The Politics of Broadcasting in France 1974-1978

2 volumes : Volume 1

by

Raymond Kuhn

Ph.D. thesis

University of Warwick

Department of Politics

July 1980
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Acknowledgements

My first debt of gratitude is to my supervisor, Dr. Ian Campbell, who has unfailingly encouraged me throughout my research. His wide knowledge of French politics and scholarly interest in the mass media are evident throughout this thesis. Without his close supervision this thesis would have been much the poorer.

I would also like to thank the other members of the Department of Politics at the University of Warwick, particularly Professor Malcolm Anderson (now at the University of Edinburgh) and Dr. Roger Duclaud-William who are both specialists on French politics. I am grateful to Professor W.J.M. Mackenzie, formerly of the University of Glasgow, for giving me the initial push to engage on research in the field of French politics.

Dr. Jay Blumler of the University of Leeds helped me considerably when I was starting my research, as did Mr. Anthony Smith, BBC producer and writer on the mass media. In France M. Roland Cayrol of the Institut d’Etudes Politiques provided me with numerous contacts in Paris.

I would like to express my gratitude to my colleagues in the Department of Political Studies at Queen Mary College, University of London, who have given of their time and patience to answer my inquiries and calm my fears. They include Mr. Trevor Smith, Ms. Judith Evans, Mr. Wayne Parsons and Dr. Elizabeth Vallance.

I owe an immense debt of gratitude to those people in France who gave up their time to be interviewed. All of them proved helpful, though not equally so. Those who deserve a special mention include Mm. Joel Le Tac, Jean Favre, Jean-Claude Perier, Marcel Jullian and Marceau Long.
I wish to thank the Social Science Research Council and the French Government for financing the research on which this thesis is based.

Mrs. Evelyn Lockington and Mrs. Marie Wheeler deserve immense praise for their accurate and speedy typing of the manuscript.

Finally, I am indebted to my wife who has provided a source of inspiration and comfort during the rather prolonged period of this research.

Of course, none of the above bears any responsibility for any errors of fact or quirks of style this thesis might contain.

Raymond Kuhn

July 1980
Abstract

The subject matter of this thesis is the 1974-75 reorganisation of the French state broadcasting services which abolished the ORTF and the consequences of this reform for the relationship between the Government and broadcasting during the early years of the Giscardian presidency.

The originality of the thesis lies in the fact that this reorganisation is placed in an explicitly political context, the election of the first non-Gaullist President of the Fifth Republic and the ensuing conflict between the Gaullist and Giscardian components of the governing coalition. The thesis also makes a significant contribution to the limited amount of academic literature on French broadcasting in general.

Placed within the framework of the debate about the role of broadcasting in liberal democracies, the thesis examines the applicability of two antithetical models, the "fourth estate" and "state control" models, to the French broadcasting system since 1974.

Neither is found to be satisfactory. Our detailed study of government-broadcasting relations since the reform demonstrates that the political executive, and within the executive particularly the President of the Republic, has at its disposal a variety of means through which to control those aspects of broadcasting in which it has an interest, ranging from determining the legal framework of the state monopoly to appointing political sympathisers to key decision-making posts. Neither the broadcasting staff, the management or the boards of governors of the separate companies set up by the 1974 reform has the freedom of manoeuvre necessary for broadcasting in France to be regarded as a "fourth estate."

On the other hand, the "state control" model is too vague and monolithic, unable to allow for change except of a totally radical kind. On the basis of a wide variety of published and unpublished material and interviews with members of broadcasting management, staff, journalists, politicians and civil servants, this thesis shows that government-broadcasting relations in France have altered greatly in form and to a limited extent in substance since 1974. For example, the direct, overt controls which were so much of a feature of de Gaulle's presidency have given way to a reliance on indirect controls, particularly via partisan appointments within the broadcasting companies. This is especially the case with control over news output which has been largely internalised within the radio and television companies.
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<td>Antenne 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFP</td>
<td>Agence France Presse</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALO</td>
<td>Association pour la libération des ondes</td>
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<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>British Broadcasting Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDS</td>
<td>Centre des Démocrates Sociaux</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Centre d'Études d'Opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFDT</td>
<td>Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFTC</td>
<td>Confédération Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGC</td>
<td>Confédération Générale des Cadres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGT</td>
<td>Confédération Générale du Travail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNRS</td>
<td>Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAEBC</td>
<td>Direction des Affaires Extérieures et de la Coopération</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDF</td>
<td>Electricité de France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENA</td>
<td>Ecole Nationale d'Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FO</td>
<td>Force Ouvrière</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR3</td>
<td>France Regions 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>FSU</td>
<td>Fédération Syndicale Unifiée</td>
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<td>HCA</td>
<td>Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INA</td>
<td>Institut National de l'Audiovisuel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRP</td>
<td>Mouvement Républicain Populaire</td>
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<td>ORTF</td>
<td>Office de Radiodiffusion - Télévision Française</td>
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<td>PDG</td>
<td>Président Directeur Général</td>
</tr>
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<td>RAI</td>
<td>Radio Audizioni Italia</td>
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<td>RFP</td>
<td>Régie Française de Publicité</td>
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<td>RTL</td>
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RPR  Rassemblement pour la République
SAC  Service d'Action Civique
SCORT Syndicat des Cadres de l'Office de Radio-Television
SFA  Syndicat Français des artistes-interprètes
SFP  Société Française de Production
SFT  Société Française de Télédistribution
SIRT Syndicat Interprofessionnel de Radio- Télévision
SJTI Service Juridique et Technique de l'Information
SNCF Société Nationale des Chemins de fer Français
SNJ Syndicat National des Journalistes
SNRT Syndicat National de Radio et de Télévision
SOFIRAD Société financière de radiodiffusion
SURT Syndicat Unifié de Radio et de Télévision
SUT Syndicat Unifié des Techniciens
TDF Télédiffusion de France
TFL Télévision Française 1
UDF Union pour la Démocratie Française
UDR Union des Démocrates pour la République
USDA Union Syndicale des Artistes
VAT Value Added Tax
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INTRODUCTION

During the 1970s the traditional public service broadcasting organisations of western Europe came under strong attack from a variety of quarters. In Great Britain, for example, the long-standing duopoly of the BBC and IBA was temporarily threatened by a recommendation of the Annan committee to allocate the fourth television channel to a new Open Broadcasting Authority.\(^1\) A minority of the committee also recommended that the BBC be split up into two separate organisations, one of which would be concerned with television production and programming and the other with the provision of radio services.\(^2\) By the end of the decade the BBC's dependence on revenue from the licence fee set by the Government was posing the corporation grave financial problems. Not only were certain services cut back, but the BBC's relationship with the Government was called into question along with the very concept of a public service broadcasting system.\(^3\)

In Italy too the situation became particularly confused after a constitutional court decision in July 1976 that the state broadcasting monopoly, previously entrusted to the Italian broadcasting corporation, the RAI, was legally enforceable at the national level only. This decision resulted in the creation of a multitude of private television companies and radio stations, operating in conditions of unrestrained competition at the local and regional levels.\(^4\)

In West Germany attempts were being made in the late 1970s to establish a commercial television channel. In Ireland commercial pirate radio stations were set up in flagrant breach of the state monopoly, while Belgium, Sweden and Denmark among others were engaged in reorganising their own broadcasting services. Writing in 1975 Anthony Smith remarked that "one can now perhaps discern the beginning of the end of the age of the broadcasting monoliths."

The reasons for this state of crisis in western European broadcasting may have differed from country to country. Yet what is striking is the extent to which well-known national broadcasting institutions such as the BBC and the RAI were exposed to severe criticism. Nor was France immune from this malaise in national broadcasting organisations. Indeed, in 1974-75 the ORTF, the custodian of the State's broadcasting monopoly, was abolished by President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing following his victory in the 1974 presidential elections. The unitary structure of the ORTF was replaced by seven broadcasting companies, organisationally independent of each other. Each company was responsible for a particular function in the broadcasting process: transmission, production, radio programmes, television programmes and regional programmes.

The subject matter of this thesis is the reorganisation of the French state broadcasting services in 1974-75 and the consequences of this reform for the relationship between the Government and broadcasting during the early years of the Giscardian presidency.

   See also A. Williams, Broadcasting and democracy in West Germany, London, Crosby Lockwood Staples, 1976.


There are several reasons why the 1974-75 broadcasting reform merits close study. Moreover, an examination of these reasons serves to place this thesis in the context of important changes taking place in the French political system.

The reorganisation of the state broadcasting services was the first major substantive reform undertaken by the new President of the Republic on his accession to the presidential office. Elected by a very small majority of the voters on a platform of reformist change, the new President quickly introduced a series of reforms, particularly in the social field, to mark the start of the Giscardian regime.

By mid-1976, however, the President's reformist zeal had waned quite dramatically. The poor performance of the parties of the governing right-wing coalition in the 1976 cantonal elections; the growing tension between the President and his Prime Minister, Jacques Chirac, which culminated in the latter's resignation from the premiership in August 1976; the lack of a reliable, stable and sufficiently large parliamentary base to support reform proposals; and, finally, the President's preoccupation with foreign policy - all contributed to a noticeable decline in reformist measures as the presidency established itself. 8

The capital gains tax reform, emasculated beyond recognition in the Gaullist dominated National Assembly in the spring of 1976, arguably marked the end of the reformist period of the Giscardian presidency. It is possible to view the reorganisation of the state broadcasting services,

8. Domestic reforms usually require legislation, whereas in foreign policy the President's freedom of manoeuvre is more extensive.
therefore, as not only the first major reform of the new presidency but also one of the most important to be implemented.  

A second reason for studying the 1974-75 broadcasting reform is that with Giscard d'Estaing's election to the presidency France, for the first time in the Fifth Republic, had a non-Gaullist President. The 1974 reorganisation of state broadcasting was one of the first policy decisions not only of a new President, but more importantly of a President of a different political stance from his two Gaullist predecessors. Since Giscard d'Estaing's antipathy towards certain aspects of the Gaullist regime was well-known, it was clear that his election to the principal political office would in all probability exacerbate tension within the governing coalition and prove a source of considerable disquiet for a large section of the Gaullist party. In this context the abolition of the ORTF, a powerful symbol of the Gaullist state, marked the beginning of a new phase in the politics of the Fifth Republic.

Furthermore, the Government's broadcasting bill and the ensuing debate in the National Assembly exemplified what was to become a salient feature of Giscard d'Estaing's presidency: the lack of a presidential power base in Parliament. The new President's dependence on Gaullist party support had a considerable influence on the content of the reform bill and the nature of the reorganisation. While at this early stage of the presidency Giscard d'Estaing could rely on Chirac to deliver the votes of the Gaullist parliamentary party, nonetheless the potential for conflict between the President of the Republic and the Gaullists in Parliament was evident even in these first few weeks of the new regime. This conflict was to become increasingly overt from 1976 onwards as Chirac adopted a highly critical attitude towards the Giscardian presidency.

9. The other main reform of this period was the abortion law reform carried out in the autumn of 1974.
The reorganisation of the state broadcasting services illustrates this institutional and political conflict between a Giscardian President and a National Assembly in which the Gaullists remained the single largest group in the majorité. While the compromise nature of the reform reflects in part Giscard d'Estaing's dependence on Gaullist parliamentary support, appointments to key managerial and editorial posts, particularly since 1976, and political coverage in news bulletins demonstrate the President's desire to marginalise the influence of Chirac and his supporters in the Gaullist party.

A third reason for studying the 1974-75 reform of broadcasting is that it marked yet another attempt to provide a stable organisational framework for state broadcasting in France. The reform was the third major piece of legislation on the structure of the state broadcasting services in ten years. Established by statute in 1964, reformed by statute in 1972, the ORTF was finally abolished by statute in 1974. Moreover, other important reforms had been carried out during this period without recourse to a new broadcasting statute. These included the introduction of commercial advertising at the ORTF in 1968 and the reorganisation of the ORTF news departments undertaken in the wake of the 1968 events at the instigation of the Prime Minister, Jacques Chaban-Delmas.

The sheer quantity and variety of the reforms introduced during the Fifth Republic prior to 1974 highlight the constant difficulties the French government has faced in establishing an acceptable structure for state broadcasting. In attempting to provide such a structure the 1974 reform retained the twin concepts which have underpinned the organisation of the broadcasting media in France since the second world war: a public service system within the framework of the state monopoly. However, in
abolishing the unitary structure of the ORTF and replacing it with separate companies, the reform marked a break with the tradition of a functionally centralised broadcasting institution. Moreover, by instituting a system of competition among the separate programme companies the reorganisation introduced a degree of economic liberalism into what had traditionally been a centralised, dirigiste structure.

Finally, the 1974-75 reform is worthy of study because the relationship between politics and broadcasting in France has been a contentious issue since at least the outbreak of World War Two. While the state monopoly has been traditionally accepted by all sides of the political spectrum with few exceptions, the way in which this monopoly has been used, not to say misused, by the Government in a crude partisan fashion has ensured the French broadcasting services of the unenviable reputation of being one of the most overtly controlled in Western Europe. According to ministerial spokesmen the 1974 statute was designed to grant the broadcasting companies an unprecedented degree of independence from the Government. One objective of this thesis is to test the validity of this claim.

In the light of the political importance of the 1974 broadcasting reform and indeed of government-broadcasting relations in France generally, the amount of academic literature on the subject is surprisingly and disappointingly limited. Partial accounts by members of the broadcasting management or staff are not uncommon, but even the best of these tend to treat only particular aspects of the subject, usually highly unsystematic.

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10. Up until recently the state monopoly was accepted as the most desirable framework for the organisation of broadcasting by the Socialist and Communist parties, the broadcasting unions, the majority of the Gaullist party and some Giscardians. Only a few Gaullists and some Giscardians, backed by business interests, favoured the introduction of a commercial television channel.
In any case they mainly predate the 1974 reform.\textsuperscript{11}

There is also a strong tradition of legalistic approaches to the subject, typefied by Charles Debbasch's massive volume on the 1964 ORTF statute.\textsuperscript{12} The most recent example of this approach is the study by Jacques Chevallier entitled \textit{La radio-télévision française entre deux réformes}. This work examines the 1972 ORTF statute and the 1974 broadcasting statute from a jurisprudential viewpoint.\textsuperscript{13} However, Chevallier tends to underestimate the importance of the political context of the 1974 reform. Moreover, as his study was published in 1975 it inevitably takes a very short-term perspective on the significance of the reorganisation. Nor does it contain any material on the consequences of the reform with regard to such important matters as news coverage and the development of pirate radio stations.

Observation studies by media sociologists, of which there have been several recent examples in this country, would appear to be much less common in France.\textsuperscript{14} Nor, surprisingly, have French political scientists directed their analytic skills to the question of government-broadcasting relations in their own country, though journalists have been less reluctant.\textsuperscript{15}

The major text in English on broadcasting in France is a study by Ruth Thomas entitled *Broadcasting and Democracy in France*. Published in 1976, this work concentrates on government-broadcasting relations prior to the 1974 reform in a semi-historical semi-thematic framework. As the author is not a political scientist, her work lacks the analytic and conceptual rigour of that discipline. In any case, the book provides only the very broadest outlines of the 1974 reorganisation and nothing at all on the consequences of the reform.

This thesis, therefore, seeks to fill an obvious gap in the academic literature. First, it places the 1974 broadcasting reform in a political context: the changeover from a Gaullist to a Giscardian regime. This change in the balance of power within the ruling right-wing coalition is exemplified by this thesis on the reorganisation of the state broadcasting services. Secondly, by concentrating on the 1974 reform and certain of its consequences the thesis makes what we hope is a significant contribution to updating the limited amount of literature on the politics of French broadcasting.

This thesis is not a history of the ORTF. Nor does it seek to cover all aspects of the 1974 reform. We are interested here in the political features of the reform and in particular the effects of the reorganisation on the relationship between the Government and the state broadcasting services. We have confined our research to metropolitan France, with the result that the thesis contains no material on the organisation of broadcasting in the French overseas departments and territories. Moreover, within metropolitan France we have concentrated for obvious reasons on the state broadcasting services. While in the final chapter we examine the role

and development of certain broadcasting media outside the state broadcasting companies, such as the peripheral radio stations and pirate radio, this is done with the general intention of placing the state broadcasting services within the context of the French broadcasting media. More particularly, we have included these other broadcasting media to highlight certain problems which the state companies, particularly Radio France and FR3, have had to face in recent years and to analyse the response of the Government and these companies to these external challenges.

The framework within which this thesis is placed is that of democratic theory as applied to the role of the mass media and in particular to the relations between the State and broadcasting in liberal democracies. Other theoretical frameworks could have been usefully employed. For example, our research might well have been conducted within the tradition of inquiry known as organisation theory. In particular it might have proved interesting to use the break-up of the ORTF as a case-study to examine the general thesis of Michel Crozier's *Le phénomène bureaucratique* regarding French attitudes towards hierarchical relationships in organisations and society.


However, we decided not to use organisation theory as the framework for our research since this might have led to a disproportionate emphasis being placed on the internal organisational relationships within the broadcasting companies. The risk would then be that the external environment, and in particular the relationship between the broadcasting companies and the Government, would be given less attention than we consider it merits. Indeed because we are concerned with the political context of the reform, it is this external environment which principally concerns us in this thesis.

Partly for similar reasons decision-making theory was not employed as the research framework.\(^{19}\) This is not to say that a decision-making analysis would not add much of interest and relevance to the subject matter of our research. For example, an analysis of the process by which the 1974 reform was drafted, the different forces involved in the drafting procedure, the groups whose interests had to be taken into account and the compromises and concessions made during the parliamentary debates would contribute a great deal to our knowledge of the 1974 reform.

Nevertheless, we have chosen not to adopt such a decision-making approach for two reasons. First, and this is a practical objection, much of the information which would be most relevant to such an analysis is simply not available to the outside observer, even with the help of interviews. More importantly, however, a decision-making approach runs the risk of policy decisions being considered in isolation with undue

emphasis being placed on particular decisions of the policy-making process and insufficient attention being paid to policy content and the consequences of its implementation. 20 Yet the content of the Government's broadcasting policy as contained in the 1974 reorganisation and the consequences of that reform for state-broadcasting relations are very much our concern in this thesis.

By placing the thesis within that tradition of inquiry which is concerned with the role of the mass media in democratic theory, we can evaluate the 1974 broadcasting reform in terms of the same concepts used by those involved in the political communications process: independence, autonomy, impartiality and control. This framework is also that most frequently employed, albeit implicitly, by commentators on French politics when writing about the broadcasting services.

In our assessment of the 1974 broadcasting reform we could have conducted our research on a cross-national comparative basis, seeking to illuminate, for example, the similarities and differences in the British and French responses to the question of state-broadcasting relations. On the other hand, given the numerous attempts to reorganise broadcasting in France and the change of regime in 1974, we decided that a longitudinal comparison covering roughly the period of the Fifth Republic would in itself be sufficient to highlight the main features of continuity and change in state-broadcasting relations in France. Therefore, while the emphasis is on the period since the 1974 reorganisation, our research necessarily involved comparison with government-broadcasting relations at the time of the ORTF.

With regard to the methodology of our research two main sources of information were utilised. The first comprised published material, both primary and secondary. This included studies of broadcasting in France and elsewhere, official documents, minutes of committee meetings, annual or occasional reports by interested parties such as the broadcasting unions, parliamentarians, parliamentary committees, the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel and the Quality Committee, unpublished academic theses and dissertations, trade union journals, and newspaper and magazine articles.

The second source of material consisted of a series of over eighty interviews with members of broadcasting management, representatives of the broadcasting unions, journalists, civil servants and parliamentarians among others. These interviews were conducted during two separate stays in France: the first from October 1976 to June 1977 and the second from June to September 1979. In some cases the same persons were interviewed during both periods. These interviews were open-ended with no formal questionnaire being submitted to interviewees. Given the different roles of those interviewed, the interviews were formulated with the objective of eliciting the maximum amount of relevant information from each interviewee. The interviews were principally used to clarify or exemplify certain points which had already emerged from the published source material. This is reflected in the text. They are not representative in any statistical sense, nor were they ever intended to be so. Each, however, reflects a personal view of some aspect of French broadcasting and their inclusion in the main body of the text is justified on that basis.
We ought perhaps to justify the extension of the time-span covered by our research. Originally it was intended that the thesis would cover the period up to and including the legislative elections of March 1978. Indeed most of the material included in the thesis falls between the initial dates, 1974-1978. However, we decided to bring certain sections up to date when major developments occurred during writing. Our task was of course facilitated by the fact that there was no change of government, and hence no restructuring of the broadcasting services, in 1978. This extension of our analysis past 1978 has proved particularly useful in the section on anti-strike provisions in chapter 7, the section on special ad hoc parliamentary committees in chapter 8 and the sections on local radio and satellite broadcasting in chapter 12.

In conclusion, it will be useful to present an outline of the structure of the thesis. It is divided into four sections, of which sections two and three form the core of our analysis. Section one looks in general terms at the relationship between politics and broadcasting. Chapter 1 places the research within the relevant academic literature, while chapter 2 concentrates on the relationship between the Government and the state broadcasting services in France prior to the 1974 reform. Section two on the break-up of the ORTF consists of four chapters: chapter 3 on the origins of the reform, chapter 4 on the liquidation of the ORTF, chapter 5 on appointments in the new broadcasting companies and chapter 6 on the reallocation of ORTF staff among the new companies. Section three looks at particular features of the new broadcasting system. Chapter 7 is devoted to the organisation and behaviour of the broadcasting unions, while chapter 8 examines the role of Parliament as a possible counter-balance to the predominance of the political executive. The role of the executive in two
areas of control is studied in detail: control of finance (chapter 9) and control of news programming (chapter 10). Chapter 11 deals with criticisms of the programme output of the new companies and proposals to amend the reform. Section four is concerned with challenges to the State's broadcasting monopoly. Chapter 12 examines these challenges and the Government's response to them.

Naturally these sections do not form watertight compartments. However, we would strongly defend the organisation of our research material as presented in this thesis. There is a thematic logic in the division as it stands, with section two concentrating on certain immediate aspects of the reorganisation and section three dealing with more long-term features of the reform.
Section 1

Politics and broadcasting
CHAPTER 1

The politics of broadcasting

Broadcasting is now a major feature of life in all developed industrialised countries, with almost every household possessing both radio and television.¹ Large sections of the population in these countries spend an important part of their leisure time either listening to radio or watching television.² Moreover, both of these

1. See tables 2.4v and 2.v for statistics relating to France.


In West Germany there are approximately 20 million television sets, one for every three inhabitants. There are also about 22 million radio sets according to official figures. M. Jenke, *Telecommunication development in the Federal Republic of Germany*, Strasbourg, Council of Europe, CCC/DC (76) 83-E, 1976, and West German Press and Information Office, *Facts about Germany*, London, 1979, p.295.

