hick" impersonations were found objectionable, also simulated accents. 90% of the homes surveyed have television and many homes have one or more radios.

## ONTARIO INSTITUTES' TELEVISION EVALUATION

The "Don Messer Jubilee Programmes" from Halifax over the CBC network rate 100% as the most popular programme of entertainment. Many requests were received for a one-hour programme for this show.

Again 100% reports ask for less violence and shooting to kill, less Westerns, cowboys and crime, especially during the older children's hours of listening. A few report some cowboy shows are liked by boys and they can take them in their stride, but parents ask for less killing and law-

lessness. Roy Rogers' show was cited as a good example for a western show.

## Children's Programmes

The Children's Programmes seem to fit in very well with the pre-school and kindergarten age. The "Teddy Forman Nursery School" on the CBC network rates high. This programme for 15 minutes should be increased to half an hour according to many reports. "Romper Room" on local stations with local pre-school children taking part received many fine comments. "Leave it to Beaver" is seen by many, but not much comment. "Lassie" is a favourite with the children on most of the channels, but parents object to the emotional build-up, which is so quickly resolved and leaves many children visibly moved and shaken. "Dennis the Menace" is liked by the children, but here again parents say that Dennis does not think as a child and the humour is not natural. "Father Knows Best" and the "Danny Thomas Show" rate highly with the young and older children. Captain Kangaroo (U.S.A.) came in for much support. "Chez Helen" CBC received many fine comments. Disneyland and Junior Magazine are well liked by the older children. Disneyland apparently is not being shown in some parts of Ontario that have received it before and they ask for its return. Cartoons seem to have quite a following and there seems to be little objection to them except in the case of Pop-Eye, because the English used on this programme is very bad. Parents ask how they can teach young children to speak good English when many of the children's programmes use bad grammar.

A few reports, especially from Institutes that had discussed the evaluation in their branches, said children should be allowed to see both sides of life, but that parents should be willing to interpret the meanings to their children. Parents should also divert the children's interest to something else such as reading or outdoor play when a programme scheduled is not the right one in their opinion.

## Women's Shows

"Open House" CBC network, seems to be the favourite. Women would like to see the time of this increased from one half hour to one hour. It happens to be the only women's show received via TV in Northern Ontario, according to reports. This show has a very high rating. Local stations showing women's programmes receive commendation; the commentators know what the women want and they cater to them. Interviews with local people are arranged, cooking and household hints usually given each day, and this is what the women enjoy. Wingham gets great praise; Kitchener, London and Barrie, in that order. Women's Institute members who visit Kitchener enjoy the tour of the TV station as