

THIS WEEK AND NEXT

by Ray Argyle



Has This Hour Run Out?

Canada's most popular television program, *This Hour Has Seven Days*, had its final showing of the season last Sunday and it's still not known whether it will be back in the fall.

There is no need to recount here the events which led up to the firing of co-hosts Patrick Watson and Laurier LaPierre, and the threatened strike of producers which was averted only by the appointment of newspaper publisher Stuart Keate as an informal mediator in the dispute.

The fate of the *Seven Days* show was not, on the face of it, an important national issue. But it was a controversy that attracted great attention because the people behind the program had known how to use the intense impact of TV to popularize issues that were important to the nation.

The *Seven Days* show represented one of the very few occasions when TV had been used to stir the emotions and even the intellect, of the average viewer.

Typical CBC "public affairs" programs have been informative, intelligently produced, and skillfully presented. But most of them also have gone high over the heads of the majority of Canadians, like a pitcher who knew what he was aiming at but couldn't keep the ball over home plate.

This was clearly not the case of *Seven Days*. It tackled vital issues in a way that involved the average man on the street—be it the treatment of Indians in northern Ontario; the pathetic figure of spy suspect Victor Spencer; or the tragedy of a thalidomide baby.

Why, then, did CBC president Alphonse Ouimet (recently appointed to another seven-year term) move so drastically in his decision to dump Watson and LaPierre?

If there had been a great public outcry about *Seven Days*, or if there had been widespread public revulsion against either the content or the treatment of the shows, the action would have been understandable.

Yet this was not the case. Here was a show which had attracted a larger audience than any other CBC program (with

the exception of hockey which doesn't really qualify as a program), and which had gained great publicity by scoring a number of major scoops.

Producer Douglas Leiterman says the CBC has not given any "comprehensible reason" for the firing of the co-hosts. There has been reference by CBC brass to *Seven Days*' alleged "lack of good taste" or "irresponsibility". But how do you measure these things? Certainly the general Canadian standards of taste have not been offended by *Seven Days*. Unless Mr. Ouimet is prepared to enforce a taste standard which is clearly not shared by Canadians in general, then his complaint on this score is hardly acceptable.

In defense of the CBC, it has been argued that "management has the right to manage," and that if the network chiefs want to dump a performer, they have every right to do so.

The rights of management apply even in a publicly-owned corporation such as the CBC. But management must also be responsible to its owners, which in the case of the CBC is each and every one of us.

It may be that Mr. Ouimet, in his wisdom, will be able to install new hosts for *Seven Days* who will do a better job than Watson and LaPierre, and produce an even more popular show. If he is not able to do this, then he should resign, because if management has the right to manage, the stockholders also have the right to hold management responsible for its actions.

As Hon. Judy LaMarsh has commented, the *Seven Days* fiasco is only "the tip of the iceberg" in the CBC's troubles. These troubles will be pinpointed in the forthcoming government white paper on broadcasting. There is growing suspicion that the CBC is overloaded with executive fat—the way the firings were handled suggests ample evidence of this—and that Messrs. Watson and LaPierre were dumped not because of indiscretions on *Seven Days*, but for their oft-repeated criticism of how the CBC is run under Mr. Ouimet.

Toronto Telegram News Service



Holy Mother center piece at Mother's Day Tea.
Photo by G. Whiteley

CATHOLIC GIRLS HOLD MOTHER'S DAY TEA

On May 8th the Catholic Girls' Club held a Mother's Day Tea in honour of their mothers. The Tea was preceded by the recitation of the Rosary in the Church. As the mothers arrived they were presented with a corsage of mums and their daughters escorted them to a table. They were entertained by a fashion show and hat display. Diane Campbell acted as commentator. Fashions displayed the latest styles from the time of the cave man up to the present. The hats were creative and humorous and the mothers enjoyed the display very much.

The club executive, Carole Gaudet, Claire Bervilleau, Lita Marie Boudreau and Diane Campbell were introduced and the president (Diane Campbell) introduced the club's new counsellor, Mrs. L. McBride.

Seated at the head table which was gaily decorated with floral displays were Rev. Dean E.A. Gallagher, Mrs. J.R. Campbell, Mrs. H. Boudreau, Lita Marie Boudreau, Mrs. L. McBride and Diane Campbell.

Gay blue and white streamers with pink flowers decorated the hall and a statue of the Blessed Virgin was a focal point in the centre of the room.

The tea was very successful and the mothers enjoyed themselves immensely.

GOLF MEETING WEDNESDAY

The annual meeting of the Aguasabon Golf Club will be held at 8 P.M. WEDNESDAY, MAY 11TH in the Curling Club Lounge.

All members of the club are asked to attend.

NEW MEMBERS ENROLLED BY MOOSE LADIES

The Women of the Moose met Wednesday evening at the Moose Home. Senior Regent Marge Dejonghe conducted the opening ritual and Recorder Barbara Dejonghe read the minutes and correspondence.

Junior Graduate Regent Ann Didura gave a report on the Academy of Friendship sessions at Minneapolis. Two new members, Elsie Fedorak and Rae Tuomi were enrolled.

Members are reminded that the voting for the new executive takes place at the (Continued page 11)

PAPOUSEK TRIP (Continued from page 2)

home they visited Mrs. Papousek's brother John Holancin and family in Sorelle, Quebec and her family in Holland Marsh, Ontario.