Italy had around 12 million television licence holders in 1975, which meant that officially 75% of Italian households possessed a television set. F.L. Cavazza, "Italy: from party occupation to party partition", in A. Smith (ed.), *Television and Political Life*, London, Macmillan 1979.

Similar figures reflecting saturation point in radio and television ownership could be produced for every developed industrialised country.


Again, similar figures could undoubtedly be produced for all other developed industrialised countries.
broadcasting media constitute among other things important sources of information about politics. In fact, during politically sensitive periods such as elections the broadcasting media in developed countries represent the principal sources of political information ahead of the press, party leaflets or campaign meetings.

3. For example, around half of the French population over the age of 15 watch the main evening television news programme on either TF1 or A2. See tables 5.ii and 5.iii.


4. In France this was shown during the 1974 presidential and, to a lesser extent, the 1978 legislative election campaigns. In reply to the question "Which are the media most useful in helping you to know how to vote?", the replies were as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1974</th>
<th>1978</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversations</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaflets</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posters</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion polls</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None/don't know</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Multiple replies were allowed in 1978 but not in 1974.


This article also contains a sociological breakdown of the electorate's use of the media during the 1978 legislative elections.
In the light of this penetration of the broadcasting media as sources of political information in developed countries, the nature of the links between politics and broadcasting has naturally given rise to much idle speculation and an impressive quantity of academic research. The aim of this chapter is to place this thesis within the body of academic literature which has examined the relationships between politics and broadcasting. While the findings of our research are mainly and unashamedly empirical, we have nonetheless sought to bear in mind the contribution of the thesis to the relevant academic literature. We hope, therefore, that this thesis on the politics of broadcasting in France since 1974 will have a wider application than to just one political system over a specific time period.

There are a variety of entry points into a study of the role of broadcasting in the political communications process. The first section of this chapter examines briefly the contribution of each of the major different traditions of inquiry in the general field of politics and broadcasting. The second section concentrates in more detail on the role attributed to the broadcasting media in democratic theory. Two antithetical views of the relationship between the State and broadcasting in liberal democracy will be studied: the pluralist "fourth estate" model and the elitist "state control" model.5

Broadcasting in the political communications process

The paradigm of the political communications process which we shall consider in this section is that made famous by Harold Lasswell: Who says What in Which Channel to Whom with What Effect? As Colin Seymour-Ure remarks, corresponding to each question is a field of analysis: control, content, media, audience and effect. Lasswell's formula allows one, therefore, to concentrate on different aspects of the political communications process at will, focusing on either the communicator, the message, the medium, the audience or the effects of the message.


One might have used instead Deutsch's cybernetics model. K. Deutsch, The nerves of government, New York, Free Press, 1966 (second edition). Deutsch's aim is "to use the concepts and methods of the science of cybernetics to provide explanations for not simply the survival but the growth of political systems, and to predict the consequences of changes that affect the structures of systems. ... A cybernetic model directs the analyst to specific aspects of any system. He is led, for example, to analyse the amount of variety of information; the structure of the information network ...; the structure of subsystems; the feedback system; the organisation of the system's 'memory' mechanisms; and the rules which determine the behaviour of the system."


However, as Seymour-Ure remarks, although "one method ... is to describe a model of the political system entirely using communication concepts, (as) has been done by Karl Deutsch in The nerves of government, ... it is doubtful whether his model could be applied to an actual system." C. Seymour-Ure, op. cit., p. 16.

Research on the mass media, and in particular broadcasting, has concentrated unequally on these different aspects, treating them usually as "discrete specialist departments." The literature has been dominated, perhaps to a stultifying extent, by research on the final aspect of the political communications process: the effects of the broadcast message (effects analysis). Moreover, within this body of research on effects the emphasis has been disproportionately placed on the short-term responses of the audience to specific stimuli. As Denis McQuail writes,

"Studies of media effectiveness have tended to focus on short-term, measurable effects and on the marginal effects of any change in the pattern or amount of mass media provisions." Moreover,

"Studies based on measurements of individuals have also been favoured compared with studies of structures and institutional patterns which may be markedly affected by the mass media, but for which tools of measurement were unavailable." 11

Recently there have been attempts to move away from this narrow focus of inquiry by directing attention towards the long-term effects of the media as well as the short-term effects of the message. In addition, effects analysis now concentrates not only on the audience but also on the communicator, social and political elites, institutions and the political system itself since the broadcasting media and the message also affect their political and social role through, among other things, feedback from the audience. 12

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10. D. McQuail, op.cit., p.47.


12. C. Seymour-Ure, op. cit., is an example of the wider approach to effects analysis.
The most familiar strand of effects research for political scientists has concentrated on evaluating the influence of broadcasting output on the viewers prior to elections. A vast amount of research has been done in this particular area both in the United States and western Europe with the result that no election study now seems complete without the ritual chapter on the role of the mass media during the campaign.13

13. Studies of elections and referenda in France are conducted by the Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques and published by Armand Colin, Paris.

Note also H. Penniman (ed.), France at the Polls, Washington, American Enterprise Institute, 1975, especially the chapter by Alfred Grosser entitled "The role of the press, radio and television in French political life," and the chapter by Monica Charlot entitled "The language of television campaigning."

See also J. G. Blumler, R. Cayrol and G. Thovéron, op. cit. and R. Cayrol, op. cit.

On elections in Britain see J. Trenaman and D. McQuail, Television and the political image, London, Methuen, 1961; J. Blumler and D. McQuail, Television in Politics: its uses and influence, London Faber and Faber, 1968; and, of course, the Nuffield election studies. See also, C. Seymour-Ure, op. cit., pp.202-239.

For a pioneer study of influences on voting behaviour taken from the 1940 American presidential campaign see P. F. Lazarsfeld, B. Berelson and H. Gaudet, The People's Choice, New York, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1944.

Another tradition of inquiry within the field of effects analysis has examined the role of the broadcasting media in the process by which members of a political system become socialised to the norms, values and beliefs of that system. This branch of research has shown that along with the family, peer groups, the educational system and the church among others, the mass media in developed political systems represent one of the main socialising agents. While research into the effects of broadcasting output on the electorate during election campaigns takes a short-term perspective, political socialisation research adopts a more long-term approach which seeks to evaluate the role of the mass media not just in influencing a particular political decision but in forming the political persona of the members of a political system and thus influencing that system's political culture.

While effects research has traditionally been the most popular area of inquiry in studies of the political communication process, other aspects have not been totally ignored. For example, rather than concentrating on the effects of the broadcast message, some researchers


See also P. Golding, op. cit., pp.85-98.


Note also the impressionistic comment by L. Wylie in his *Village in the Vaucluse*, London, Harvard University Press, 1974 (third edition), chapter 18 "Peyrane ten years later" (1959):
"Television seems to have atomised still further the social contacts of the people of Peyrane, which were already badly fragmented in 1950. However, the Peyranaia who watch television instead of playing boules with their neighbours and gossiping about village affairs no doubt feel as though they have more in common with Frenchmen in general who are also watching the swimming meet in Paris. This is only one example of many influences which act upon the people of Peyrane to increase their sense of integration with the rest of France today."
have preferred to devote their attention to the message itself. This tradition of inquiry may range from simple content analysis through agenda-structuring studies right up to extremely detailed interrelated analyses of the content, form, presentation and language of the message by semiologists.15

The most recent and sophisticated analysis of broadcast content in Great Britain was undertaken by the Glasgow University Media Group who analysed the content of news bulletins on all three television channels for a period of five months.16

"... we presented a mass of evidence culled from a large sample of recorded news bulletins to illustrate the basic agenda-setting function of the news. We demonstrated that the bulletins of competing services did not really compete as to the stories they were reporting, or the style in which they reported them. We showed a predictability in the ordering of news items and the limited range of presentational devices available to the broadcaster.

We further demonstrated that regularities in the area of industrial reporting lead to a consistent failure to cover the area thoroughly ...

It is not that the news programmes leave the audience bewildered. On the contrary, the agenda-setting function works to limit the range and density of information just so that it can be comprehended within a narrow consensus." 17

However, content analyses of such a detailed nature remain relatively rare as an area of inquiry for practical as well as methodological reasons.


Another field of broadcasting research has focused on the first part of Lasswell's paradigm: the communicator. This tradition of inquiry has concentrated on such topics as the sociological background and recruitment of the communicators, the norms and values of the professional broadcasters, the organisational ethos of the broadcasting institution and the production process, particularly with regard to political television.  

Frequently this approach depends on direct observation of the television production process and interviews with the broadcasters. Two recent examples of the genre in Great Britain are Michael Tracey's *The Production of Political Television* and Philip Schlesinger's *Putting 'reality' together*. The former is

"a study of production within political television, an attempt to understand and explicate the fashioning of political images within the confines of the television organisation."

Schlesinger's book, in similar vein,

"examines the practices and ideology which lie behind the making of the news by Britain's most prominent broadcasting organisation."

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This thesis also is principally concerned with the first part of Lasswell's paradigm. In particular we are interested in a specific aspect of the role of the broadcasters in the political communications process: their relationship with the major actor in the political system, the Government. This thesis, therefore, concentrates less on the internal organisational context in which the broadcasters function and more on the external political environment. Of course, in practice the dividing line between the two is by no means clear. Nonetheless, our starting point is always the external political environment and only secondarily the internal organisational context. Because of this emphasis, we have chosen to place our research within that body of literature which is devoted to an examination of the relationship between the State and broadcasting in democratic theory.

The role of broadcasting in democratic theory

The debate regarding the nature of state-broadcasting relations in liberal democratic regimes forms part of a much wider controversy about the distribution of power which lies at the very heart of democratic theory. Essentially this controversy is between those who argue that power in liberal democracy is diffused among different and competing elites, none of which is dominant, and those who contend that it is concentrated in the hands of a homogeneous ruling class or ruling elite. The former group are generally known as pluralists and the latter as elitists.\footnote{See footnote 5.}

The following section relies heavily on chapter 2 of M. Tracey, \textit{op. cit.}
The pluralist view

The functions of broadcasting from a pluralist perspective are perhaps most clearly set out in the charters of the broadcasting institutions of western Europe. Specifically assigned public service obligations, radio and television in western European democracies have as one of their main functions to inform the electorate of the policies and arguments of the competing political elites so that in turn these elites may be held accountable to the electorate.

To perform these functions effectively the broadcasting media must be independent of the political elites and in particular of the Government. In an ideal-type pluralist democracy there would be a variety of broadcasting outlets representing views across the whole spectrum of political debate with only minimal state intervention to protect this "free broadcasting market" from monopoly domination. Any group of citizens would be allowed to establish their own radio or television station to express their political grievances or act as a forum for political debate.

However, broadcasting in western European states, unlike the press, has never been organised on anything remotely resembling these lines. On the contrary, in most western European political systems, including Great Britain, France and Italy, broadcasting has been organised, at least initially, within a totally antithetical framework: the state monopoly. This state broadcasting monopoly has then usually been entrusted to a single, large-scale national institution such as the BBC, the RTF or the RAI.

23. Broadcasting in the United States has of course been organised along different lines from its counterpart in western Europe. As this thesis is concerned with France, we have chosen to emphasise the western European dimension.
The main reason usually given for this organisation of broadcasting as a state monopoly was a technical one, namely the shortage of wavelengths. Given the finite scarcity of this technical resource it fell to the State to establish the framework within which broadcasting would operate, since a free market response on a national level was technically undesirable.

"In the early 1920s America's wavelengths had become impossibly cluttered by a radiophonic anarchy in which radio operators almost overnight were allowed to grab wavelengths like early settlers staking claims on land, and squabbling over the boundaries. Thousands of stations sprang up trying to blast one another off the air. The news of this chaos spread across the Atlantic and fostered in Britain the creation of a highly disciplined system; Mr. F.J. Brown of the British Post Office visited the United States in the very early months of 1922 when the BBC was scarcely conceived, and his report was a decisive influence. A new kind of state monopoly was born." 24

Other factors working in favour of the state monopoly included the special importance of broadcasting as a means of conveying information to a large public, broadcasting's capacity to cross political frontiers and the presumed social power of broadcasting.25

Because of this organisation of broadcasting within the framework of the state monopoly, plurality of expression could not be guaranteed by a multiplicity of outlets. At first sight, therefore, the existence of a single broadcasting institution benefiting from monopoly status conflicted with the norms of the pluralist model of democracy. To resolve this dilemma pluralist expression had somehow to be guaranteed within a single organisation so that the information and accountability functions of radio and television could be said to be effectively carried out.


For pluralist theorists this difficulty was overcome by establishing as many filters as possible between the State and the political elites on the one hand and the broadcasting institution on the other. In addition, guidelines were laid down regarding the dissemination of political information. In these respects the archetypal pluralist model of broadcasting in western Europe was, and still is, the BBC. 26

Financed from licence revenue, administered by a board of governors whose tasks are to represent the public interest within the corporation and act as a screen between it and the Government, the BBC represents for pluralist theorists of democracy in western Europe the "fourth estate" model of state-broadcasting relations. According to this view of the BBC's role the corporation is independent of the Government and the political parties and pressure groups. As a necessary corollary of this independence and also because of the BBC's privileged status as a political communicator, the political output of the corporation has to conform to certain norms. Thus, in return for its independent status the BBC has to be impartial, objective and balanced in its political coverage. The independence and impartiality of the BBC are inextricably interlinked.

"The state leaves, indeed requires, the broadcasters to be independent because/on condition that this independence is exercised in a certain way: impartially. The state does not grant autonomy to the broadcasters to behave as they please: it grants autonomy only on the condition that broadcasters treat the controversial and problematic matters germane to their own sphere, and to the controversial sphere of the political system, which supports and creates the state, with a 'due impartiality'." 27

26. A. Smith, op. cit., chapter 2 section 1, "The BBC as Archetype."
This pluralist model of state-broadcasting relations as applied to western European political systems may be viewed as both descriptive and prescriptive. Pluralists theorists would argue, for example, that the above is a model of both how the BBC functions in practice and how it ought to function in theory. A major proponent of this pluralist model as applied to broadcasting in Great Britain is Jay Blumler, a leading writer on the British mass media.

Blumler has written a considerable amount on British broadcasting. From his publications it is possible to build up a picture of his view of state-broadcasting relations in Britain, which regards the broadcasters as essentially independent of the political elites and in particular of the Government. For example, in answer to the self-posed question whether broadcasting journalists should function as a mouthpiece for the State, the neutral purveyor of someone else's information, a source of non-partisan comment and criticism or as an overtly partisan editorialiser, Blumler argues that British television moved "from the more subdued second function, which predominated in the 1950s, towards an enthusiastic application of the third in the 1960s."\(^{28}\)

In his discussion of the broadcasting media's coverage of the February 1974 election campaign Blumler writes of the relatively free hand which producers had with regard to output.

"Some part of the explanation for this must lie in the public service model of organisation that Britain has sustained in the broadcasting field for many years. This has ensured that financial constraints do not stifle innovatory impulses at source, and has helped to keep alive the principle that communication should serve citizenship."\(^{29}\)


Finally, with reference to the power of the mass media to resist political control, Blumler writes:

"... the normative root of media power can be crucial at times of conflict. This springs from the respect that is accorded in competitive democracies to such tenets of liberal philosophy as freedom of expression and the need for specialised organs to safeguard citizens against possible abuses of political authority. This tends to legitimate the independent role of media organisations in the political field and to shelter them from overt attempts blatantly to bring them under political control." 30

It was this fourth estate model of state-broadcasting relations which was used by French government spokesmen in 1974 to prescribe the relationship between the Government and the new state broadcasting companies established by the 1974 statute. The provisions of the statute, the terminology of the companies' cahiers des charges and numerous statements by ministerial spokesmen reproduced the concepts integral to the fourth estate model: public service, independence, autonomy, balance, impartiality and objectivity. 31 A principal objective of this thesis is an examination of the extent to which government-broadcasting relations since 1974 correspond to the norms of the fourth estate model.

The elitist view

In marked contrast to pluralist theorists of democracy, elitist theorists usually regard the mass media in general and broadcasting in particular as fulfilling an important function in the process by


31. See chapters on the Liquidation of the ORTF and News programmes.
which power is concentrated in the hands of a ruling class or ruling elite. Rejecting the pluralist argument that broadcasting in liberal democracy is independent of the State and can thus perform both information and watchdog functions, elitist theorists regard the broadcasting media as subordinate to the State and the output of the broadcasting services as furthering the interests of the ruling class or ruling elite.

There are varieties of emphasis within this broad elitist camp. Tracey, for example, argues that there are two main themes.

"One, that the restraints on, or 'structuring' of, the production process derive from other social institutions or social groups, for example, the State, institutional elites, social classes, etc.

The other theme ... derives from the more 'sophisticated' pastures of media research and points to the structuring of the programme-making process by particular routines and ideologies that derive from the occupational setting of the organisation and from the general structure of ideas within society ..." 32

However, this difference of emphasis is underpinned by the shared view that, in the words of Althusser, the broadcasting media in capitalist regimes function as "ideological state apparatuses." 33


One of the leading spokesmen for this elitist camp is Ralph Miliband, who in *The State in Capitalist Society* writes:

"In most ways ... the assumed impartiality and objectivity (of the broadcasting media) is quite artificial. For it mainly operates in regard to political formations which while divided on many issues are nevertheless part of a basic, underlying consensus ... (There exists, therefore) an ideological bias ... There is nothing particularly surprising about the character and role of the mass media in advanced capitalist society. Given the economic and political context in which they function, they cannot fail to be predominantly agencies for the dissemination of ideas and values which affirm rather than challenge existing patterns of power and privilege, and thus to be weapons in the arsenal of class domination." 34

The view expressed by several commentators that prior to the 1974 reform the state broadcasting services in France were controlled by the Government neatly fits in with this elitist view of the role of the mass media in liberal democracy. 35 However, the advocacy of

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34. R. Miliband, op. cit., pp.200 and 211.

35. See, for example, J. Hayward, *The One and Indivisible French Republic*, London, Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1973, pp.143-144, "Since the second world war, and especially since the advent of the fifth republic, ... the radio and television services have been increasingly subordinated to the state, being converted into the government's docile propaganda instrument."; J. Ardagh, *The New France*, Harmondsworth, Pelican, 1973 (second edition), pp.607-608, "... if French television today is far less excitingly creative than French cinema, and less varied and dynamic than TV in Britain, the causes lie in its political subservience to the Government."; L.G. Noonan, *France: the Politics of Continuity in Change*, Illinois, Dryden Press, 1970, p.148, "... the reform of 1964 (gave) the impression of having reduced greatly the control of the government over the ORTF ... In the meanwhile the service continues to act as a creature of the government."; R. Thomas, *Broadcasting and Democracy in France*, London, Crosby Lockwood Staples, 1976, p.1, "... French broadcasting can early be seen developing those traits which appear so clearly in later years. On the one hand, government control, more extensive and more political than is usual in Western Europe; ..."; and W.D. Redfern, "The Media in France", *West European Politics*, vol.1 no.3, October 1978, p.167, "... the national networks (have) been brought under the governmental thumb, ..."
this state control model does not necessarily form part of an acceptance of the whole elitist argument regarding the distribution of power in French society.

The fact that both pluralist and elitist commentators on French politics tended to agree about the main features of state-broadcasting relations before 1974 is in our opinion quite revealing, since it shows that one's substantive conclusions are not necessarily predetermined either by one's ideological predisposition or research methodology.36 We would argue strongly that our conclusions in this thesis were not predetermined by the methodology of the research, which could in the face of different evidence equally well have produced different results. We did not assume a specific type of relationship between the Government and the state broadcasting services in France, but rather sought to examine that relationship empirically.

In turn, this empirical study has shed some light on the nature of the argument between the pluralist and elitist commentators on state-broadcasting relations in liberal democratic political systems. To say the least our research casts serious doubt on the applicability of the fourth estate model to government-broadcasting relations in France since the 1974 reform. The norms of independence and autonomy on the one hand and impartiality and balance on the other do not at all describe the reality of the relationship.

36. Elitist commentators would regard the Government's control of broadcasting as evidence of their more general theory about the distribution of power in liberal democratic regimes. Pluralist commentators would regard the same relationship as a deviant case, "the exception which proves the rule."
However, for a variety of reasons the alternative model of state control does not seem to us to be particularly satisfactory either, since it tends to underestimate certain distinctions which we would regard as important. The state control model is monolithic and static since it covers in an all-encompassing fashion a wide variety of state-broadcasting relationships with differing areas and degrees of state control in each.

For example, Miliband writes:

"In France both radio and television were quite deliberately turned into Gaullist institutions, to be used to the advantage of the general, his government and the party which supported them. ... In strict political terms, this is a very different situation from that which has prevailed in a country like Britain, where the Labour leaders have been assured since the war of some kind of parity with their Conservative opponents. In large ideological terms, however, the contrast has been rather less dramatic; ... As between all shades of the consensus on the one hand and all shades of counter-ideology on the other, radio and television in all capitalist countries have ensured that the former had by far the best of the argument." 37

In the context of Miliband's thesis this might well be the case. However, in our opinion the political differences are frequently as important and revealing as what Miliband regards as the large ideological similarities. This is particularly true when one is focusing one's attention on a single political system. Thus, in the context of French politics the changeover from a Gaullist to a Giscardian regime as reflected in the reorganisation of the state broadcasting services has altered the relationship between the French state and its broadcasting services. 38

37. R. Miliband, op. cit., p.201.

In assessing the applicability of the state control model to the relationship between the Government and the state broadcasting companies since 1974, we have sought therefore to make the model more explicit. This involves examining empirically, first, different areas of control; secondly, the degree of control in each area; and, thirdly, the source of control. In this way we hope that the static and monolithic state control model may be improved by the adoption of a more dynamic approach.

This thesis illustrates the shortcomings of the state control model. For example, one conclusion of our research is that the type of direct, overt control exercised over news programming during the presidency of General de Gaulle is no longer a feature of government-broadcasting relations in France. Thus, we would argue that the 1974 reorganisation has had important consequences for the form of government-broadcasting relations and, to a limited extent, on its substance.

The essential point we are making is that a focus on the two antithetical models of fourth estate and state control grossly oversimplifies reality by glossing over distinctions which are quite significant. Even if one confines one's study to liberal democracies alone, government-broadcasting relations are not susceptible to such a crude twofold classification. Rather we would prefer to see government-broadcasting relations viewed as on a continuum with the more subordinate systems at one end and the more autonomous at the other. This would still allow one to group certain systems in a specific category if one so desired, but, first, it would allow one also to focus on the differences within and between categories and, secondly, the categorisation would be done on the basis of empirical enquiry rather than merely reflecting one's ideological
predilections.

This approach is that proposed by Blumler and Gurevitch who write that:

"... media systems may be classified as more or less subordinate to, or autonomous from, the political institutions of society; ... such structural differences give rise to a differential processing of political material and manner of presenting political ideas, issues and events to the public ..." 39

In this thesis, therefore, we have sought to employ the framework proposed by Blumler and Gurevitch as amended by Kees Brants and Walther Kok. 40

Blumler and Gurevitch outline a framework "consisting of four dimensions by reference to which the political communication arrangements of different states could be profiled. ..." 41 These dimensions are, first, degree of state control over mass media organisations; secondly, degree of mass media partisanship; thirdly, degree of media-political elite integration; and, finally, the nature of the legitimising creed of media institutions. 42

The first dimension is concerned with those areas where government intervention can exist and where the resulting degree of state control can be assessed. Blumler and Gurevitch point to three areas in particular: control of appointments; control of media finance; and control over media content. The second dimension focuses on the degree of partisan commitment exhibited by mass media outlets. The third dimension concentrates on the degree of integration between media elites


42. Ibid.
and political elites, emphasising the degree of political affinity and social-cultural proximity that obtains between these two sets of structurally differentiated elites. Aspects of this affinity between the two elites include similar social and cultural backgrounds leading to similar interests and values; an overlap of personnel; and informal interaction between members of the two sets of elites. The final dimension, the nature of the legitimising creed of media institutions, concerns the organisational and professional ethos of the media institution which may act as a check against tendencies to subordinate media performance to politicians' goals.

Brants and Kok have simplified and improved upon Blumler and Gurevitch's above framework. Their starting point is the relationship between the mass media and the State or government, political parties, other organised interests in society and the public in respect of the following six aspects: first, control of appointments of the media elite; secondly, control of media finance; thirdly, control of (form and) content; fourthly, control of technological possibilities; fifthly, norms and opinions about the role of the mass media and within the media themselves concerning their political role; finally, the degree of integration between media elites and other elites.\(^{43}\)

Using this adapted framework we have sought to examine empirically the external political context in which the French state broadcasting companies have functioned during the early years of the Giscardian presidency.\(^{44}\)


\(^{44}\) Control of appointments of the media elite and degree of integration between media elites and the political elite is covered in the chapter on Appointments; control of media finance is dealt with in the chapter on Finance; control of content is the subject of the chapter on News programmes; control of technological possibilities is discussed in the chapter on the State monopoly; finally, the norms and opinions of the media personnel are considered in the chapters on the Reallocation of ORTF staff, the Broadcasting Unions and News programmes.
Conclusion

With the help of Lasswell's formula, we have examined in this chapter the main areas of research into the political communications process. Concentrating on France since the 1974 broadcasting reorganisation, our own research covers one aspect of this process, the relationship between the Government and the state broadcasting services. Two antithetical models are usually employed to describe government-broadcasting relations in liberal democracies: the fourth estate and state control models. In this chapter we have raised doubts about the usefulness of this extreme polarisation, since neither model seems suitable for our enquiry. The fourth estate model is totally inapplicable, while the state control model is for our purposes too static and all-embracing. Neither adequately reflects the complex reality of state-broadcasting relations in France since the 1974 reform.
CHAPTER 2

Politics and broadcasting in France before the 1974 reform

The political importance that broadcasting has assumed in France evidently owes much to the specific nature of the French historical experience. The wartime occupation of France, the polarised nature of the French political system, the essential characteristics of the French press system and not least the skilful use of radio and television by General de Gaulle, all helped to shape the relationship between the Government and the broadcasting services during the Fifth Republic, at the very time that television was becoming a truly mass medium in France.

The first part of this chapter concentrates on those historical and political features which ensured that broadcasting became an important and controversial area of policy-making in France. In the second part we shall go on to trace briefly the history of the relationship between the Government and the state broadcasting services from the end of the second world war to the death of President Pompidou in April 1974. Given, as Vincent Wright remarks, "that the biggest decision-maker in any political system is the past", this historical introduction is vital if a proper evaluation is to be made of the origins and consequences of the 1974 broadcasting reform.

The first and second parts of this chapter are closely linked with each other. Indeed the main argument of this chapter is that because of

certain historical and political factors broadcasting in France, from world war two up to the 1974 reform, was organised with the primary objective of furthering the interests of whichever government was in power. With the increased stability of governments after 1958 and the concomitant development of television, this partisan politicisation of broadcasting became a notable feature of the political system of the Fifth Republic.

Wartime occupation

It would be impossible to overestimate the role played by radio during the second world war in influencing the subsequent organisation and development of broadcasting in France. The potential of radio as a propaganda weapon came to light with the advent of the war and was exploited by all sides in the conflict. From 1940 to 1944 France was the scene of a verbal battle over the air involving pro-Nazi, pro-Vichy and pro-de Gaulle radio stations. It was during this period that de Gaulle acquired those broadcasting skills which he was later to employ with such remarkable effect during his presidency. As Anthony Smith writes of this period:

"It was in Britain, in the studios of the BBC, that a new system of French broadcasting was born. Brigadier de Gaulle made his historic broadcasts to the people of Occupied France from British soil. It is uncertain whether many people heard him, certainly in the early months when millions were fleeing from their homes and the Germans had attempted to confiscate every single radio receiver in the northern part of France. Nonetheless the political personality of de Gaulle, which was decades later to be the foundation stone of the broadcasting structure, was created at that moment by the transmitters of the BBC. It was at that time that he first realised, more powerfully and more skilfully than any other world leader, the political potential of broadcasting and its particular applicability to the chaotic conditions of the French nation." 3.

2. For the political role of broadcasting during the Vichy regime, see P. Amaury, Les deux premières expériences d'un ministère de l'information en France, Paris, Pichon et Durand-Auzias, 1969, pp. 409-422.

De Gaulle's first radio speech from London on June 18 1940 has been described as "an extraordinary intervention" and as "the act which established his prestige beyond dispute". In recognition of this fact and as a sign of the importance the Gaullists attached to their wartime origins, for a long time during the Fifth Republic one of the major symbols of Gaullism was the four beats of "London calling".

The role played by the radio during the war not only allowed de Gaulle to familiarise himself with the necessary techniques to become a formidable broadcasting performer. The success of the Free French station was a decisive factor in the formation of Gaullist views on broadcasting, since it was decided during this wartime period that the radio services would be nationalised following the liberation. The private radio stations which had been allowed to broadcast up until the outbreak of hostilities were not to re-appear on French territory after the war. In fact, after some vacillation the Vichy laws on broadcasting were reinstalled by the liberation government in 1945. The main provisions of this legislation were the confirmation of broadcasting as a state monopoly and public service, placed under the responsibility of a Minister of Information. The liberation government thus legitimised the framework within which broadcasting in France was to develop and attain maturity: a public service within a state monopoly.

Political polarisation

While the changed nature of political communication has increased the political importance of broadcasting as a means of mass information, the high degree of political pluralism in France has meant that broadcasting has been a constant subject of political controversy. The political system of the Third Republic, with its democratic base in the provinces rather than Paris, its numerous small self-contained constituencies and its weak party organisation, has disappeared. While in the Fourth Republic the means of mass communication were slow to adapt to the growing "nationalisation" of political issues, in the Fifth Republic the balance has been redressed with a vengeance. While in the traditional system of political intercourse the local personalities predominated, now it is the national political figures, such as the President of the Republic and party leaders, who attract most publicity. Since 1958 television has provided politicians with a readily available means of nationwide coverage and has altered radically the style of political communication. 9

During the Fourth Republic the Socialists, Radicals, Christian Democrats and modérés all sought to colonise broadcasting. However the instability of Fourth Republic governments tempered the effects of these attempts, even when the Algerian crisis came to threaten the survival of the regime. Gaullist politicians were not slow to avail themselves of television in their bid to implant the new regime in 1958, with the Algerian troubles which dominated the political agenda of the first four years of the Fifth Republic providing the background.

to the Gaullist government's takeover of broadcasting. However, the Gaullists, as their predecessors in power had done during the Fourth Republic, were unwilling to allow access to television to their political opponents. The high degree of polarisation in the political system, reflecting cross-cutting cleavages in French society, partly accounts for this refusal. Not only did France have a multi-party system, but prior to 1965 the opposition parties were highly critical of certain principles of the 1958 Constitution and most notably the 1962 constitutional amendment by which the President of the Republic was to be elected by direct universal suffrage. As no consensus existed among the parties on the basic principles upon which the Fifth Republic was founded, no practice developed in France of the give-and-take which characterises the approach of British political parties to the allocation of broadcasting time. On the contrary, an antithetical tradition, already in evidence before the institution of the Fifth Republic, became established by which control of radio and television came to be regarded as a legitimate spoil of electoral victory.

Press system

The political significance of broadcasting since the war has been especially enhanced by certain characteristics of the French press system. The wartime division of the country into an occupied and an unoccupied zone increased the importance of the regional as opposed to the Parisian press. As a result, the most popular newspapers are still the regional dailies. The Paris newspapers, which are the only

ones to achieve nationwide circulation, have with some notable exceptions such as *Le Monde* fared badly in competition with the provincial press.

Since the war the number of daily newspaper titles has sharply declined, while at the same time the total circulation of those still in print has stagnated despite an increase in the population and "the relative democratisation of higher education." 11 The readership of daily newspapers in France is lower than that of most other developed countries including Great Britain and West Germany. Partly attributable to the growth of radio and more especially television, this relative decline of the press from its post-war peak has in turn further increased the importance of the broadcasting media. Indeed it is ironic that the section of the press with the biggest circulation in France is that of the television magazines such as *Télé-7-Jours* and *Télérama*. 12

According to Alfred Grosser the two most important press phenomena of the postwar period in France are what he calls "departification" and consolidation. 13 Under the first heading it is clear that since the end of the second world war various political party newspapers have disappeared: the MRP daily, *L'Aube*, folded in 1951, while the Socialist daily, *Le Populaire*, eventually gave up the ghost in 1966 after years of decline. The Gaullist party daily, *La Nation*, disappeared in 1974,

"... after Giscard's government team cut off its secret subsidy because of the paper's criticism of the "ungaullist" behaviour of the new president." 14


12. In 1976, for example, the highest selling daily in France was Ouest-France with a circulation of about 650,000 compared with a circulation of over 2,000,000 for the weekly television magazine *Télé-7-Jours*.

Though it had a derisory circulation, La Nation was politically important because its editorials had been given prominent coverage in radio and television news programmes during de Gaulle's presidency. Finally, L'Humanité, the Communist party daily, has managed to maintain its precarious existence despite a sharp decline in its circulation since the post-war peak.

"Departification" does not, however, mean depoliticisation. The national daily, Le Monde, a paper full of political news and comment on France and abroad, has substantially increased its circulation since the war. The decline of the party political dailies has been partly compensated by the appearance of new non-party political weeklies such as L'Express, Le Nouvel Observateur and Le Point, all of which have creditable circulation figures. In 1977, just one year prior to the crucial 1978 legislative elections, a new national daily was launched by the management of Le Nouvel Observateur. This new daily, Le Matin de Paris, later renamed Le Matin, is strongly sympathetic towards the French Socialist party.

The other phenomenon referred to by Grosser, that of consolidation, is particularly evident in the provincial press with many nominally independent newspapers belonging to large press groups. One consequence of this consolidation is that in many of the French regions a press monopoly has been established with one newspaper dominating the market. For example, in Brittany Ouest-France has no competitor worthy of the name in a circulation area which covers ten French departments, while on the Mediterranean coastline Le Provençal

15. L'Express, favourable to the Giscardian wing of the majorité, had a circulation of over 500,000 in 1977; Le Nouvel Observateur, which generally favours the Socialist party, had a circulation of around 350,000 in the same year; Le Point, more pro- than anti-majorité, had a circulation of around 250,000 in 1977. R. Cayrol, op. cit., pp. 15-16.
benefits from a similar monopoly position. Regions such as the north-east where competition among regional dailies does exist, La Voix du Nord competing against both Nord Eclair and Nord Matin, are now the exception to the general rule of market dominance in each region by one daily newspaper.

The essential features of the French press system which emerge from this brief outline are, first, that overall the French press has been on the decline since the high point of the liberation, and, secondly, that since the war for a variety of reasons the regional press has been much stronger than its national counterpart. It is in this context that the state broadcasting services have come to fulfil a vital role as truly national media as well as constituting for many the major source of news and political comment.

During de Gaulle's presidency Alain Peyrefitte, the most important Minister of Information in the Fifth Republic, sought to justify the pro-government stance of the regional news programmes on the state broadcasting services by pointing out its balancing effect in areas where the press was controlled by the opposition. Such an area was the south-west where La Dépêche du Midi retained its Radical origins and actively opposed the Gaullist regime. Moreover, according to Malcolm Anderson:

"the absence of a serious large-circulation newspaper or weekly supporting the Government convinced the Gaullist leadership early in the Fifth Republic that it was faced by a predominantly hostile press." 18

Whether the Gaullist leadership really did believe this to be the


17. For circulation figures of the French press, see tables 2.i, 2.ii and 2.iii.

case or not, the fact remains that Peyrefitte sought to justify the one-sided presentation of news by the regional television stations as a reaction to the perceived anti-Gaulism of the regional press. The consequence was that broadcasting particularly in the early years of the Fifth Republic, as we shall see later in this chapter, was closely controlled by the Gaullist government who believed it to be an important political weapon to be used to their advantage.

De Gaulle's use of the broadcasting media

De Gaulle's personal understanding of broadcasting as a political tool also influenced the political development of radio and television during his presidency. The success of his wartime broadcasts led de Gaulle to invest radio, and later television, with a special power to influence the French people, a power which he was determined to exploit to the full. From the very start of his political career, therefore, de Gaulle was aware of the political importance of broadcasting and he maintained this sense of awareness throughout his presidency.

For example, control of broadcasting was naturally of paramount importance during periods of political crisis. During the Algerian troubles de Gaulle asserted his authority via the broadcasting media on two important occasions. First, during the week of the Algiers barricades in January 1960 de Gaulle appeared on television in army uniform to condemn the insurgents and to call for the strictest discipline from the army. Again, during the Algerian putsch of the four army generals in April 1961 de Gaulle spoke out on the radio to


condemn the uprising and order the soldiers to use every means possible to ensure the failure of the rebellion. In his book *De Gaulle* Alexander Werth describes the effect of this broadcast in these terms:

"It was later said that this broadcast produced in Algeria what was called "a transistor victory" for de Gaulle. The hundreds of thousands of French conscript soldiers there had, through their transistor radios, listened to this broadcast, and the effect had been overwhelming; they were determined to resist the "foursome". Countless officers who had wavered, decided against embarking on an adventure which might end very badly for them. It was obvious to them that de Gaulle was a man who would stand no nonsense."

De Gaulle's frequent interventions on television in election and referendum campaigns were considered, by the Gaullists and their opponents, to be crucial in rallying support to the Gaullist camp. In the 1961 referendum campaign on Algerian self-determination, for example, de Gaulle opened the campaign, made two broadcasts in the week before the poll and had almost as much time on the air as all the parties together.

The finest examples of de Gaulle's use of the broadcasting media were the presidential press conferences which received saturation coverage on radio and television. Since many of the major policy decisions of the President were announced at these conferences, these occasions would have been significant from the point of content alone. What made them such impressive events, however, was de Gaulle's style. Presidential policy decisions were revealed on television not only to the viewers but also to government ministers who up until the start of the conference were often unaware of what policy initiatives de Gaulle was going to announce. The President used an element of suspense to dramatise his utterances for maximum impact. By dint of careful stage management

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de Gaulle not only enhanced the prestige and dignity of the presidential office and its incumbent, but also demonstrated the force of broadcasting as a political instrument.  

De Gaulle spared no pains to ensure that he performed well on television. He took

"all the trouble to write out his text, to learn it off by heart ..., to make the most of his mannerisms which, in the end move rather than irritate people. He rehearses his TV speeches in front of a mirror and with the help of a tape-recorder. He even took lessons in diction from an eminent actor of the Comédie Française, and knows all the right cadences, and is aware of the gestures and intonations to avoid."  

Using the broadcasting media to bypass intermediary bodies such as Parliament and the political parties, de Gaulle capitalised on the growth of television and his mastery of this medium in no uncertain fashion.

It is worth stressing in this context that the beginning of the growth of television in France coincided almost exactly with the foundation of the Fifth Republic. Though government interference in the news output of the state broadcasting services had originated during the war and had re-emerged in the latter years of the Fourth Republic, it was only with the establishment of the Fifth Republic that the dimensions of this practice assumed such political importance. The foundation of the Gaullist regime, the advent of the transistor radio and the start of the expansion of the television market in France were more or less contemporaneous events. Thus, while before 1958 television was confined to a select few, after this date sales steadily increased from around one million in 1959 to saturation point of about


fifteen million in the mid 1970s.\textsuperscript{25} From 1958 onwards de Gaulle and his ministers exploited the new medium to the full, thus giving rise to a description of the new Gaullist regime as a "telecracy".\textsuperscript{26}

A combination of the above factors is sufficient to explain not only why broadcasting has assumed political significance in France, but also why it has given rise to such bitter controversy. The problem of how to ensure that the democratically elected government does not control in a partisan fashion the state broadcasting services which are supposedly at the service of the whole nation was from the beginning never satisfactorily resolved. The failure to resolve this problem is evidenced in the following brief examination of the relationship between the Government and the state broadcasting services from the end of the second world war to the presidential election of 1974.

\textbf{Government and broadcasting: the Fourth Republic: 1946-1958}

During the Fourth Republic government control of broadcasting worked especially to the detriment of the Communists and the Gaullists, including the General himself. --Both Communists and Gaullists suffered from a lack of radio time in which to air their views, while the Communists were also the victims of anti-Communist propaganda broadcasts such as \textit{La Vie en Rouge} and \textit{Paix et Liberte}.\textsuperscript{27} Most of the governments of the Fourth Republic justified this censorship by pointing to "the lack of objectivity" of those who were kept off the air.

\textsuperscript{25.} See tables 2.iv and 2.v.

\textsuperscript{26.} The term "telecracy" was used as the title for a book on the politics of French broadcasting during the Fifth Republic. c.f. C. Durieux, \textit{La Télécration}, Paris, Téma, 1976.

Under Guy Mollet's Socialist government, which included in its ministerial ranks Francois Mitterrand, Jacques Chaban-Delmas and Arthur Conte, measures were taken at the time of the Algerian troubles to suppress anti-government views in news broadcasts. During the Fifth Republic Gaullist ministers, criticised by the opposition for their exploitation of the broadcasting services, frequently retorted by referring to the censorship of which they had been the victims during the Fourth Republic and to the doctoring of the news during Mollet's premiership.

The lack of a statute to regulate government-broadcasting relations did nothing to ameliorate the situation. Of sixteen bills drawn up on the subject of the state broadcasting services during the Fourth Republic, none was passed or even went to the vote. In the absence of any regulatory legislation the temptation on the part of government ministers to control news programming was easily given in to when the Fourth Republic ran into trouble over the Algerian question.

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On coming to power in 1958 the Gaullists began to install their own men in the key posts of the Radiodiffusion-télévision française (RTF). In July Jacques Soustelle was appointed Minister of Information, a post he had already occupied in 1945. Within a month of his appointment Soustelle had

"... changed the holders of a dozen key posts in the RTF (director general, president of the higher council, director of news, editor of television news, director of the politics desk, general secretary, etc.), appointing at all these levels, except one, Gaullist loyalists ..." 29

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Thus, Christian Chavanon, a Gaullist conseiller d'Etat, was appointed director general of the RTF, while Louis Terrenoire, a former general secretary of the Gaullist RPF, was given the post of director of news. By 1959, therefore, the key decision-making posts of the RTF were almost without exception occupied by Gaullist sympathisers.

The consequences of this Gaullist domination of the state broadcasting organisation were quickly in evidence, particularly during election and referendum campaigns. Gaullist politicians were given a vastly disproportionate amount of time in which to outline their policies, while opposition spokesmen were either denied the opportunity of replying or their replies were deliberately distorted by skilful editing. In 1958, for example, during the referendum campaign for the new constitution, de Gaulle's "yes" campaign was enthusiastically reported and Soustelle was allowed most of a news programme in which to refute the arguments of the opposition. Commenting on the use of the state broadcasting services during the 1958 campaign, Pierre Viansson-Ponté writes:

"Never since the Second Empire, with the possible exception of the 1877 elections, had one witnessed in France under a Republican constitution such an unleashing of propaganda. Never had the hold over the RTF, the deliberate distortion of radio and television news, attained such a degree. Never had simple equity in an electoral contest been so flagrantly pushed aside. ..."

Likewise in the 1962 referendum campaign on the election of the President of the Republic by direct universal suffrage and in the legislative

30. J. Montaldo, op. cit., p.121.


election one month later, "radio and television were thoroughly exploited" and "the supreme governmental weapon was, as always, de Gaulle's own broadcast." 

In 1964 a bill was introduced in Parliament by the Government, setting out a framework for the organisation of the state broadcasting services. The statute of June 27 1964, which reproduced the provisions of the Government's bill, was the major legislative text on broadcasting during the eleven years of de Gaulle's presidency. Under the terms of the new statute the state broadcasting services were to be renamed the Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française (ORTF), a name which was quickly to become one of the symbols of the authoritarian face of the Gaullist regime. The statute itself contained only nine clauses and was concerned solely with the general lines of the reform. The ORTF, like its predecessor the RTF, would be managed by a director general appointed by the Government and responsible for the everyday management of the Office. 

In addition, and this was an innovation, provision was now made for the creation of a board of governors, half of whom would be appointed directly by the Government, to watch over amongst other things the objectivity and accuracy of news programmes. The lines of control between the broadcasting services and the Ministry of Information were to be relaxed.

The statute was quickly supplemented by five decrees signed on July 22 which dealt with the organisation of the board of governors, the ORTF's finances, the staff statute, the journalists' statute and the composition of the Office's programme committee.

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34. L'Office is frequently used by French commentators as a synonym for the ORTF.


36. Journal Officiel, Lois et Décrets, Decrees no. 64-736, 64-737, 64-738, 64-739 and 64-740 of July 22 1964.
The avowed intention of the Government was that the 1964 statute signified a step towards greater autonomy for the state broadcasting organisation. Peyrefitte, the Minister of Information responsible for preparing the Government's bill, stated in the National Assembly that

"the fundamental defect which we intend to remedy by the present statute is the permanent confusion which has taken root in the minds of the public between RTF and the Government."37

This did not, however, prevent Peyrefitte from appointing several members of his cabinet to key positions in the ORTF.38 Nor did it stop the one-sided presentation of news and government policy on the Office's news programmes.

The 1965 presidential election showed, however, that this strict control of broadcasting through appointments and direct supervision of news content could be counter-productive. By the law of November 6 1962 the allocation of broadcasting time among the candidates in the official campaign period (but only within the official period) was to be supervised by a special ad hoc committee appointed by the Government for the purpose. Thus, for the few weeks of the official campaign opposition candidates, notably Mitterrand and Jean Lecanuet, appeared on television to present their case. Long accustomed to the bombardment of Gaullist propaganda, the electorate was for the first time exposed to critics of the regime who used their screen time to put forward anti-Gaullist policies. The effect was shattering.

"Television which for seven years had tirelessly offered the same faces, the same pictures, the same satisfied and soporific statements, seemed suddenly shaken by a fit of madness. Unknown faces appeared on the screen to tell

38. See chapter on Appointments.
millions of stupefied Frenchmen that everything was not for
the best, that de Gaulle was not always right, that the
Government was not the best one possible. People felt
shocked as if the ORTF had fallen into the hands of dangerous
rebels." 39

While prior to the first ballot de Gaulle had scarcely used his allocation
of television time, the necessity of a second ballot convinced him that
he could not remain above the electoral battle in the face of his critics.
The political importance of television was thus further enhanced and was
measured in opinion polls which showed de Gaulle losing more ground among
viewers than among non-viewers, especially to Lecanuet before the first
ballot. 40

The disappointing election result lead to a limited relaxation
of the Government's control over broadcasting. New current affairs
programmes such as Face à Face, Zoom and Camera III were introduced
in which opposition politicians, including Communists, were featured.
Nevertheless, while current affairs programmes strove to be more politically
balanced, news programmes, watched by a much larger audience, continued
to be closely controlled by the Minister of Information by means of
ministerial directives and direct intervention. Self-censorship by
journalists and producers also remained in evidence. 41

The events of May 1968 highlighted the nature of the relationship
between the Government and the ORTF during de Gaulle's presidency.
At first the Government refused to let the ORTF broadcast any account of

40. Cahiers de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, L'élection
p. 611. J. Thibau, Une télévision pour tous les français Paris,
the riots, even though the press and the peripheral radio stations were giving them full coverage. At the end of May, first the general staff and then the journalists came out on strike in protest against the Government's directives regarding the reporting of the events and more generally the way in which the Government had manipulated the state broadcasting services for ten years. The strikers demanded a new ORTF statute to guarantee the autonomy of the broadcasting services, freedom from ministerial pressures and an impartial news service. More specifically, they insisted that the ORTF board of governors should no longer contain a de facto government majority, that the director general should be elected by the board of governors and not appointed by the Government and that a "committee of wise men" independent of the board of governors be set up to ensure objectivity in news content.  

Obviously the Government could not accept these demands. The general aims of the strikers were in theory already guaranteed by the 1964 statute, while the more specific claims demonstrated that only those provisions of the statute had been applied which reinforced the Government's hold over broadcasting. Taking advantage of the climate of reaction which followed the May events, the Government proceeded to quell the strike.

The measures taken by the Government after May 1968 were particularly savage. While on the one hand some minor conciliatory moves were made, such as an increase in the staff representation on the board of governors, the Government,...
(which nonetheless still remained in the hands of the Government), more significant steps were taken to punish the strikers. In August more than sixty radio and television journalists were dismissed and thirty others were "exiled" from Paris to offices in the French regions or abroad; eight of the eleven members of the strike committee were sacked and other prominent strikers effectively demoted; current affairs programmes were axed to be replaced by others less outspoken. L'Année Politique summed up the consequences of the strike as follows:

"A strike of five weeks at the ORTF. Results obtained: a rise in salaries, a comité d'entreprise, commissions paritaires, two or three more votes on the board of governors, ... Not a negligeable result. But it was not to obtain this that the strike took place. What did the strikers want? The independence of the Office guaranteed by the (1964) statute but not put into effect and to ensure this independence precise guarantees. The Government's answer to these unusual demands was a categorical no. After a facade of negotiations, everything was restored to order at the time of the June elections." 43

In short, having made some formal concessions the Government proceeded to reassert its authority over the ORTF.

The backlash to the strike at the ORTF in 1968 proved, if further proof were necessary, that the 1964 statute had failed to remedy the "fundamental defect" to which Peyrefitte had referred: the permanent confusion between the state broadcasting services and the Government. In April 1968, four years after the passing of the ORTF statute and only a few weeks before the ORTF strike, a Senate report concluded:

"the depoliticisation promised by the Government was to say the least scarcely evident and the instructions of the authorities, far from diminishing, appeared rather to be increasing. ... The

political personalities close to the Government benefited from favourable treatment: they were systematically shown to advantage." 44

To sum up the period of de Gaulle's presidency one can scarcely do better than repeat the oft-quoted phrase first used by Pierre Viansson-Ponté in his history of the period:

"... television (is) the absolute weapon of the regime." 45

The Chaban-Delmas experiment: 1969-1972

From the beginning of his presidency in June 1969 Pompidou assumed responsibility for policy making in most fields with the notable exception of broadcasting which was the most important area the President was content to leave to his Prime Minister. It was only after May 1972 that broadcasting became included in the presidential sector of policy making. Since the views of Pompidou and Chaban-Delmas on the role of the ORTF were quite different, this change of policy making sector was symptomatic of a substantive change in broadcasting policy.

That the relationship between the Government and the state broadcasting services became an issue during the presidential election campaign of May 1969 was largely due to Alain Poher, the interim President of the Republic after de Gaulle's resignation and a candidate


for the vacant presidency. On numerous occasions Poher attacked
the ORTF's lack of objectivity in its presentation of the campaign
and put forward plans for a reform of the 1964 statute. These
proposals, similar in detail to the demands of the 1968 strikers,
favoured greater autonomy for the Office from government interference
and, in particular, the abolition of the Ministry of Information, the
symbol of Gaullist control of the broadcasting media. 46

In reply to these proposals Pompidou was obliged to outline his
own views on the ORTF. He too supported a more liberal statute which
would guarantee the state broadcasting services "real autonomy."47
Echoing the declarations of his rival for the presidential office,
Pompidou advocated the abolition of the Ministry of Information as
well as the establishment of competition between the two ORTF channels.
There was no question, however, of any commercialisation of broadcast-
ing or indeed of any modification of the state monopoly.48

Pompidou showed himself very conscious of the national vocation
of the ORTF and its distinctiveness from other means of mass com-
munication such as the press. Thus, any liberalisation of state
broadcasting could not be allowed to detract from the quintessential
role of the Office as "the voice of France." During the election
campaign Pompidou asserted:

"... because we have a national radio and television service
... they are in a sense the official voice of France, and there
is a certain tone to be maintained which must be the tone of
France." 49

It was in fact this view of the ORTF as the mouthpiece of the State

which was more representative of the new President's thinking on the subject of broadcasting than his advocacy of any liberal measures. Pompidou eventually disavowed the reform proposals which he had put forward during the campaign with the main aim of not being outbid by Poher.

After the formation of the new government in June 1969, responsibility for broadcasting policy was assumed by the office of the Prime Minister, and particularly by Chaban-Delmas himself and one of his advisers, Roger Vaurs. In the Government's declaration of general policy before the National Assembly on September 16 1969 Chaban-Delmas launched his project to transform France's "stagnant society." Included in his proposals to construct "the New Society" was a reorganisation of the ORTF. This reform included greater financial autonomy for the Office, more competition between the ORTF's television channels and the allocation of screen time to political groups and socio-professional organisations. 50

The most controversial measure sought to hive off the news departments on each of the two channels to form independent units whose directors would enjoy a hitherto unparalleled degree of autonomy. The directors of these news departments would be able to choose journalists for their respective teams without any interference either from the Government or the channel directors. As a guarantee of their independence they would not be required to submit their material in advance for higher approval, thereby reducing the need for self-censorship. Moreover, the news directors were to be appointed for a fixed period of three years and could be dismissed only in the event of serious professional misconduct.

The director subsequently placed in charge of the news department on the second channel was a dedicated Gaullist, Jacqueline Baudrier. For the more widely viewed first channel the Prime Minister chose a television journalist known for his independent, not to say left-wing, views, Pierre Desgraupes. Desgraupes had been among those who had signed a communiqué protesting against government interference in the television coverage of the May 1968 events and had taken part in the subsequent strike by ORTF staff.

Welcomed by many commentators and broadcasting staff as the sign of a fresh approach to news broadcasting, the appointment of Desgraupes gave rise to vehement criticism inside the ranks of the Gaullist party, and even inside the Government where it was rumoured that the Minister of Defence, Michel Debré, had threatened to resign from his post.51 Chaban-Delmas, however, refused to bow to this pressure as this would have entailed a volte-face on the policy formulated by him and outlined to the Assembly in September. During this period of dissension inside the Gaullist ranks President Pompidou refused to intervene in what he obviously regarded as a prime ministerial matter.52

Nonetheless it was obvious that Pompidou did not fully associate himself with his Prime Minister's policy on the ORTF. In a presidential press conference in July 1970 he asserted that the Ministry of Information had been abolished on the initiative of his Prime Minister. More conclusively, in a television broadcast in December 1969 Pompidou referred to the recent reorganisation of the ORTF in the following

52. L'Express, no. 951, September 29 - October 5 1969.
critical terms:

"... I accepted the reform of the ORTF. But I intend to see that freedom of speech is not abused and that our national radio and television service is truly impartial and worthy of our country." 54

Pompidou thus emphasised that he had "accepted" rather than initiated government policy on broadcasting. Some controversy was caused by the ambiguous second sentence in which the President specified that the broadcasting services should be "truly impartial." The implication was that he did not judge them to be so already, and that, in particular, he objected to the way in which events were being presented by the news department of channel one. In this speech the President appeared to be claiming the right to intervene directly in the administration of the ORTF, a right he was to exercise after May 1972.

The President's criticisms of his Prime Minister's broadcasting reform, and indeed of his New Society project in general55, echoed those of a large body of Gaullist deputies who harked back to their virtual monopoly of the broadcasting services during de Gaulle's presidency.56 As early as January 1970, for example, Robert Poujade, general secretary of the Gaullist party, sent out to party officials and deputies a letter in which he invited them to denounce any broadcast which appeared to them to call into question the work of the Fifth Republic. Poujade promised to convey their protests to the Prime Minister who was now constantly under attack from inside his own party over his broadcasting reform.57

In February 1971 Poujade's successor as general secretary, René

56. Prominent among these critics were Jacques-Philippe Vendroux, Charles Pasqua, Pierre Bas and Christian de la Malène.
57. For the full text of this letter, see P. Avril, UDR et gaullistes, Paris, PUF, 1971, p.28.
Tomasini, went even further in his criticism of Chaban's ORTF reform. Tomasini, who had been the candidate supported by Pompidou for the post of general secretary of the Gaullist party, made an outspoken denunciation of the news programmes on channel one, claiming that they were 'under the control of the enemies of freedom.' In addition, he affirmed that while in other areas the policies executed by the Prime Minister had had positive results, "in broadcasting matters he has been led astray."  

What was apparent in this speech and in the controversy it gave rise to in the press and the Gaullist party was that it was the Prime Minister personally and not the President of the Republic, far less the director general of the ORTF, who was held responsible for the "lack of objectivity and honesty" of the ORTF. In fact Tomasini in acting as the spokesman for many Gaullist deputies was at great pains to point out the loyalty of his supporters to the President. Moreover, Pompidou noticeably failed to reprimand Tomasini for his outburst or to give his Prime Minister any support in the affair.

The period 1969-1972 marked in the eyes of many commentators a step in the direction of a less overtly governmental broadcasting service when compared with the previous eleven years of de Gaulle's presidency. As a consequence of the 1969 reform, the news programmes on channel one were openly critical of government policy in social and economic affairs and opposition leaders appeared almost as often on television as governmental figures.  

59. Ibid.  
as government spokesmen. The two news departments, which formed independent units outside the normal hierarchical structure of the ORTF, were far less subject to ministerial interference than before. However, it should be remembered that the 1969 reform did not, and given that it was in operation only three years could not, fundamentally alter the underlying attitudes which certain sectors of the political elite, most notably within the Gaullist party, adopted towards government-broadcasting relations. Thus, the 1969 liberalisation depended largely on the personal convictions of Chaban-Delmas and his immediate entourage. Desgraupes in particular owed his appointment to Chaban-Delmas personally and as a result his fate became inextricably linked with that of the Prime Minister. When Chaban-Delmas was dismissed from the premiership by Pompidou in July 1972, Desgraupes left the ORTF soon after, one of the first victims of the abandonment of the 1969 reform.

Broadcasting and the presidential sector: the 1972 ORTF statute

Despite the President's notable lack of enthusiasm for the 1969 reform of the ORTF, it was not until mid-1972 that Pompidou brought broadcasting into the presidential sector of policy-making, which now became all-embracing. In this he was helped by the publication at the beginning of May of two parliamentary reports on the ORTF which brought the issue of broadcasting once again into the political spotlight.

A Senate mission of inquiry, with André Diligent as its rapporteur, had been set up in December 1971 to investigate the scandal of covert advertising at the ORTF. Its report revealed that a number of television producers had been accepting bribes from private companies to advertise their products during normal transmission time. In addition, the public had been duped into buying products in support of various charities, while in fact the manufacturers of the products were benefiting more than the charities concerned.

A National Assembly committee of inquiry set up in the same month confirmed the findings of the Senate report and concluded that the covert advertising scandal was merely "... the epiphenomenon of the profound malaise which prevails at the Office." This report, whose rapporteur was Joel Le Tac (Gaullist), had a wider brief than that of its senatorial rival. It condemned not only the underhand advertising but also the bad management, the wastage of resources and the bureaucracy and corruption which characterised the administration of the ORTF. On the other hand, the Le Tac report welcomed the 1969 reform of the ORTF news service and praised the work of the separate news departments in the following terms:

"It seems that at present the two directors of the news departments have proved that they are journalists who ... carry out their task of informing the viewers in an honest way. The creation of these two departments is therefore at

64. Journal Officiel, Documents Sénat, 1971-1972, no 165, Rapport d'information présenté au nom de la mission commune d'information ... chargée d'examiner la régularité de la gestion de l'ORTF et des relations que cet organisme entretient avec diverses entreprises nationales, établissements publics, sociétés d'économie mixte ou autres, notamment dans le domaine de la publicité, par André Diligent, annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 25 avril 1972. (The Diligent report, 1972.)

this level an undoubted success." 66

Both parliamentary reports were critical of certain aspects of the ORTF's organisation. Since broadcasting policy had been the personal responsibility of Chaban-Delmas since 1969, the criticisms of the ORTF contained in the reports amounted, intentionally or not, to an indictment of the policy the Prime Minister had initiated on coming to office. 67 Though Chaban-Delmas promised the Gaullist deputies that those implicated in the covert advertising scandal would be brought to justice, the adverse publicity surrounding the publication of the reports provided Pompidou with the pretext to introduce a new reform of the ORTF and to bring broadcasting into the presidential sector of policy making.

The first indication that broadcasting had moved into the presidential sector was the appointment of Philippe Malaud to the task of preparing a new statute for the ORTF. An Independent Republican deputy, Malaud was known to be a supporter of the President's views on broadcasting. 68 Infamous for his hardline views, Malaud had previously denounced the "left-wing elements" at work on the first channel and thus showed himself opposed to the policy of Chaban-Delmas. 69 It was on the personal recommendation of Pompidou that Malaud was authorised to take charge of the reorganisation of the Office, 70 and it was to the President and not the Prime Minister that Malaud later presented his proposals. As a result, Chaban-Delmas found himself outmanoeuvred and confronted with a fait accompli.


67. For a more detailed account of the importance of special parliamentary reports see the chapter on Parliamentary Control.


The 1972 ORTF statute confirmed the state broadcasting monopoly and the ORTF's status as a public establishment of an industrial and commercial character. The Office would continue to be administered by a board of governors, half of whose members would be appointed by the Government. Provision was now made for a right of reply, though not for political groups, and for an extension of the minimum service during strikes.71 One of the major objectives of the new act was that the ORTF's structure became more decentralised with each unit (channel one, channel two, radio, etc.) being accorded a greater degree of responsibility for the running of its own services. In fact, however, this decentralisation of the ORTF had still not been put into operation two years later when the Office was finally abolished.72

Three aspects of the 1972 statute in particular indicated that the policy formulated by Vaurs and Chaban-Delmas in 1969 was to be discontinued. First, the directors of the news departments lost the autonomy which had been accorded them in 1969. Previously responsible solely to the board of governors, which meant in fact a high degree of independence, the news directors now became subject to the authority of the channel heads. This reintegration of the news departments within their respective channels was a complete about-turn on the policy initiated by Chaban-Delmas three years previously. Subsequent to this reorganisation being put into effect Desgraupes resigned as news director on channel one, while some members of his staff were sacked and the rest were transferred to the much less widely

71. See chapter on the Broadcasting Unions.

viewed second channel.\textsuperscript{73}

Secondly, the fusion of the posts of director general and chairman of the board of governors in the one post of Président Directeur Général (PDG) was expressly designed to centralise responsibility at the top of the ORTF and remove any potential countervailing force.\textsuperscript{74} The PDG was to be appointed by the Government for a "fixed period of three years."\textsuperscript{75} The obvious risk was that as the post of PDG was within the patronage of the President, the person appointed would become a rubber stamp for policy decisions taken at the Elysée.

Finally, the reconstitution of the Ministry of Information after the formation of the new government in July 1972 reflected the change in policy. As a reward for his efforts in helping to draw up the new statute the new ministry was given to Malaud whom Pompidou felt he could trust to reflect his own views on broadcasting.

It is not difficult to understand why Pompidou was so keen to bring broadcasting into his own policy-making sector and to reverse the policy initiated by Chaban-Delmas. The organisational defects listed in the two parliamentary reports and the surrounding public scandal regarding charges of corruption at the Office afforded a useful pretext for the reform of the ORTF. However, the major reasons behind the change in direction were more overtly political.

A major factor was the relative failure of the referendum on Europe which had taken place at the end of April and which Pompidou

\textsuperscript{73} Le Monde, June 14 1972.

\textsuperscript{74} One might note in passing the contradiction within the statute between its decentralising objectives and the creation of the post of PDG of the ORTF.

\textsuperscript{75} 1972 ORTF statute, article 9.
had made his personal concern. Both a manoeuvre to embarrass the Left which was split on the Common Market issue and a means of boosting his own popularity, the referendum had backfired on the President due to a very high rate of abstention at the polls. Pompidou attributed the mediocre success of the "yes" vote to the inadequate presentation of the campaign by the ORTF. In particular he was incensed at the scarcely concealed preference for abstention which many of the television journalists had shown.76

Moreover, with the approach of the 1973 legislative elections the President realised that a well-orchestrated campaign would be required to combat the common programme of the Socialists and Communists whose electoral alliance had just been announced. It was in the obvious interest of Gaullist deputies, many of whom were in grave danger of losing their seats, that the news programmes of the ORTF should publicise the Government's actions in a more favourable light than had been the case since 1969. Obviously Chaban-Delmas could not be expected to agree with this change of policy on the status of the ORTF's news departments. It was therefore left to the President to bring the ORTF under his own supervision.

This change of broadcasting from the prime ministerial to the presidential sector of policy making reflected a more general assertion of the primacy of the presidential office. After the failure of his referendum on Europe Pompidou's standing with the Gaullist deputies was at a low ebb. Chaban-Delmas, on the other hand, was apparently recovering from the adverse publicity he had received following the

publication of his tax returns in the satirical weekly *le Canard Enchaîné*. In May the Prime Minister decided without any prior consultation with the President to seek a vote of confidence in the National Assembly. His objectives in seeking such a vote were to strengthen his position inside the Gaullist party, to confirm his hold of the premiership and to protect himself from the rancour of the President who blamed him for the insufficient preparation of the electorate by the ORTF during the referendum campaign. Pompidou, however, dissociated himself in advance from this initiative and, despite the massive vote of confidence accorded Chaban-Delmas, decided that he was free to dismiss him barely a month later. Thus Chaban-Delmas had failed in his bid to play off the National Assembly and particularly the Gaullist party against the President. When Pompidou asked for his resignation following the practice of the Fifth Republic if not the letter of the Constitution, Chaban-Delmas had no alternative but to accede to this request.

The "resignation" of the Prime Minister represented the final breakdown in relations between Pompidou and Chaban-Delmas, which had been increasingly strained due to Pompidou's lack of enthusiasm for Chaban's "New Society" project. In adopting this stance Pompidou had been strongly encouraged by his advisers Pierre Juillet, Marie-France Garaud and Jean-Louis Guillaud, who were all opposed to Chaban-Delmas and wanted his dismissal. It is in this context

77. It was revealed in January 1972 that Chaban-Delmas had paid no income tax for some years while he was President of the National Assembly. Although this was quite legal, his standing with the public had been impaired. *Le Monde*, January 21 1972.

78. The vote in the Assembly was 368 for and only 96 against. *Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale*, May 25 1972.

79. Interview with Joel Le Tac, June 14 1979.
of presidential-prime ministerial relations that the 1972 ORTF statute can be interpreted as one sign of the growing presidentialisation of the regime which took place in the summer of 1972.80

At the ORTF the appointment of Arthur Conte as the first PDG of the Office delivered the coup de grâce to the broadcasting policy put into operation by Chaban-Delmas. Conte had been one of the Gaullist party critics of the broadcasting policy of the former Prime Minister, condemning on one occasion at the 1971 Gaullist party conference in Strasbourg the news programmes of channel one as tending to weaken the authority of the State.81 In an interview with the author Conte described the incident as follows:

"I spoke out at the Strasbourg congress criticising the news reporting on channel one because during the presentation of a particular topic, I forget now what it was exactly, it seemed to me that the journalists were being too communistic. ... I criticised Chaban-Delmas because he was at the table beside me. I did not criticise the director general of the ORTF because it was the Prime Minister and not the director general of the ORTF who was responsible." 82

The new PDG had impressed the President by his television appearances during the recent referendum campaign and it was on Pompidou's personal recommendation that Conte was appointed.

Conte's appointment thus fitted in with the trend whereby positions of responsibility inside and outside the Government were being given

80. Other signs of the presidentialisation of the regime included Pompidou's choice of Prime Minister to replace Chaban-Delmas. Pierre Messmer failed to impress as even a potential challenger to the primacy of the Head of State over the next two years of Pompidou's presidency. Moreover, Pompidou's most trusted political supporters were well represented in the allocation of ministerial posts in the new government: Robert Poujade (Minister of the Environment), Jacques Chirac (Minister of Agriculture), Yvon Bourges (Minister of Commerce) and Jean-Philippe Lecat (government spokesman). Le Monde, July 21 1972 and l'Express, no.1097, July 17-23 1972.


82. Interview with Arthur Conte, June 19 1979.
to persons whose loyalties were to the President personally rather than to the Gaullist party. A former SFIO deputy in his native department of Pyrénées Orientales, Conte had changed sides to represent his constituency as a Gaullist from 1968 onwards. A strong defender of French Algeria in the early sixties, Conte had been a strong critic of the Gaullist regime and so his commitment to the Gaullist movement was neither deep-seated nor long-standing.\footnote{P. Viansson-Ponté, \textit{op. cit.} (vol.1), p. 461.}

It was difficult to believe that the choice of a Gaullist deputy and more importantly personal acquaintance of the President as head of the ORTF could in any way enhance the independence of the state broadcasting services vis-à-vis the Government. The declaration of the new PDG that his objective was to ensure a "loyal" news coverage did nothing to assuage the criticisms which greeted the integration of the news departments within the structures of their respective channels.

Though Conte's immediate task, to prepare the ground for a right-wing victory in the 1973 legislative elections, was successfully carried out, relations between Conte and the Elysée steadily worsened during 1972-73, despite the fact that Conte had been a personal appointment of the President. Partly this was due to Conte's delay in drawing up a detailed plan to implement the decentralisation of the ORTF outlined in the 1972 statute. More importantly, it was due to Conte's desire to use the ORTF as his own power base, his own personal fief. The importance Conte attached to his appointment can be judged by the fact that he considered the post of PDG of the
ORTF to be the most important political position after that of President of the Republic. 84

Apparently assured of his own position at the ORTF for a fixed three year term at least, Conte was unwilling to share responsibility for the running of his new empire with either the Minister of Information or the Elysée. Thus the tandem placed by Pompidou to supervise the running of the ORTF, Malaud as Minister of Information and Conte as PDG of the Office, started to pull in different directions. While the policy difference between the two men came to a head over the issue of ministerial interference, what was to become known as the Conte affair was as much due to the clash of personalities between the two men concerned.

Limits to the independence of the PDG: the Conte affair: October 1973

Mutual hostility between Conte and Malaud had been building up throughout 1973 and finally erupted in October. Conte complained to Pompidou about ministerial interference in his management of the Office and offered his resignation if his authority over the ORTF were not confirmed. Pompidou at first assured Conte of his complete confidence in the latter's administration and asked him to withdraw his proffered resignation. Yet barely ten days later, after Conte had tactlessly denounced in public the political pressures to which the Office had been subjected, Pompidou performed a sudden about-turn and sacked Conte from his post. 85

84. Interview with Arthur Conte, June 19 1979
Conte's dismissal after only fifteen months in office demonstrated the practical limits of the autonomy granted the PDG of the ORTF by the 1972 statute. It also belied the declarations of government spokesmen that the 1972 statute guaranteed the PDG a minimum three year term of office. Conte's mistake was to alienate simultaneously those who had been responsible for his appointment and those who had opposed it. As a result, he was left unprotected when faced with a direct challenge to his authority. His public dispute with Malaud angered Pompidou while his attempt to use the ORTF as an independent power base annoyed the President's personal advisers. The fact that he was a personal appointment of the President and not a party man scarcely commended him to the main body of Gaullist deputies who were disturbed at the increasingly presidential orientation of the regime. Using as a pretext the financial deficit in the Office's budget for 1973, the Gaullist deputies were in the main critical of Conte's running of the Office. In particular, they objected to the way in which recent political events had been presented on television: the work-in at the Lip watch factory, the coup in Chile against the Allende government and the Middle East conflict in which France had a major interest as an arms dealer.

The only man who could protect Conte, the President himself, was already gravely ill and incapable of sticking to any decision he came to. As a result, when Conte found himself under attack from Malaud, the presidential entourage and an important section of Gaullist deputies, he had no support on which to rely, particularly once he had made the dispute with the Minister of Information public.

86. Interview with Arthur Conte, January 28 1977.
87. Le Monde, October 17 1973
knowledge. The ORTF staff, while condemning the manner of the dismissal, could scarcely be expected to organise in defence of a presidential appointment and even if they had done so it is difficult to see what they could have achieved. As a power base the ORTF was too fragile and at the first major concerted attack its PDG was compelled to retire from the scene, a victim of his own overreaching ambition and political miscalculation.

Conte was replaced as PDG of the ORTF by Marceau Long, a top civil servant who could be relied on to keep a low profile and to execute government policy regarding the decentralisation of the Office. At the same time Malaud was replaced at the Ministry of Information by Jean-Philippe Lecat, a more conciliatory figure than his predecessor. Long described his appointment in the following terms:

"I received a phone call by ministerial telephone from the Prime Minister. I had previously worked as general secretary in the ministry of the Armed Forces under Messmer. Messmer offered me the job of the PDG of the ORTF, an offer which Pompidou approved of. According to Messmer the ORTF needed a manager (gestionnaire) and he was keen to appoint someone quickly so that the affair could be completed as soon as possible. I did not feel any particular enthusiasm in being offered the job, but given my training as a high civil servant I could not very well refuse it. Therefore, I accepted it with some foreboding." 88

Prior to his appointment Long admitted that he had no knowledge of the ORTF from the inside nor of broadcasting matters in general. Since he was neither a party politician, nor a broadcasting professional, one may readily infer from Long's appointment that the Government was seeking to calm things down at the ORTF after the Conte scandal and rely on Long's administrative experience to remedy the organisational defects of the Office.

Long's first tasks were to bring the ORTF out of the red and more importantly prepare a plan for the decentralisation of the Office in line with the 1972 statute. However, his attempt to bring this latter project to fruition was called to a halt by the death of Pompidou in April 1974 and the subsequent election of Giscard d'Estaing as President of the Republic. The problem of the ORTF quickly became one of the prime concerns of the new President with the result that the reform proposals drawn up by Long were pushed aside almost as soon as they had been prepared. Giscard d'Estaing decided to implement a more radical reorganisation of the state broadcasting services which, embodied in his first major piece of legislation, heralded the end of the ORTF's stormy ten year existence.

Conclusion

The objectives of this chapter were, first, to explain why the relationship between government and broadcasting in France assumed such political importance and, secondly, to outline briefly the nature of this relationship from the end of the second world war up to the death of President Pompidou-in 1974. What has emerged is that because of certain historical and political factors (the wartime occupation, political polarisation, the press system...)

and de Gaulle's use of radio and television), broadcasting in France was never allowed to develop an independent role vis-à-vis the Government.

From 1958 onwards, as the sale of television sets started to take off in France, the new Gaullist government appointed faithful sympathisers to the key broadcasting posts and at the same time established a system of direct ministerial supervision of news programmes. Even what some commentators regarded as a period of relative liberalisation during the premiership of Chaban-Delmas was over-dependent on the Prime Minister's personal espousal of a non-interventionist policy with regard to news programming and on his ability to stay in office. When the conflict between Chaban-Delmas and Pompidou came to a head, it was the Prime Minister who in the tradition of the Fifth Republic had to resign from his post. The appointment of Conte as FDG of the ORTF in 1972 and the end of the Desgraupes experiment—reflected Pompidou's desire to put into practice his view of the ORTF as "the voice of France." When Conte sought to establish his independence from the President he was dismissed in a manner which highlighted the de facto limits on the autonomy of the head of the ORTF.

According to the new Giscardian government the 1974 broadcasting reform was intended to be a radical move away from this tradition of close government control of the state broadcasting services. In abolishing the ORTF, the first non-Gaullist President of the Fifth Republic was dismantling one of the major edifices of the Gaullist state (l'Etat UDR), thereby heralding the beginning of the end of the Gaullist domination of ministerial, administrative and para-
administrative posts which had lasted since 1958. In the following chapter we shall examine the causes of this reorganisation of the state broadcasting services and the drafting of the Government's reform bill.
Section 2

The break-up of the ORTF
CHAPTER 3

Origins of the 1974 reform

The origins of the 1974 reform of the state broadcasting services in France may be placed in two broad contexts which, though analytically distinct, frequently overlap in practice. One context comprises the administrative and financial history of the ORTF in the early 1970s, while the other is made up of changes taking place in the nature of the French political system at the time. This analytic distinction is a useful one, particularly since commentators on the 1974 statute have in general tended to concentrate almost entirely on the internal organisational context of the reform and to underestimate if not ignore the importance of the wider external political context.¹

While the administrative and financial history of the ORTF may be sufficient to explain why some sort of reform of the state broadcasting services was desirable and even necessary, an examination of changes in the political system is vital for an understanding of the scope of the reform. In this chapter we shall argue that while the ORTF would have undergone internal reorganisation in early 1974, without the election of a new President of the Republic it would not have been abolished. It is principally by studying changes in the political system following Giscard d'Estaing's presidential victory that one can appreciate why on the one hand the reform was so wide-sweeping (dissolution of the ORTF) and on the other hand why it did not go further (creation of a commercial channel). The first part of this chapter

examines the administrative context of the 1974 reform, while the
second part looks at the wider political context, in particular the
power relationship between the newly elected President of the
Republic and the Gaullist dominated National Assembly.

Administrative centralisation

If one looks at the administrative history of the ORTF up until
1974 it is not difficult to see why Giscard d'Estaing thought it both
necessary and opportune to introduce a reform of the state broadcasting
services so soon after his victory in the presidential election. Certain
organisational defects of the Office had once again come into prominence,
including most notably a very centralised decision-making procedure
whereby even matters of relatively minor importance were sent up to
the PDG for his attention. This procedure, described by Malraud in
August 1973 as one of "bureaucratic centralism", was aggravated by
poor lines of communication between management and staff to the detriment
of any atmosphere of cooperation. As a result of this chronic
centralisation the ORTF gave the impression of constant corporate
entropy.

It cannot be simply asserted however, that the ORTF was just too
big to be run efficiently. The BBC, for example, was and still is a
larger organisation in terms of staff numbers and variety of services
than was the ORTF. Yet the Annan report published in 1977 was only

général fait au nom de la commission des finances ... sur le
projet de loi de finances pour 1975, Tome III, annexe no.43. ORTF,
rapporteur spécial: André Dilligent, annexe au procès-verbal de

3. ORTF.............. 13,386 employees.
BBC ................ 23,753 employees.
Presse Actualité, no. 96, December 1974
mildly critical of the BBC's organisation. In fact, referring to
the break-up of the ORTF a majority of the committee specifically
rejected the splitting of the BBC into two separate organisations, one
for radio and the other for television. Moreover, within France it-
self public companies larger than the ORTF, such as Renault, EDF and
the SNCF, did not pose nearly such intractable problems of management
as did the ORTF. Senator Jean Cluzel asserted in his 1974 budgetary
report that the organisational problems facing the ORTF were due not
so much to its sheer size, but to the fact that the Office had not
adapted its management methods to the changes which had taken place
in French broadcasting over the previous ten years: the creation of
a second and then a third television channel, the introduction of
colour television, increasing competition for the state radio services
from the peripheral radios and the increase in the number of staff to
deal with the expansion of services. It was this problem of the
inability or unwillingness of the Office to adapt to changing circum-
stances which came to a head in 1973-74.

However, the problem of centralisation within the ORTF was not
a new one. On assuming responsibility for broadcasting policy in 1969
Chaban-Delmas established an independent committee under the chairmen-
ship of former minister Lucien Paye with the task of "studying the
modifications to be made to the ORTF statute, with the aim of
facilitating the adaptation of the Office to its functions." In its
report published in June 1970 the Paye committee recommended a thorough
decentralisation of the ORTF without going so far as to call for the

4. Report of the Committee on the Future of Broadcasting, Command 6753,
fait au nom de la commission des finances ... sur le projet de loi de
finances pour 1975, Tome III, annexe no. 44, Radiodiffusion et télé-
vision, rapporteur spécial: Jean Cluzel, annexe au procès-verbal de la
6. Rapport de la commission d'étude du statut de l'ORTF, Paris, La
break-up of the Office. The committee proposed the creation of six separate companies under the overall control of a central holding company. The six companies would comprise a radio company, two television channels, a regional radio and television company, a production company and a transmission company. The functions of the holding company would be

"... to supervise the management of the subsidiary companies, to coordinate their activities, to share out the ORTF budget among them, to decide priorities in equipment, as well as to assume certain common tasks (staff policy) and to run directly certain common services (collection of the licence revenue ...)."

The 1972 ORTF statute reproduced with certain alterations these recommendations of the Paye report. Eight separate functional units (régies) were to be created comprising the radio, television channel one, television channel two, regional radio and television (channel three), the transmission services and three separate production units (vidéo fixe, vidéo mobile and films). A central structure was to be maintained to be responsible for overall budgetary and staff policy. Paradoxically the 1972 reform also merged the previously separate offices of chairman of the board of governors and director general into the single post of Président Directeur General, thereby centralising authority at the head of the ORTF. During 1972 and 1973 Conte with the support of the broadcasting trade unions refused to implement the decentralising proposals of the 1972 reform preferring to maintain a centralised structure with himself at the top of the pyramid.

On replacing Conte as PDG of the ORTF Long immediately proceeded

8. Ibid, pp. 221-222.
9. Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, Law no. 72-553 of July 3 1972, article 4 and arrêté of July 21 1972, articles 1, 2 and 3.
to draw up his own proposals for the implementation of the 1972 reform. These proposals were made public in February 1974, only a few months before the ORTF was finally abolished. The structure of the ORTF was to be reorganised in line with the major recommendation of the Paye report within the limitations set by the 1972 statute. Six public corporations (établissements publics) were to be set up to include each of the following: the radio services, television channel one, television channel two, regional radio and television (channel three), "heavy production" and, finally, external services. Each of the television channels would have its own "light" production services directly attached to it. A central organism would be retained with the task of supervising the programming of the television channels by means of cahiers des charges. It would also have control of the ORTF's budget, the transmission services, staff policy, the ORTF's overseas stations and its commercial services. There was to be no harmonisation between the two major television channels, but "ruthless competition" was to be discouraged by means of the cahiers des charges. The proposed functional decentralisation, therefore, did not go so far as to abolish a powerful central body and as a result the unitary structure of the ORTF was to be maintained.

In an interview with the author Marceau Long spoke about the importance of his project.

"The main problem with the ORTF in late 1973 was not the financial problem, but rather the fact that since the publication of the Paye report in 1970 none of the heads of the ORTF had made any attempt to put into effect a serious policy of decentralisation.

11. "Heavy production" consists of dramas, series, variety shows, etc.
12. The ORTF's foreign broadcast service was called La Direction des Affaires Extérieures et de la Coopération (DADC).
13. A charter setting out obligations with regard to programming. See chapter on the Liquidation of the ORTF.
14. The directorship of harmonisation set up in 1972 to coordinate the programming of channels one and two was thus abandoned.
15. Nouvelles de l'ORTF, supplement to number 68, February 27 1974. (ORTF management publication.)
The Paye report had been very badly accepted by the broadcasting unions. Partly because of this opposition from the unions, who themselves were very centralised and wanted the ORTF to remain so the Paye report was not applied during the period from 1970 to 1973. In other words a number of occasions were lost during this period to decentralise the ORTF. This was especially true of the launching of channel three. When channel three was established (January 1973) the ORTF ought to have been decentralised at the same time. Instead channel three was immediately integrated within the structure of the Office."16

Approved by the ORTF board of governors with only two staff representatives voting against, the Long project was accepted by the Government and the relevant government decrees were already drawn up when the news of President Pompidou's death was announced. With the election of Giscard d'Estaing to the presidency the Long project was overtaken by events, with the very existence of the ORTF and not just its internal reform becoming the first major subject of political controversy of the new regime.

The ORTF's financial record and the Chinoaud report

Coupled with the long-standing defect of administrative centralisation was the ORTF's precarious financial position. During 1973 the Office had gone into deficit. Used by the Government in October as a pretext for the dismissal of Conte, this deficit also helped critics of the ORTF justify a radical reform of the state broadcasting services.

It should be noted that the ORTF's financial record prior to 1973 had been excellent. Relying overwhelmingly from income from the licence, supplemented since 1968 by advertising revenue, the ORTF was a self-financing organisation, receiving only a very small subsidy from the Government for its external broadcasts. From its budget the ORTF

covered both its capital investment and operational costs and even made frequent annual profits. However, in 1973 a combination of circumstances, only some of which can be attributed to the ORTF directly, sufficed to push the Office into the red.

Certainly the ORTF was not entirely blameless for this state of affairs. As the Chinaud report on the ORTF's financial administration pointed out, production costs were allowed to soar far in excess of the original estimates, certain production units were under-employed and delays in production frequently led to increased costs. The ORTF's investment policy was criticised for its lack of rigour; there was a lack of forward planning and of a coherent staffing policy, while the sale of ORTF programmes to foreign broadcasting services was considered derisorily low.

In an attempt to establish control of its costing system the ORTF had in the early seventies introduced a computerised accounting system. While in theory this new system ought to have resulted in a more rational use of resources, in practice it proved far too sophisticated for the ORTF staff who had not been given enough time to master its complexities. There were too many subdivisions of costs with the result that even a small overstepping of estimated costs in each subdivision led to a considerable increase in overall costs. In short, far from establishing an efficient control over the ORTF's expenditure, the computerised accounting system actually contributed to the Office's growing financial problems.


The introduction of channel three, which came into service on December 31, 1972, had also imposed a considerable strain on the ORTF's finances. In 1973 the Office spent 264 million francs, over 11% of its total budget, on transmitters, programmes and production equipment for the third channel, a budgetary outlay it could scarcely afford. The extra revenue which the Office obtained after 1972 due to the increase in the licence-fee and the rise in the number of licence holders was almost totally absorbed by the expenditure of channel three alone. With the benefit of hindsight the Chinaud report severely criticised the establishment of the third channel at the ORTF, which now became the only broadcasting institution in the world to run three-separate television channels.20

Lacking effective control of its expenditure, the ORTF was also suffering from a levelling out of its income. Since the sale of black and white sets had to all intents and purposes reached saturation point, any increase in revenue from the licence was dependent on the changeover by viewers to colour sets and on the Government raising the cost of the licence for black and white and introducing a higher licence fee for colour. Unfortunately, the changeover to colour sets by the viewers had been less widespread than forecast, the increase in the cost of the licence had not kept pace with the rise in costs during the early 1970s and a separate higher licence fee for colour sets was not introduced until July 1974. Revenue from advertising, the other major source of income for the ORTF, was pegged by law at a maximum 25% of the ORTF's total income and was therefore dependent on the amount of revenue obtained through the licence. As a result, the Office's total income was not sufficient to meet its expenditure at a time of spiralling costs.

20. Ibid, pp. 87-89.
There can be no doubt that the ORTF was partly responsible for its financial plight in 1973. However, the Government also must shoulder a considerable share of the responsibility. From 1970 onwards the ORTF had been "subject to the same taxation system as private enterprise" with the result that VAT had to be paid on all revenue including the income from the licence.\(^\text{21}\) The ORTF, therefore, did not benefit from the total amount of licence revenue collected, with the net loss in 1973 being calculated at 54 million francs.\(^\text{22}\)

In 1971 the ORTF had entered into a contractual agreement (contrat de programme) with the Government whereby the Office's income would be automatically raised each year. The objective of this contract was to guarantee the ORTF financial stability and a greater degree of independence from the Government. In practice, however, the annual increase was restricted to 3-5% over the previous year's income, which proved far too optimistic a target in the light of the rate of inflation over the next three years. Consequently, far from guaranteeing the ORTF a regular stable income, the contractual agreement severely weakened the ORTF's financial equilibrium.\(^\text{23}\)

In addition, the ORTF was not reimbursed for the revenue lost through licence fee exemptions which were granted unilaterally by the Government on political grounds. In 1973 25% of those who paid only the radio licence were exempted from payment while 5% of television owners were exempted from paying the television licence. The total cost of these


\(^{22}\) Chineaud report, 1974, p. 164.

\(^{23}\) J. Chevallier, op. cit., p. 62.
Exemptions to the ORTF in 1973 amounted to 116 million francs. 24

Finally, the Government was guilty of grossly inadequate payment for programmes produced and broadcast by the ORTF at the Government's request. The ORTF produced programmes for various government departments, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Overseas Departments and Territories and the Ministry of Culture among others. These ministries consistently failed to reimburse the ORTF the real cost of these programmes and so were partly responsible for the ORTF's financial plight at the end of 1973. 25 For example, between 1971 and 1974 the contribution of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the budget of the ORTF's external services rose from 51.3 million francs to 55.4 million francs, while the total budget of the external services rose from 103.7 to 142.2 million francs. Thus while in 1971 the ministry contributed 49.5% of the total income of the external services, in 1974 it gave only 39%. 26

The ORTF's overall deficit in 1973 amounted to 75 million francs. 27 More alarmingly, at the end of that year it was forecast that the deficit in 1974 would be around 150 million francs, 6% of the Office's total

   It was forecast that in 1974 exemptions from payment of the licence would cost the ORTF 134 million francs.


As we have seen, however, the deficit in 1973 was not solely due to financial maladministration within the ORTF. The Government too must accept some of the blame for imposing financial burdens on the Office without full compensation. In any case the gravity of the ORTF's financial position in 1973-74 was certainly overstated.

"There was a hole in the ORTF's budget, a financial problem partly due to bad management. ... (But) the financial problem was not the main problem. At the end of 1973 the ORTF had a very small deficit compared with the total budget of the Office. The financial problem was much exaggerated." 29

After Long's appointment the ORTF's financial position improved to such an extent that the Office made a small profit of 34 million francs during 1974. 30 This improvement in the ORTF's finances was not due to any increase in the Government's contribution for the services it imposed on the Office. Certainly the cost of the licence was increased in July 1974 from 130 to 140 francs, only half the increase Long had asked for, and a separate licence for colour was introduced at a cost of 210 francs. By themselves, however, these measures would have been inadequate as a remedy to the ORTF's financial problems. It was, therefore, left to the new PDG to put the ORTF's finances in order. This he accomplished by means of severe cutbacks in operating costs and in capital investment. 31

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30. See also "L'An 1 de la Radio-Télévision Française", Regards sur l'actualité, Paris, la documentation française, no. 18, February 1976, p. 27.
Paradoxically, the ORTF was abolished partly on the grounds of financial maladministration at the very time that the Office was showing a profit.32

The financial difficulties of the ORTF were highlighted at the end of June 1974 by the publication of the findings of a special National Assembly committee of inquiry: the Chinaud report. Set up in December 1973 to investigate the financial management of the ORTF, the committee produced a report which was critical of many aspects of the Office's internal administration, while the Government's share of the responsibility for the ORTF's financial plight was also condemned. The timing of the publication of the report was crucial since the future organisation of the state broadcasting services was already being discussed by the new Giscardian government. The Chinaud report, therefore, became a weapon to be used by the new Government and by the supporters of commercial television against the ORTF, while those parts of the report which emphasised the Government's role in the ORTF's finances were not unnaturally scarcely mentioned by government spokesmen.

The main recommendation of the Chinaud report was that the ORTF be retained with a more decentralised administrative structure along the lines of the 1972 statute.33 The Office was to continue to be financed principally from licence revenue so as to guarantee its "financial independence."34 Critics of the ORTF, however, regarded the report as presenting a powerful case for the creation of a commercial television channel. Moreover, it was well-known that both the committee's rapporteur, Roger Chinaud, president of the Independent

32. It is fair to say, however, that the savings made by Long during 1974 could not have been indefinitely extended without having an adverse effect on the quality and range of the ORTF's services. They were short-term measures to deal with a specific financial problem.
Republican group of deputies in the National Assembly, and its chairman, Robert-André Vivien, a leading Gaullist deputy, were both personally in favour of the establishment of a commercial channel.

Given the importance the report assumed in preparing the ground for the break-up of the ORTF, it is interesting to note some leading reactions to its publication. Marceau Long, PDG of the ORTF at the time, commented:

"The Chinaud report was very violent towards the ORTF. In fact the report was excessive. The ORTF had some defects, but no worse than a lot of other bodies. The ORTF was a scalp for Chinaud."

Jack Ratite, Communist party deputy and secretary of the Chinaud committee, also criticised the report in the following terms:

"The objective of the committee was to discredit the ORTF. I voted against the committee's report and produced a 5-6 page document giving my reasons for voting against. The committee refused to publish this document. The Chinaud committee wanted to throw out the baby with the bath water."

Finally, Joel Le Tac, Gaullist deputy and rapporteur spécial of the National Assembly Finance Committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting, attacked the conclusions of the committee on several grounds:

"The Chinaud committee was completely useless. It merely reproduced the findings of my 1972 report. The parliamentary administrators were the same and naturally they wanted to do the least possible. In any case not all that much had happened since 1972. Another criticism I have of the Chinaud committee is that it was criticising Conte's management at a time when he had already left the Office. The management of the Office had been greatly improved under Long. Therefore, the report was already out of date when it was published and as such its conclusions were unfair to the ORTF. Vivien and Chinaud were mounting an anti-ORTF operation. Both are in favour of commercial television. It was obvious from the beginning, given the personalities in charge of the committee that the ORTF would be badly judged. The Chinaud committee was a pro-commercial manoeuvre at a time when Pompidou's health was obviously failing and people were thinking of the presidential elections to come."

37. Interview with Joel Le Tac, June 14 1979.
Strikes at the ORTF and the public reaction

A long section of the Chineaud report was devoted to staff problems at the ORTF with a detailed annex listing the number and length of strikes at the Office during the early 1970s. Overmanning at the ORTF, the strong corporatist trade unions and the propensity to strike action were all condemned by the committee. More immediately, a strike by sections of technical and administrative staff in spring 1974 appeared to justify the criticisms contained in the report. In itself the strike scarcely presented a challenge to the continued existence of the ORTF and programmes were relatively little disturbed. However, given extensive coverage by certain sections of the French press and exploited by commercial television lobbyists as symptomatic of the abuse of power by the broadcasting unions, the strike contributed to the siege-like situation of the ORTF at a time when the Office had still not recovered from the politico-financial crisis of 1973-74. In other words the strike was probably the trigger factor which precipitated the break-up of the ORTF.

In any case it scarcely required the publication of a parliamentary report to focus the public's attention on the administrative difficulties of the ORTF. Conte's dismissal in October 1973, the surrounding publicity on the ORTF's financial crisis, the strikes during the early months of 1974 and the forthcoming increase in the cost of the licence combined to ensure that the viewers were well disposed to greet


39. For the background to this strike and its development, see La Croix, June 16 1974, Le Monde, June 20 and 21 1974 and Combat, June 27 1974.
enthusiastically any reform of broadcasting which promised them a more reliable and cheaper service. An opinion poll conducted in June 1974, at the very height of the ORTF crisis, predictably reflected this public discontent. Not surprisingly, given the timing of the poll, 68% of those interviewed agreed with the principle of a commercial television channel to compete against the state broadcasting services.  

The new presidency

A series of interrelating factors concerned with the recent administrative and financial history of the ORTF were, therefore, instrumental in bringing about a reorganisation of the state broadcasting services in mid-1974. In addition, more overtly political factors strongly influenced both the decision to reform broadcasting at this time and the type of reform chosen.

The new President, elected in May 1974, had based the major part of his election campaign on the theme of change, promising the French electorate that they would be surprised "by the scope and speed of the changes." The haste in which the reform proposals on broadcasting were drawn up and then steamrollered through Parliament in a special legislative session can be attributed to Giscard d'Estaing's desire to prove to the electorate that his espousal of a policy of reform was not simply empty rhetoric. In fulfilment of his electoral pledge, the President wanted to settle the broadcasting issue with an impressive flourish so that the new companies could be in operation by the start of 1975.

In this context the reform of the state broadcasting services was only

one of several measures intended to aid the implantation of the new regime, and mark the end of the "UDR state." Giscard d'Estaing was acutely conscious of the fact that he had been elected with fewer than 500,000 votes more than his left-wing opponent, Mitterrand, a margin of less than 1%. Since at this time the Union of the Left showed no signs of the split which was to take place in the autumn \(^{42}\), the President decided to ease the pressure on the new government and bring public opinion behind the regime by a series of reforms. While the changes put into effect were not all popular with the general public, they did succeed in confusing the left-wing opposition and the trade unions, who remained irritated but quiescent until the autumn when the Government's economic measures began to bite.

Though all the measures taken were designed to aid the implantation of the new regime, they were not all of equal importance. Certain innovations were superficial, concerned with setting the style of the new presidency and as such frequently criticised as rather pointless "gimmicks". These included the changes in protocol at the official inauguration ceremony at the end of May, the jazzed up Marseillaise and the transfer of the July 14 military parade from the Champs-Elysees to the Bastille. Other measures were of more substance and tended to be lumped together under the heading of "liberal reforms". These included such diverse measures as the suppression of telephone tappings, the lowering of the age of majority from twenty-one to eighteen, the liberalising of the laws on contraception, improvements in the penal system and promised reforms on the controversial issues of abortion and

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\(^{42}\) For a detailed account of the split in the Union of the Left which took place in the autumn of 1974, see I. Campbell, *The End of the Mitterrand Experiment*, Department of Politics, University of Warwick, Working Paper no. 5, August 1975.
divorce. These policy decisions were designed to give Giscard d'Estaing a liberal, humanitarian image, to keep the President in the public eye and to remove the spotlight from the more fundamental economic and social problems which faced the Government. It was in the context of these liberal measures that the broadcasting reform was dubiously placed by government spokesmen.43

The 1974 reform was the first concrete manifestation of the new President's desire to stress the change of regime. The fact that the reorganisation of the state broadcasting services was the first major piece of legislation during the new presidency emphasises the importance of broadcasting as a political weapon for disseminating news and structuring the political agenda. In addition, the reform acquires a special significance because of the particular status of radio and television as means of mass communication, since it is largely through these media that government decisions in all other policy areas are explained and defended. In other words, the reorganisation of the state broadcasting services at the start of Giscard d'Estaing's presidency not only revealed the President's views on the organisation of broadcasting and the benefits of a competitive system, but was also important because the presentation of policy decisions in other areas such as health, education and agriculture, would be affected by the reform of the ORTF. This double importance of the 1974 broadcasting reform was further enhanced by the fact that in stark contrast to many other policy areas the consequences of a reorganisation of broadcasting become evident very quickly, particularly in the politically sensitive field of news programming.

It is scarcely surprising, therefore, that Giscard d'Estaing should

decide to mark the beginning of his presidential term of office with a reform of the state broadcasting services. In so doing the new President was maintaining a tradition whose origins can be traced back to the foundation of the Fifth Republic and before, whereby major changes of government have often been accompanied by changes in the structure of the state broadcasting services and the appointment of political sympathisers to the key posts. Thus de Gaulle's accession to power in 1958 was quickly followed by the 1959 broadcasting ordinance and a flood of Gaullist appointments to the key posts, which heralded the start of Gaullist domination of the state broadcasting services. After Pompidou's election to the presidency in 1969 an internal reform of the ORTF was carried out at the instigation of the new Prime Minister, Chaban-Delmas. Similarly, the dismissal of Chaban-Delmas in 1972 and the concomitant growth of presidential power was accompanied by a new statute for the ORTF and the appointment of a man personally loyal to the President to the post of PDG of the ORTF. While the 1974 Giscardian broadcasting reform was a symbol of the change of regime, it was also part of a tradition which incoming governments had upheld since before the foundation of the Fifth Republic.

A reorganisation of the state broadcasting services in 1974 can be explained, therefore, with reference to both organisational and political factors. Furthermore, it is argued here that the nature of the reform can be fully understood only by examining changes in the political system following Giscard d'Estaing's presidential election victory and particularly the balance of forces within the governing coalition. The abolition of the ORTF and the establishment of a competitive broadcasting system with public service goals and within the framework of the state monopoly was a compromise solution between
the supporters of the establishment of a commercial television channel and the defenders of the state monopoly embodied in the ORTF.

Commercial television lobby

Since the foundation of the ORTF in 1964 various abortive attempts had been made to introduce a commercial television channel to compete against the state services. The introduction of brand advertising on the ORTF channels in 1968 was intended not only to supplement the Office's income without increasing the cost of the licence, but also was an attempt to buy off the commercial television lobby by going part of the way to satisfy its demands. However, since the amount of advertising revenue the Office was allowed to obtain was limited by the Government, the introduction of brand advertising at the ORTF did not wholly satisfy the supporters of a commercial television channel who continued to lobby for the creation of an alternative to the ORTF. Prior to 1974 none of these projects had ever come to fruition, largely due to the opposition of the mainstream of the Gaullist party who regarded a state monopoly broadcasting service as a fundamental principle of Gaullism, particularly as they could control it to their own political advantage.

Traditionally the party which was most in favour of commercial television was Giscard d'Estaing's own party, the Independent Republicans. During the parliamentary debate on the 1972 ORTF bill Olivier Giscard d'Estaing, the brother of the new President, had

44. On the commercial lobby, see R. Thomas, op. cit., pp. 118-125.
introduced an amendment in favour of the creation of an independent channel on the lines of the IBA in Great Britain. In his speech Olivier Giscard d'Estaing defended his amendment on the grounds that such a channel would provide greater freedom of choice for the viewer, while in any case the state monopoly was already obsolescent with the advent of cable television, videocassettes and broadcasting satellites. Opposed by the Socialists, Communists and most of the Gaullists, this amendment was defeated in the National Assembly without a public vote being taken.

In 1972 also, Michel Poniatowski, one of the leading members of the Independent Republican party, expounded his party's view on the question of the state monopoly in the following terms:

"One of the fundamental principles which our political movement professes is precisely that of leaving each individual, in every domain and as much as possible, freedom of choice. Undoubtedly this objective will be obtained one day only by the creation of private television channels which would free the ORTF from its restrictions as is already the case with radio (in competition with the peripheral stations)." 46

The election of Giscard d'Estaing to the presidency in 1974 was, therefore, followed by an intensive campaign in favour of the establishment of a commercial television channel since the Giscardians were well known to favour such a policy. In fact even before Pompidou's death proponents of a commercial channel were seeking to exploit the crisis at the ORTF to their own advantage. The setting up of the Chinaud committee was one such manoeuvre. Another was the drawing up

47. The Giscardian club Perspectives et realites also declared itself in favour of the establishment of a commercial channel. Le Monde, June 22 1973.
of a private members' bill (proposition de loi) in the National Assembly in March 1974 in favour of a commercial channel by Jean Boyer, an Independent Republican deputy. Largely ignored at the time, the bill was given more publicity following Giscard d'Estaing's election as the ORTF crisis developed and the very existence of the Office was called into question. ⁴⁸

The Boyer bill criticised the financial management of the ORTF and condemned the high cost of the licence and the limits placed on the amount of brand advertising which could be shown on the ORTF channels. To remedy these defects the Boyer bill proposed that independent radio and television stations should be established and grouped together to facilitate control of their income in an Office de radiotélévision commerciale (ORTC). There would be no limits on the amount of advertising these commercial broadcasting companies would be allowed to transmit. With regard to technical matters, the commercial companies would be placed under the supervision (tutelle) of the ORTF.

Boyer underlined the beneficial effects of this competitive system on programme quality and foresaw the reduction and long-term abolition of the licence as a means of broadcasting finance. The revenue from advertising would be used to help compensate the press for any loss in income from advertising it suffered, while the ORTF would also receive financial compensation. It was apparent, given Boyer's self-confessed support of a commercial broadcasting system on the American model, that the ORTF was being preserved solely to provide the technical infrastructure for the commercial companies, since

the initial capital cost of constructing a separate transmission network would have been prohibitive. Another project put forward around this time favoured the use of the spare television channel in the French network by the company Images et Son-Europe 1, the parent company of the peripheral radio station Europe 1.

The project which was most widely publicised at the time the new broadcasting reform was being drawn up was, however, le projet Baudouin, named after the initiator of the proposal Denis Baudouin. Baudouin proposed the hiving off of one of the state television channels to be run by the Société Financière de Radiodiffusion (Sofirad) of which Baudouin was the Président Directeur Général. Sofirad is a holding company set up during the second world war with the State as its main shareholder. Through its board of governors, ten of whom including the chairman are appointed by the Government, the State controls the financial operations of the peripheral radio stations with the exception of Radio Télé Luxembourg and Radio-Andorre.

Baudouin defended his project on the grounds that the streamlining of the ORTF would have a beneficial effect on its financial position, since it would no longer have to run three television channels. Moreover, Baudouin also argued that by setting up a channel in competition with the ORTF the Office would be encouraged to manage its affairs more efficiently. The State would retain the transmission monopoly and would retain overall control of the new channel's finances as well as responsibility for key appointments. If it was considered

49. Le Figaro, June 24 1974.
50. Channel three was generally considered to be the likeliest candidate. Interview with Denis Baudouin, January 25 1977 and Le Monde, June 13 1974.
51. For more information on Sofirad and the peripheral radio stations see the chapter on the State Monopoly.
necessary a *cahier des charges* could be imposed on the new channel to ensure the respect of the public service goals of French broadcasting.\textsuperscript{52} The Baudouin project thus combined the advantages of reducing the size of the ORTF while at the same time guaranteeing that the Government would continue to possess important means of control over the new channel through *Sofirad*.

**Giscard d'Estaing's views on broadcasting**

At the time of Giscard d'Estaing's accession to the presidency, therefore, there was no shortage of proposals for the creation of some sort of competitor for the ORTF, commercial or semi-commercial. However, the new President's own views on broadcasting policy were by no means clear. Despite the publicity surrounding the ORTF, the broadcasting issue did not assume nearly the same degree of importance during the 1974 presidential election campaign as it had done during the 1969 contest between Pompidou and Poher. Moreover, though as Minister of Finance Giscard d'Estaing had been closely concerned with the financial administration of the ORTF\textsuperscript{53}, he had never publicly outlined his views on the organisation of the state broadcasting services and their relations with the Government. He was thought to be in favour of the establishment of a commercial television channel since the bulk of the Independent Republican party, his right-hand man, Poniatowski, and his brother, Olivier, had all in the recent past come out in favour of this option. On the other hand, there is some verbal


evidence that for political reasons Giscard d'Estaing was personally in favour of retaining the state monopoly to conciliate the strong pressure group of the regional press which was opposed to commercial television for fear of losing a large amount of its advertising revenue.\footnote{54}

During the campaign itself Giscard d'Estaing's views on the ORTF emerged in dribs and drabs. Frequently he was content to express himself in very abstract terms, exemplified by his profession of support for a "wider access to information."\footnote{55} However, he did explicitly reject his predecessor's view that the ORTF was the voice of France:

"The ORTF is a public body. It exercises a function of information, but - and this is my profound conviction - France is something too valuable and too important to be identified with anything else. The voice of France, it can be heard in the presidential election and not through an instrument or a sector of information. ... I do not think that the ORTF has the task of being the voice of France. The voice of France is the President of the Republic or the French people."\footnote{56}

The fullest exposition of Giscard d'Estaing's views on broadcasting came not from him but from an interview with his advisers published in Le Figaro prior to the first ballot. Even here, however, the replies were either rather vague or at worst totally vacuous. Nonetheless, with the benefit of hindsight it is possible to see a hint of Giscard d'Estaing's opposition to the unitary structure of the ORTF if not necessarily to the principle of the state monopoly:

\footnote{54. Interviews with Marceau Long, July 10 1979 and Antoine de Tarlé, September 8 1979. See also the chapter on the State Monopoly.}

\footnote{55. Le Monde, May 3 1974.}

\footnote{56. Interview on Europe 1, May 13 1974.}
...perhaps we should be considering a more fundamental difficulty, which results from the convergence on a single body like the ORTF of all the paths of news and broadcasting culture."57

In short, after his election Giscard d'Estaing was able to maintain a convincingly flexible stance on the broadcasting issue, since, apart from his rejection of the view that the ORTF was the voice of France, he had made no specific pronouncement on the future role and organisation of the state broadcasting services. Yet his espousal of the liberal ethic of competition in economic policy was well-known and it was but a short step from this to a belief in the benefits of a competitive broadcasting system. Once this step had been taken it was then rationalised after the event in a passage in the President's slim, pretentious, and monumentally tedious volume on French democracy:

"Pluralism also in the broadcasting media. The break-up of the former ORTF into several national companies, completely independent of each other, contributes to the preservation of our liberties. The rule of independence and of competition must be developed in all its aspects, including the objective of the cultural quality of the programmes." 58

The Gaullist factor

Given the financial and administrative crisis of the ORTF, the pressure exerted by the different strands of the commercial lobby and Giscard d'Estaing's liberal belief in the merits of free enterprise and competition, it may at first sight seem surprising that the option of a commercial channel and the halfway house solution of a Sofirad channel were both rejected by the President when the

reform of the ORTF came under discussion. However, this would be to underestimate the strength of the defenders of the state broadcasting monopoly. The ambivalent nature of the presidential majority in the National Assembly, and especially Giscard d'Estaing's dependence on the support of Gaullist deputies for the passing of the Government's proposed legislation in Parliament, had an important influence on the substance of the President's broadcasting reform.

Giscard d'Estaing's presidential victory had resulted in significant changes in the triadic relationship between the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister and the majorité in Parliament. The President's ambition had long been to create a centre party which would take over from the Gaullists the role of parliamentary support for the Government, and so throughout 1972 and 1973 Giscard d'Estaing had been seeking to win over the support of the centre parties for his assault on the presidency. After his election the majorité was extended to include the centrist reformers of Jean Lecanuet and Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber. While this widening of the base of the majorité accorded with Giscard's objective of pushing the Gaullists out towards the isolation of the extreme right, it also made Giscard d'Estaing's parliamentary base less cohesive than Pompidou's as well as alienating a large body of Gaullist deputies.

In addition, the election of the first non-Gaullist President of the Fifth Republic meant that Giscard d'Estaing could not count on the unconditional loyalty of the Gaullist party in Parliament. Since Giscard d'Estaing's desire to govern France from the centre was not shared by the Socialist party leader, Mitterrand, who
preferred to ally his party's electoral fortunes with those of the Communist party, Giscard d'Estaing was compelled faute de mieux to rely on the large body of Gaullist deputies whose support he would have much rather been in a position to do without. As a result, the President would be running a risk if he sought to adopt a policy which undermined or appeared to undermine the basic principles of Gaullist doctrine. While after Chirac's resignation from the premiership in August 1976 Giscard d'Estaing was prepared to defy the Gaullists to bring the Government down by a vote of censure on issues such as the bill sanctioning direct elections to the European Parliament (1977) and the 1980 budget provisions (1979), up until the change of Prime Minister Giscard d'Estaing was more likely to compromise with the Gaullists, as he did with the 1974 broadcasting reform, even at the risk of his proposals being savaged in the Assembly, as they were during the debates on capital gains tax reform in 1976. The most notable exception to this preference for compromise when Chirac was still Prime Minister was the abortion bill, which passed through the Assembly despite the opposition of many Gaullists because the Socialists and Communists rallied to support Giscard d'Estaing's reform.

Giscard d'Estaing's task in retaining the support of the Gaullist deputies was facilitated at the start of his presidency by the decline in the power of the Gaullist barons such as Chaban-Delmas and the concomitant rise of Chirac within the UDR. During the presidential campaign Chirac had given his full hearted support to Giscard d'Estaing's candidacy before the first ballot and had persuaded forty-three Gaullist deputies to do likewise. In so doing he had made a vital contribution to Giscard d'Estaing's victory, though at the risk of incurring the wrath of the mainstream of the
Gaullist party which had officially backed the candidacy of Chaban-Delmas. In the months immediately following the presidential election Chirac was principally concerned with re-establishing his position inside the Gaullist party, capturing the post of general secretary in December 1974. As a result of the growing importance of the Prime Minister inside the Gaullist party during 1974, Giscard d'Estaing was able in the early months of his presidency to work through Chirac to obtain the required support of the Gaullist deputies. On the broadcasting issue, as in other policy areas up until the cantonal elections of spring 1976, Chirac acted as the link between the President of the Republic and the Gaullist party in Parliament.

In sharp contrast to many Independent Republicans, the great majority of Gaullist deputies strongly defended the maintenance of the state broadcasting monopoly. Therefore, the bill presented in the National Assembly in late July was indicative of Giscard d'Estaing's desire for a compromise solution to keep his parliamentary majority intact and to retain the required support of the Gaullist deputies. Partly to appease the mainstream of the Gaullist party in Parliament the state monopoly of transmission and programming was reaffirmed. André Rossi, who along with Chirac was responsible for introducing the bill on behalf of the Government in the Assembly, was adamant that the Government had rejected the option of the creation of a commercial channel:

"Commercialisation is absolutely impossible without the introduction of a new law."

59. *Le Monde*, December 16 1974. Chirac's attempt to assert his authority over the Gaullist party reached its height in late 1976 after his resignation from the premiership when he was elected leader of the renamed Gaullist movement, *le Rassemblement pour la République* (RPR).

It is not difficult to understand why the Government was so anxious to profess its faith in the state monopoly. The press, even that section which was sympathetic to the Giscardian regime, was against any proposal to set up a commercial or semi-commercial channel for fear that this would deprive it of a large share of its advertising revenue at a time when its circulation was generally stagnating or on the decline. 61 The broadcasting trade unions were also virulently opposed to any move to change the monopoly status of the state broadcasting services. Moreover, the Socialist-Communist Union of the Left had frequently reiterated its determination to resist any attempt to abolish the monopoly.

The determining factor, however, was the large group of UDR deputies pledged to defend what they regarded as a fundamental principle of Gaullism. 62 The broadcasting reform bill was the first opportunity the Gaullist party had of asserting its position as the dominant group within the majorité. In complete disarray after the presidential election result and largely written off by the press as a declining political force, the UDR took advantage of the reorganisation of the state broadcasting services to present a relatively united front behind Chirac and to demonstrate to Giscard d'Estaing his reliance on their support. It was estimated that of the 181 Gaullist deputies in the Assembly over 100 would vote against any proposal to abandon the monopoly. Under these circumstances Giscard d'Estaing was unwilling to run the risk of a combination of left-wing and Gaullist votes defeating the Government's broadcasting bill and throwing the regime into an early crisis. 63

61. See section on the press system.

62. It is astonishing in this context that Chevallier should view the Gaullist party's decision to defend the state broadcasting monopoly as "rather surprising." The official policy of the Gaullists had never been anything other than the defence of the state monopoly. See J. Chevallier, op. cit., p. 108-109.

63. See table 3.1. giving composition of the National Assembly in July 1974.
Of course the President could have either pre-empted any Gaullist opposition to the bill in the Assembly or used the occasion of the bill's defeat to dissolve the Assembly and call for new legislative elections in an attempt to secure the election of a parliamentary majority less based on the Gaullist party and more loyal to him personally. However, the country was only just recovering from two months of campaigning, the summer holidays had already begun and given the popularity of the Union of the Left at this time any recourse to the electorate could have backfired disastrously. In any case, during the presidential campaign Giscard d'Estaing had stressed that if elected he would not call new legislative elections. Consequently, on this issue the President was prepared to conciliate, settle for the break-up of the ORTF, introduce a system of regulated competition within the framework of the state monopoly and rely on Chirac to rally the Gaullist deputies in support of the reform.

Though the monopoly was retained, supporters of the introduction of a commercial television channel were not displeased with the provisions of the Government's bill. Despite, or perhaps because of, the tenacity with which government spokesmen defended the pledge to preserve the monopoly, the bill was regarded by those in favour of a commercial channel, and also those against, as marking a first step towards the abolition of the monopoly. The break-up of the ORTF's unitary structure would facilitate the hiving off of one or more of the television channels to be run either by Sofirad or in the long term by private interests. The supporters of commercial television in the National Assembly, particularly the Independent Republicans intent on showing their loyalty to the new President, had little incentive, therefore, to vote against or attempt to amend the defence of the monopoly contained in the bill. Consequently, while two amendments were presented

64. L'Express, no. 1348, May 9-15 1977.
during the debate in the Assembly, one in favour of the creation of a commercial channel and the other proposing that the new transmission company should relay the programmes of the peripheral television stations throughout France, both were rejected without a public vote being taken. In large part due to Giscard d'Estaing's dependence on Gaullist support in Parliament, the state broadcasting monopoly had been granted a reprieve.

The Government's broadcasting bill.

Elected to the presidency on May 19 1974, Giscard d'Estaing pushed ahead with the reform of the state broadcasting services as quickly as possible with the result that the new statute was published at the beginning of August. In the space of just over two months, therefore, the new government had discussed the policy options available, drawn up its bill and pushed it through both chambers of Parliament in a special legislative session.

Three different reform projects were discussed in the Council of Ministers: the Long plan which proposed decentralisation within the unitary structure of the ORTF and the retention of a central coordinating body; the Baudouin project, which favoured the transfer of one ORTF channel to be run by Sofirad; and the reform as it was adopted by the Government, which proposed the abolition of the ORTF and the creation of independent state companies. Each of these three projects was defended by important personalities in the governmental discussions which preceded the drafting of the bill: Marceau Long, PDG of the ORTF was the principal spokesman for his plan. Denis Baudouin, PDG


66. See timetable of the drafting and passage of the bill, table 3.ii.
of Sofirad, defended his own proposal. Head of the Government's information service (La Délégation Générale à l'Information), Baudouin had worked for Giscard d'Estaing during the presidential election campaign. His project received support from his deputy in the Government's information service, Henri Pigeat, and inside the Government from the Minister of the Interior, Poniatowski. 67

The main spokesman for the project which was finally adopted by the Government and made public at the end of the meeting of the Council of Ministers on July 3 was Yves Cannac, deputy general secretary of the Elysée and therefore one of "the President's men". 68 Cannac's proposal was approved by Giscard d'Estaing and then accepted by Chirac and the other ministers. Rossi, the Government's official spokesman, who was to be responsible along with Long for the implementation of the 1974 statute, participated very little in the debates on the reform prior to the decision taken on July 3. 69 Moreover, once Cannac's proposal had been approved by Giscard d'Estaing, the discussions on which project to adopt immediately ceased since nobody wished to enter into an overt and fruitless conflict with the President at the very start of his term of office.

In the first few weeks after Giscard d'Estaing's election Long thought that his project might still be accepted by the incoming President, albeit with certain modifications to further its decentralising features and reduce the powers of the central body. 70 However, by the end of June the Long plan had lost credibility as a solution to the ORTF's crisis for administrative

67. Pigeat was later appointed deputy director general of Agence France Presse.


70. Minutes of the meeting of the ORTF comité central d'entreprise held on July 19 1974. See C.Floch, La réorganisation d'une entreprise publique et les relations du travail: le cas de la radiodiffusion et télévision française, unpublished DES mémoire, University of Paris I, March 1976, pp. 67-69.
and, more importantly, political reasons. Within the context of the organisational problems of the ORTF the plan still retained many of the inconveniences of the existing institution in the eyes of the new President: a centralised decision-making structure with an apparently forceful PDG at the top and a strong trade union organisation. The new President and his advisers feared that if the ORTF were not broken up the former centralising tendencies would re-emerge despite the decentralised structure outlined in the Long project.

Within the wider political context the ORTF was considered following the Conte episode as a potential political power base for its PDG. The Long plan was not a sufficiently radical break with the past and as such it did not live up to Giscard d'Estaing's electoral promise of change. As the first major reform of the new presidency the reorganisation of the state broadcasting services had to make an impact with the electorate. Since the ORTF was associated in the minds of the electorate with the Gaullist regime and with one of its more unattractive features at that, there was good reason to mark the start of the new regime with its abolition. This move, however, did not meet with the approval of the PDG of the Office:

"The ORTF had problems in 1973-74, but they could have been treated differently in a different atmosphere. But in 1974 after the presidential election there was felt a need for change. The ORTF served as the pretext for Giscard's policy of change. The Long plan could have become official ORTF policy, ... if it had not been for the pressures of time after the presidential election. It could at least have been implemented as a transitory phase on an experimental basis for a year or so to see if it would have worked." 71

The Baudouin project, on the other hand, ran up against the obstacles of Giscard d'Estaing's dependence on the Gaullist party in

Parliament and the opposition of the press to a television channel financed from commercial advertising. However attractive as an administrative reform in streamlining the ORTF and thus responding to many of the recent criticisms directed against the Office, most notably in the Chineaud report, politically the Baudouin project was a non-starter. Therefore, Cannac's proposal was approved by Giscard d'Estaing and ratified in the Council of Ministers. The Government's bill was drawn up by Rossi, Long, Cannac and Jacques Friedmann, a political adviser in Chirac's cabinet, and was published only a few days before the start of the debate in Parliament on July 23.

The debates in the National Assembly and Senate combined took less than a week from the first session in the Assembly to the final votes on the text of the commission mixte paritaire.  

Parliamentarians of all parties criticised the lack of time available for debate and the indecent haste with which the Government's proposals had been drawn up. Rossi, however, defended the decision to hold a special legislative session on the grounds that delay would have meant the postponement of the creation of the

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73. See among others the speeches of Georges-Fillioud (Socialist) and Jacques Chambaz (Communist); the inability of Rossi to give detailed answers to many of the questions asked him; the speech of Michel Miroudot, rapporteur of the Senate Cultural Affairs Committee; and the criticisms made by Joel Le Tac (Gaulist), rapporteur spécial of the National Assembly Finance Committee annual budgetary report on broadcasting. Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, July 24 1974, p. 3655 and July 25 1974, p. 3703; Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Sénat, July 27 1974 p. 914; and Journal Officiel Documents Assemblée Nationale, 1978-1979, no. 570 Rapport fait au nom de la commission des finances ... sur le projet de loi de finances pour 1979, annexe no. 12, Culture et communication: Radiodiffusion, rapporteur spécial: Joel Le Tac, annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 5 octobre 1978, p. 21. See table 3.11 for the timetable of the drafting of the reform bill and its passage through Parliament.
new companies until January 1976. According to the Government it was more desirable that the problem should be tackled and resolved quickly. In any case various reforms of the ORTF had been under discussion since 1968 and recommendations had been put forward in no less than five major reports. For the Government action not words was the order of the day.

The compressed timetable not only made Parliament's task of fully debating the proposed reform very difficult. It also meant that only the general outlines of the reorganisation were discussed in the various ministerial committees held prior to the submission of the bill to Parliament. As a result, many of the difficulties raised by the reform had not been foreseen by the Government and this became all too apparent during the parliamentary debates. The Government's bill provided only the framework of the reorganisation. The details were to be filled in later through government decrees and in the companies' cahiers des charges which themselves were drawn up by the Government. This led to the frequent complaint in Parliament that the Government was asking for a blank cheque which it could later fill in as it wished. Furthermore several bodies which might have expected to be consulted were conspicuously ignored for lack of time. These included the consultative bodies.

74. Diligent report (Senate) 1968; Paye report (Independent) 1970; Diligent report (Senate) 1972; Le Tac report (National Assembly) 1972; and Chisaud report (National Assembly) 1974. See the bibliography for full references.

75. The decrees were to cover such topics as the appointment of the chairman of the new companies, the functions and composition of the different boards of governors, the reallocation of ORTF staff and the division of ORTF programme stocks, buildings and equipment among the new companies. See chapters on the Liquidation of the ORTF, Appointments and Reallocation of ORTF staff.

76. See for example, the speech of Georges Fillioud (Socialist) in Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, July 24 1974, pp. 3654-3657.
parliamentary delegation on the ORTF, the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel, and the board of governors of the ORTF, all of which had been consulted about the Long plan.

"There was no consultation of the ORTF board of governors prior to the drafting of the Government's bill. (After Giscard d'Estaing's election victory) the problem had become a governmental rather than an administrative matter and so the board of governors was by-passed and the question decided at governmental level." 79

Yet despite the fact that the Government's bill was hurried through Parliament with only one reading in each chamber, various amendments were incorporated into the Government's text to clarify, expand or modify the provisions of the bill. Recognising the deficiencies of its own text, the Government was sometimes favourable to these amendments. For example, a series of amendments was introduced in both the National Assembly and the Senate to expand the article on the cahiers des charges of the new companies by the imposition of more specific programming obligations. 80

Moreover, Rossi even introduced amendments to the Government's bill on behalf of the Government itself. 81 Even some amendments which were opposed by the Government were passed in Parliament and were included in the 1974 broadcasting statute. These included in particular the establishment

77. For functions and composition of the parliamentary delegation on broadcasting see chapter on Parliamentary control.

78. For functions and composition of the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel see chapter on the Liquidation of the ORTF


81. For example, amendment no. 154 on the granting of "financial autonomy" to the transmission company (article 5 of the 1974 broadcasting statute); amendment no. 151 on the method of choosing the parliamentary representatives on the boards of governors of the programme companies (article 11 of the 1974 broadcasting statute); and amendment no. 156 on the procedure of staff reallocation (article 31 of the 1974 broadcasting statute).

82. For example the management of the ORTF orchestras was to become the responsibility of Radio France (article 7 of the 1974 broadcasting statute). For more details of these parliamentary amendments see chapter on Parliamentary control.
of the Institut National de l'Audiovisuel\(^{83}\); the creation of consultative regional broadcasting committees\(^{84}\); the harmonisation of programme schedules among the three television companies\(^{85}\); and the strengthening of parliamentary control.\(^{86}\) Nonetheless, while some of these modifications to the Government's bill were not without importance, the text which was finally adopted in both chambers of Parliament and which then became the statute of August 7, 1974 did not differ in its major provisions from the Government's original bill.\(^{87}\)

**Conclusion**

The 1974 reorganisation of the state broadcasting services was justified by government spokesmen principally on administrative grounds. Moreover, academic commentators in France have tended to stress the internal organizational origins of the reform. However, we have argued in this chapter that while the recent administrative and financial history of the ORTF gave the new government a perfect opportunity to introduce a reform of state broadcasting, the reorganisation is best understood within a political rather than purely administrative context. In fact, we have contended that the causes of the reform cannot be fully appreciated without taking into account the external political environment and in particular changes in the regime following the election of the first non-Gaullist President of the Fifth Republic.

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83. Article 3 of the 1974 broadcasting statute.
84. Article 10 of the 1974 broadcasting statute.
85. Article 9 of the 1974 broadcasting statute.
86. Articles 4 and 19 of the 1974 broadcasting statute. See chapter on Parliamentary control.
87. The text was adopted in the Senate on Sunday July 28, 1974 by 178 votes to 88 and in the National Assembly on the same day by 289 votes to 186. See *Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Sénat*, July 29, 1974, p. 1059 and *Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale*, July 29, 1974, pp. 3943-3944 for the full lists of those voting for and against the final bill.
The type of reform introduced, a competitive system within the framework of the state monopoly, can be viewed as a compromise measure indicative of the new power relationship between the newly elected President and his predominantly Gaullist parliamentary support. While Giscard d'Estaing would have preferred a parliamentary majority less dependent on the Gaullists, a large section of the Gaullist party had never forgiven him for his ambivalent support of de Gaulle in the mid-sixties and particularly for his support of a "no" vote in the 1969 referendum which resulted in de Gaulle's resignation from the presidency. Thus, both sides regarded each other with a certain degree of hostility, while at the same time both recognised that they were for the time being at least in a state of mutual dependence. The state broadcasting monopoly was retained partly to placate the Gaullists, while the creation of organisationally independent companies would facilitate the future hiving off of one or more companies to commercial or semi-commercial interests.

Drafted very quickly, the Government's bill was pushed through Parliament in a special legislative session. After the bill had become law the immediate task of the Government was to proceed with the liquidation of the ORTF so that the new broadcasting companies could begin their transmissions as planned in January 1975. The vagueness of the new statute on many points of substance and the truncated timetable by which the Government wished to abide meant that the period from the beginning of September 1974 to January 1975 was one of frenetic activity, punctuated by a whole series of government decrees to fill out the details of the reorganisation. Several working parties and ad hoc committees were set up to supervise various aspects of the reform. The management of the new companies drew up their plans for their first programmes and selected their key personnel, frequently with government assistance. The
broadcasting trade unions sought first to oppose the reform itself and then to mitigate its most undesirable consequences. The ORTF staff had to be reallocated to the new companies.

Details of the break-up of the ORTF and the establishment of the new companies are analysed in the following three chapters which deal respectively with the major provisions of the 1974 statute and the liquidation of the Office, the appointment of the management and boards of governors of the new companies and the reallocation of ORTF staff among the successors of the moribund ORTF.
CHAPTER 4

Liquidation of the ORTF

While the publication of the statute of August 7, 1974 marked the end of the legislative process to abolish the ORTF, it was only the beginning of the administrative stage of the reorganisation. In the space of just over four months, the Government hoped, the new broadcasting companies would come into existence with the minimum of fuss. Yet obviously the transition from the ORTF to the new structure involved a huge amount of administration.

This chapter examines certain aspects of this period of transition. In the first part of the chapter we concentrate on the main provisions of the 1974 statute, the objectives of the reform and reactions to it from interested parties, and on various immediate problems caused by the break-up of the ORTF. In part two we look at the role of the Government in this liquidating process. Separate sections are devoted to the part played by the Ministry of Information, the drafting of the companies' cahiers des charges and the broadcasting companies' first budget in 1975. In addition, there is included a section on the organisation and functions of the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel.

Two main themes run throughout this chapter. The first concerns the adverse consequences caused by the break-up of the ORTF and the many problems which had not been foreseen by the Government when it decided to undertake the reform. The second theme shows the important supervisory role played by the responsible minister and his staff in this transitional period. While we contend in this thesis that power has shifted from the Ministry of Information to the Elysee during the course of the Fifth Republic, nonetheless during the changeover period Rossi and his entourage carried out the important task of implementing the wide-ranging provisions of the 1974 statute.
The statute of August 7 1974

The statute of August 7 1974 provided for the abolition of the ORTF which had been in existence almost exactly ten years. It was to be replaced by a new broadcasting structure consisting of seven companies organisationally independent of each other: a transmission company, Télédiffusion de France (TDF), a production company, Société Française de Production (SFP), an archive and research institute, Institut National de l'Audiovisuel (INA), a national radio company, Radio France, and three television companies, Télévision Française 1 (TF1), Antenne 2 (A2) and France Régions 3 (FR3). FR3 was to be responsible for both regional radio and television. The state monopoly of transmission and programming was maintained in accordance with the provisions of the 1972 ORTF statute. Article 1 of the new legislation reaffirmed the public service goals of the state broadcasting services as set out in the first article of the 1972 statute: information, culture, education, entertainment and the values of civilisation. To these was added in 1974 the function of communication.

Along with the abolition of the ORTF went the disappearance of the unitary structure of the state broadcasting services. The 1974 statute can therefore be viewed both as a logical extension of the decentralisation set out in the 1972 ORTF statute but not put into effect in the
intervening period and as a radical break with the monolithic structure within which the state broadcasting services had functioned since the second world war. The major innovation of the 1974 reform was not so much the abolition of the ORTF as the deliberate absence in the new organisation of any central body to coordinate the operations of the separate companies.

While President Giscard d'Estaing asserted that the reform was inspired by the recommendations of the Paye report of 1970, this statement ignored the fact that the Paye report had come down against the fragmentation of the state broadcasting services and had explicitly recommended the maintenance of a central organ at the top of the decentralised structure to act as a coordinating body in matters of finance and staff policy. The 1974 reform, therefore, went much further along the path of decentralisation than had been envisaged by either the Paye report (1970), the Le Tac report (1972), the ORTF statute (1972), the Long plan (1974) or the Chinaud report (1974). The bureaucratic structure of the ORTF was dismantled in a reorganisation which pushed decentralisation to its logical conclusion, the absence of a centre.

Though organisationally independent of each other, the companies obviously have to rely on each other for the provision of certain services. For example, the two major national television companies, TF1 and A2, depend on the transmission company, TDF, for the transmission of their programmes; on the archive and research institute, INA, for staff training facilities; and on the production company SFP, for the production of major programmes such as drama series. In the absence of a central body, relations between companies were to be

13. The television companies TF1 and A2 are forbidden by their *cahiers des charges* to indulge in "heavy" production, i.e. the production of high budget programmes such as dramas and series. Article 131 of TF1's *cahier des charges* and article 130 of A2's.
regulated either by the Government through the device of the *cahiers des charges* or conducted on a bilateral commercial basis. ¹⁴ For example, since TDF is the custodian of the State's transmission monopoly, the programme companies (TF1, A2, FR3 and Radio France) have to pay TDF for the use of its transmission networks. This amount is fixed by the Government and included in the annual modifications to the companies' *cahiers des charges*. On the other hand, since the SFP does not possess a monopoly over television production, which was abandoned by the ORTF in 1964, relations between the television companies and the production company were in theory to be governed only by the laws of the market. As a short term measure to allow the SFP to find its commercial feet, however, the television companies were compelled by the Government to purchase on an annual sliding scale a proportion of the SFP's production. In fact, because of the SFP's precarious financial position, relations between the production company and the television companies have never been allowed to develop on a purely commercial basis, much to the dislike of the two major national television channels, TF1 and A2. ¹⁵

Relations among the four separate programme companies were to be governed by the liberal ethos of competition, particularly in the case of TF1 and A2. The system of complementary programme scheduling which had characterised the output of the ORTF's television channels up until 1969 and between 1972 and 1974 was explicitly rejected by government spokesmen during the debates on the reform in Parliament. ¹⁶ In the new structure TF1 and A2 were to compete for viewers as two independent companies, with only their *cahiers des charges* imposing any con-

¹⁴. See section on the *cahiers des charges* of the broadcasting companies.
¹⁵. See chapter on Finance.
straints on this competition. An amendment proposed by André Diligent and adopted by the Senate in favour of complementary programme schedules emerged much weakened in the text of the \textit{commission mixte paritaire}.\footnote{See chapter on Parliamentary control.} Consequently, in the 1974 statute there is provision only for periodic meetings of the chairmen of the television companies to ensure the harmonisation of programme schedules, though even this was more than the Government wanted.\footnote{1974 broadcasting statute, article 9.} In any case this rather minimal concession to the defenders of complementarity has had little impact since the passing of the act, as many of the critics of the Giscardian broadcasting reform have not been slow to point out.\footnote{See chapter on Criticisms of the reform.}

\section*{Objectives of the 1974 reorganisation and reactions to the reform}

The Government's objectives in breaking up the ORTF and creating seven separate broadcasting companies can be quite simply summarised. First, and most immediately, the Government hoped that the new companies would not be subject to the same sort of financial and administrative problems which had dogged the recent history of the ORTF. The creation of smaller organisational units, it was argued, would help personalise responsibility in decision-making and facilitate financial accountability. Secondly, the system of competition instituted among the three television companies would, according to the Government, result in a better-quality service for the viewer. The Giscardian belief in the benefits of the free market were thus to be applied to the state programme companies with the only constraint the provisions contained in the companies' \textit{cahiers des charges}. Finally, once the system was in operation the managements of the different companies would be entirely responsible for the running of their affairs. The 1974 reform was, in the eyes of ministerial spokesmen, designed to put an end to the symbiotic relationship of government and broadcasting which had been a permanent
feature of the Fifth Republic. Competition between autonomous responsible
companies within a state monopoly public service sums up the Government's
view of the reform. 20

Not surprisingly the Government's view of the reorganisation of
state broadcasting was not shared by the left-wing opposition parties.
Socialist and Communist party spokesmen in Parliament criticised the
reform as the first step in the establishment of a commercial broadcast-
ing system, whereas they wished to defend the public service ethos of
broadcasting through the maintenance of the state monopoly. 21 In their
opinion the financial crisis at the ORTF had been stage managed by the
Government to prepare the way for the break-up of the Office. In direct
contrast to the Government the opposition parties believed that the
system of competition among the three television companies would lead to
a poorer quality service for the viewers as the channels fought to
capture the same mass audience by reverting to the lowest common denom-
inator in taste. Finally, they argued, of itself the reform would not
put an end to the long-standing practice of ministerial interference
in the sensitive area of news broadcasting. On the contrary, the
dismantling of the Office into separate companies would facilitate
control on the lines of the classic political maxim of "divide and rule."

These criticisms were echoed by the main broadcasting trade unions

20. For a statement of the Government's objectives see the speech by
Jacques Chirac introducing the bill in the National Assembly.
Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, July
24 1974, pp. 3648-3649. Also J. Morand and G. Valter, "Efficacité
de gestion et liberté d'expression à la radiodiffusion-télévision
française", Revue du Droit Public et de la Science Politique,

21. See speeches by J. Chevènement (Socialist) in Journal Officiel,
Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, July 25 1974 pp. 3708-3713;
G. Lamoussé (Socialist) in Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires
Sénat, July 27 1974, pp. 937-938; J. Chambaz (Communist) in Journal
Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, July 25 1974,
pp. 3702-3706; and C. Lagatu (Communist) in Journal Officiel,
who also viewed the reform as an attack directed against them. For example, the Syndicat Unifié de Radio et de Télévision (CFDT) regarded the reorganisation not only as reinforcing the Government's control over news output and introducing private interests into the state broadcasting services, but also as a "settling of accounts with the broadcasting staff." The Syndicat National de Radio et de Télévision (CGT) also voiced the opinion that the reform was "an unprecedented aggression against the staff of a national enterprise" and that "never in the previous thirty years had the authorities gone so far in their attempts to dominate news and cultural output" by the broadcasting media. A member of the National Committee of the main journalists' union at the ORTF, the Syndicat National des Journalistes (autonomous), saw the reform as having three main objectives: to accentuate the hold of the Government at all levels of broadcasting; to introduce private capital into broadcasting; and to smash the Office staff and the trade union organisations.

Fears of a future commercialisation of state broadcasting were not confined to the left-wing parties or the broadcasting trade unions. They were also voiced by diverse personalities of the majorité including Joel Le Tac, rapporteur spécial of the National Assembly finance committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting, Michel-Debré, Michel Jobert and Albin Chalandon. In addition, a committee of

22. For more information on the views of the broadcasting unions on the 1974 reform see chapters on the Reallocation of ORTF staff and on the Broadcasting unions.


eminent jurists including Robert Badinter and Maurice Duverger regarded the reorganisation as preparing the way for the commercialisation of broadcasting with only the transmission company remaining in the hands of the State. 30

Despite vigorous denials by Rossi and others, various aspects of the reform gave credibility to the view that the new organisation represented a convenient jumping-off point for the future commercialisation of part of the state broadcasting services: the absence of any central federating body, the system of competition among the television companies, the contractual relationships among the various companies and the different administrative statuses of the seven organisationally independent entities. 31 The public, however, seemed uninterested in this exchange of views. Thus in an opinion poll taken between July 15 and 22, at the height of the debate on the proposed reorganisation, fewer than half those asked could provide the major guidelines of the reform. 32

**Liquidation of the Office**

To help manage the changeover from the ORTF to the new broadcasting structure a liquidating department (service de liquidation) was set up on January 1 1975. The functions of the liquidating department included the drafting of the ORTF's balance sheet for 1974, the collection and payment of the Office's debts, the management of any outstanding ORTF property and equipment not yet transferred to the new companies and the payment of redundancy money to staff not taken on by the new companies.

31. See appendix 4.i.
32. Results of the poll were published in *Le Quotidien de Paris, July 25 1974.*
companies. Jean-Francois Vincent, assistant director of the radio services at the ORTF, was appointed head of the liquidation department with a small staff made up of civil servants, former ORTF staff and some employees of the new companies temporarily seconded to the liquidation department. The department was to cease its operations on June 30 1976 at the latest, eighteen months after the changeover from the ORTF to the new structure. Those tasks which had still not been completed by that date were to become the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance.

It would seem that the allocation of ORTF programme stock and equipment was settled with little dissension. Programmes which had already been broadcast by the ORTF became the property of INA which had been given the responsibility of preserving the programme archives of the ORTF and of the new programme companies. Programmes which had been produced but had not yet been broadcast were divided up among the new companies. Radio France received the radio programmes originally destined for the ORTF's radio services as well as those produced for the Office's external services. FR3 was allocated the radio and television programmes due to be broadcast on the ORTF's regional network and in the DOM-TOM. TF1 and A2 shared between them the programmes due to be shown on the ORTF's channels one and two.

33. 1974 broadcasting statute, articles 33 and 34. See also decree no. 74-948 of November 14 1974 and decree no. 74-1109 of December 26 1974.


35. The official procedure for the allocation of ORTF property and programmes among the new companies was laid down in Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, decree no. 74-1110 of December 26 1974 and decree no. 74-947 of November 14 1974.

The allocation of ORTF buildings among the new companies posed greater problems. To ensure that the new companies would be as organisationally independent of each other as possible the Government wanted each company to have separate administrative headquarters. This led to a scramble for ORTF property and a search for new accommodation as well, with each company seeking to derive maximum benefit from the reorganisation.

The bizarre consequences of this process are best exemplified by the fate of the best known ORTF building, the Office's broadcasting headquarters on the banks of the Seine: la maison de l'ORTF. Completed in 1963 this huge building was intended to bring together under one roof the previously scattered services of the state broadcasting organisation, though in fact this objective was never achieved with the result that even the unified ORTF had over a dozen properties scattered throughout the Paris region alone. Following the break-up of the ORTF the building was allocated to Radio France as its new headquarters. However, though the building had proved too small for the ORTF, it was conversely far too large for the radio company alone. As a result, Radio France has been compelled since 1975 to rent out office space which it does not use itself.

In early 1975 this problem was temporarily overcome because the television companies continued to use the former ORTF headquarters for their administrative staff. However, both TF1 and A2 moved to new headquarters by the beginning of 1976, the former to the base of the Montparnasse tower block and the latter to a refurbished building near the Cognacq-Jay television studios. This left at the maison de la Radio, as it was now called, the radio company, the audience research services common to the new companies, and certain departments of the regional
programme company FR3. The remaining office space, almost half the total, was rented out by Radio France to the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Leisure. After the 1978 legislative elections certain services of the Ministry of Industry also took up residence in Radio France's headquarters.

Ownership of the television studios in the rue Cognacq-Jay was divided up among TF1 (40%), A2 (40%) and TDF (20%), with both of the major television companies having their news departments and studios in this one building. Since 1975 A2, which found its new accommodation in the rue de Montessuy rather cramped, has been planning to move to a new larger site at Neuilly-sur-Seine in the Paris suburbs. The original intention was to move into the new headquarters by September 1979, but this date has had to be postponed indefinitely due to lack of money. Thus A2, which in this respect came off relatively badly from the break-up of the Office, will for the foreseeable future have to remain in its present unsatisfactory accommodation.

As a direct result of the 1974 broadcasting reform, therefore, the most prestigious ORTF building is now partially occupied by government ministries which have no connection with the policy field of broadcasting. Moreover, while the maison de la Radio is too large for Radio France, other companies, most notably A2, have had to look for alternative accommodation with unsatisfactory results. The Government's desire that the new companies should each have a separate headquarters was certainly in keeping with the logic of the 1974 reform. It fitted in with the objective of containing disputes wherever possible within

39. FR3 also considered for a time moving its headquarters to the new complex at les Halles, but the project was abandoned as being too costly.
the bounds of one company rather than allowing them to affect the totality of the state broadcasting services. However, the consequences of this policy have undoubtedly been undesirable for some of the companies involved in both the short and long terms. In the short term the reorganisation involved the removal of staff, office equipment, files and other material from one building to another in a different part of Paris.\textsuperscript{40} In the long term the reform left some companies with unsatisfactory accommodation and without the means to obtain better.

The allocation of ORTF buildings was not, however, the only unsatisfactory aspect of the reorganisation of the state broadcasting services which came to light at the end of 1974. While all sections of the ORTF were naturally affected by the reform, they were not all equally affected. Two sections which were particularly badly hit were the external services of the ORTF and the Office's orchestras.

The ORTF's external services, \textit{la Direction des Affaires Extérieures et de la Coopération (DAEC)} were partly financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which also had overall control of their programme policy. In 1973 the external services broadcast in 18 different languages, had a budget of 132 million francs and employed a staff of 900 which included over 200 journalists.\textsuperscript{41} Even before the break-up of the ORTF the Government had decided to cut back on the range of foreign broadcasts produced by the external services. Thus in January 1974, in the final months of Pompidou's presidency, a \textit{comité interministériel} agreed to abolish the short wave foreign language programmes broadcast to Eastern Europe and to concentrate on

\textsuperscript{40} For a concise description of the chaos which the change of buildings involved, see \textit{L'Unité}, no. 140, January 10-16 1975.

\textsuperscript{41} ORTF 73, Paris, Presses Pocket, 1973, p. 313.
broadcasts to Africa and the Middle East. However, the break-up of the ORTF seriously exacerbated the threatened position of the external services.

After the reorganisation Radio France was given responsibility for the production of programmes broadcast to foreign countries and, in keeping with the division of labour outlined in the statute, TDF assumed control of their transmission. Since the budget of Radio France did not match up to the company's estimated needs and as the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation were unwilling and/or unable to reimburse the full cost of the external broadcasts, there was a savage cutback in the service provided. In January 1975 of the 18 language sections of the external services were disbanded with only the French, German, English and Spanish sections remaining. This compared unfavourably with the 40 language sections of the BBC or the 30 language sections of the German broadcasting services. In the league-table of short wave broadcasts, France fell to 28th position in the world, behind Albania and even Monaco. The number of staff employed in the external services was severely reduced and many journalists employed in this sector, including exiles from Eastern European countries, were not reallocated to one of the new companies at the end of 1974. In Radio France Internationale, the successor to the ORTF's external services, employed only 115 staff including 76 journalists.

It was not until 1977 that the range of foreign broadcasts was extended after the submission of a critical report to the


43. Le Monde, March 6-7 1977.

Government by Jean d'Arcy, an influential member of the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel. Broadcasts to Portugal and to Eastern Europe were resumed in early 1977, largely due to a Senate budgetary amendment which allocated 5 million francs of the licence revenue for this purpose.\textsuperscript{45} By the beginning of 1979 Radio-France-Internationale was broadcasting 17\frac{1}{2} hours daily to the African continent, 5 hours to the American continent and 15 hours daily to central and Eastern Europe.\textsuperscript{46} Nonetheless, though improvements have been made since the disastrous first months following the break-up of the ORTF, the external services output of Radio-France-Internationale still does not match up to that of its predecessor at the ORTF. The external services, forgotten in the Government's original bill in 1974, have only partially recovered from the effects of the reform.

Another major victim of the break-up, in the short term at least, were the ORTF orchestras. The Office managed three national orchestras, four regional orchestras, other assorted musical groups and four choirs.\textsuperscript{47} The fate of these musical formations was totally ignored in the Government's original bill presented to the National Assembly at the end of July. It was only in the Senate that an amendment was adopted which gave responsibility for the maintenance and development of the national and regional orchestras to the national radio company, Radio France. Accepted by the commission mixte paritaire despite governmental opposition, this amendment was included in article 7 of the 1974 statute.\textsuperscript{48}


\textsuperscript{46} *Radio France handbook, second edition 1978, pp. 97-100.*

\textsuperscript{47} *ORTF 72, Paris, Presses Pocket, pp. 206-207.*

\textsuperscript{48} See chapter on Parliamentary control.
Welcome as it was, this amendment was of itself scarcely equal to the problems facing the ORTF orchestras at the end of 1974. The orchestras had been particularly badly affected by the statutory clause which made retirement compulsory at the age of 60 and had lost approximately 20% of their musicians. Moreover, Radio France's budget was insufficient to cover the cost of maintaining the orchestras, particularly as they were in any case in no fit condition to give public concerts. To save Radio France money the regional orchestras were attached directly to the Ministry of Culture after 1976, but only after their upkeep had cost the radio company 13 million francs in 1975. As with the external services it was not until two to three years after the reorganisation that the orchestras attached to Radio France began to attain a level of performance comparable with that given by the ORTF orchestras prior to the reform.

The Ministry of Information

One of the major objectives of the 1974 reorganisation of the state broadcasting services was to sever the umbilical cord which had linked the ORTF to the Government. The ORTF had up until 1969 been squeezed in a vice between two government ministries. On the one hand, the Ministry of Finance had exercised a high degree of control not only over the total size of the Office's budget but also over the way in which it was spent, interfering in the minor details of programme expenditure and staffing policy. Simultaneously the Ministry of Information concentrated among other things on the ORTF's news output, with the Office's news programmes being censored and sometimes even composed by the minister himself with the assistance of his cabinet and top ORTF management. A certain relaxation was

49. See chapter on the Reallocation of ORTF staff.
noticeable during the premiership of Chaban-Delmas (June 1969-July 1972) when the Ministry of Information was abolished and broadcasting became the personal responsibility of the Prime Minister. News output became the responsibility of the broadcasting journalists within the ORTF and the Government's financial controls were slightly relaxed. However, when in 1972 Chaban-Delmas was forced to resign from the premiership, a new ORTF statute was passed in Parliament, the Ministry of Information was reconstituted and the reforms made under Chaban-Delmas were discontinued.  

As we have seen, during the 1974 presidential election campaign Giscard d'Estaing explicitly rejected the idea of a Ministry of Information. Consequently, by the terms of the 1974 broadcasting statute the Government's supervisory role in the new broadcasting structure is relatively limited. The Prime Minister or a minister appointed by him for this purpose ensures that the state broadcasting-monopoly is protected and that the companies observe their public service obligations in general and the regulations contained in their cahiers des charges in particular. A government minister was to be responsible for the drafting of the companies' cahiers des charges and the Government was to appoint the chairmen of the new companies and fix the cost of the broadcasting licence. While the Government obviously had an active role to play in the transition period from the ORTF to the new structure, once the new companies were operational the Government was supposed largely

51. See chapter on Politics and broadcasting in France before the 1974 reform.
52. See chapter on the Origins of the 1974 reform.
53. 1974 broadcasting statute, article 14.
54. Ibid, article 15.
55. Ibid, articles 5 and 11. The Government's powers as laid down in the 1974 statute resemble very closely those set out in article 5 of the 1972 ORTF statute.
to retire from the scene and allow the system to function on its own within the constraints imposed by the cahiers des charges and the companies' financial resources.

During the changeover period at the end of 1974 the Government played a vital role in ensuring the implementation of the reform. The minister directly responsible for this task was Rossi, who was assisted by Cannac at the Elysée, Friedmann at Matignon, and his own personal cabinet. In accordance with the new President's electoral pledge Rossi did not have the title of Minister of Information. Instead his official nomenclature was that of government spokesman. Whatever his official title, however, Rossi was the government minister given the task of executing the 1974 reform.

Rossi had at his disposal a small group of persons, either members of his cabinet or temporarily assigned to his ministerial department, to assist him in this task. Of these the most important was undoubtedly the director of Rossi's cabinet, Antione de Clermont-Tonnerre, who was responsible for coordinating the implementation of the reform. Clermont-Tonnerre was to maintain his relationship with the state broadcasting services throughout Giscard d'Estaing's presidency, stepping from a supervisory role in ministerial cabinets (1974-1978) to the top post in the ailing production company (1979).56

56. A graduate of ENA, Clermont-Tonnerre had been a member of different ministerial cabinets before becoming director of Rossi's in 1974. In 1976, when the broadcasting tutelage (tutelle) became the responsibility of the Prime Minister in the first Raymond Barre government, Clermont-Tonnerre was appointed to Barre's cabinet and placed in charge of broadcasting matters. In April 1978 when the tutelage passed to the newly created Ministry of Culture and Communication, Clermont-Tonnerre remained in Barre's cabinet as adviser on questions of culture and communication. Prior to his appointment as head of the production company with the task of establishing it on a sound financial footing, Clermont-Tonnerre was also a member of Sofirad's board of governors.
Under Clermont-Tonnerre a small group of people were responsible for supervising different aspects of the reform. For example, Bertrand Cousin was responsible for the judicial aspects of the break-up of the ORTF and for drafting the new companies' cahiers des charges, before he moved to occupy a top post at FR3.57 Jean-Loup Arnaud dealt with the financial aspects of the reform, particularly the drawing up of the companies' first budget. In 1978 he too was given a post at FR3.58 Paul L'Ollivier, an administrator at the ORTF, was in charge of questions relating to the reallocation of the ORTF staff, before being given a post at Radio France.59 As these few cases show, the practice whereby persons move back and forth between posts in the state administration and in the state broadcasting services has not been significantly affected by the 1974 reform.

During the implementation of the 1974 reform Rossi was also assisted by staff of the Service Juridique et Technique de l'Information. Formally attached to the office of the Prime Minister, the SJTI is concerned with matters relating to the press and the broadcasting media. It prepares legislation and ministerial decrees in this field and supervises their application. With specific regard to broadcasting the SJTI has the task of preparing the groundwork for the exercise of those functions given the Prime Minister in the 1974 statute, particularly article 14. It also prepares the way for ministerial decisions regarding the protection of the state monopoly.

57. Bertrand Cousin, a graduate of ENA and conseiller d'Etat, held the position of conseiller technique in Rossi's cabinet. He then became director of Contamine's cabinet at FR3 and then general secretary of the company. In December 1979 he returned to the state administration but retained his connection with broadcasting, being appointed head of the Service Juridique et Technique de l'information.

58. Interview with Jean-Loup Arnaud, July 3 1979.

The SJTI has the further task of ensuring that the broadcasting companies abide by the regulations contained in their cahiers des charges.  

In short, the SJTI is the administrative body which performs the daily supervisory tasks allotted to the Prime Minister (or a minister appointed by him for this purpose) by the 1974 broadcasting statute.

It would be a mistake to imagine that the minister responsible for the supervision of the state broadcasting services has at his command a vast body of civil servants to assist him in his task. The SJTI has a staff of about 50, of whom only half deal with broadcasting questions and the other half with matters relating to the press. Therefore, not only is there now no Minister of Information in France, but there is no Ministry of Information either. Indeed the ministry only ever did exist as a skeleton administrative service. The SJTI's supervisory role is, therefore, very limited.

However, it is not non-existent. It was the SJTI which was the coordinating body on the company management side in the negotiations for the drawing up of collective staff agreements (conventions collectives) in late 1975. It was also the SJTI which drew up the bill introduced by two deputies of the governing coalition in 1979 to extend the minimum service provisions in the event of strike activity in the broadcasting companies.

In the absence of a Minister of Information the Government's

60. Journal Officiel, Lois et Décrets, Decree no. 75-127 of March 7 1975.


62. See chapter on the Broadcasting unions.

63. Ibid. Both the above examples of the activity of the SJTI were provided by M. Mougey, a member of the SJTI's staff, in an interview with the author, September 17 1979.
formal supervisory role in the broadcasting field has since 1974 been the successive responsibility of different government ministers. From May 1974 to August 1976 the task was carried out by Rossi, government spokesman and as such also responsible for explaining government policy to the press. Following the government reshuffle which accompanied the appointment of Barre to the premiership in August 1976, responsibility for broadcasting was given to two ministries, the office of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Culture. The role of the latter ministry, however, was particularly small, since it had only a general watchdog function with regard to programme quality and the companies' observance of their cahiers des charges. 64

After the surprisingly comfortable victory of the governing right-wing coalition in the 1978 legislative elections, responsibility for the supervision of broadcasting was given to a newly constituted Ministry of Culture and Communication in the hands of a former Minister of Information during the Pompidou presidency, Jean-Philippe Lecat. The new minister, who had been Giscard d'Estaing's press secretary at the Elysee from August 1976 to April 1978, emphasized that the creation of a new ministry did not mean the re-establishment of a Ministry of Information under another name. 65 Instead he confirmed that his role would be that laid down in article 14 of the 1974 statute. To assist him in this role he would have at his disposal the services

of the SJTI. He would also chair the meetings of the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel.

The fact that responsibility for supervising broadcasting policy has been given to different ministries since 1974 does not signify any change in the relationship between the Government and the state broadcasting services in the period since the reform. Apart from the Minister's personal cabinet there is nobody at the Ministry of Culture and Communication who is concerned with broadcasting problems, with the result that the new minister, like his predecessors, continues to rely on the services of the SJTI.

However, there has been an important change in the relationship between the Government and the state broadcasting services during the course of the Fifth Republic. From 1964 to 1969 it was the Minister of Information who both formally and in fact supervised and controlled the Government's policy on broadcasting. It was Peyrefitte who drew up the 1964 statute, placed members of his cabinet in key posts at the ORTF and exercised a close daily control of the ORTF's news output. His successors as Minister of Information during de Gaulle's presidency carried on this strong interventionist role.

In 1969 responsibility for broadcasting moved from the Minister of Information to the Prime Minister, Chaban-Delmas, who was personally responsible for the formulation and execution of governmental policy on broadcasting up until his resignation in 1972. While the Ministry of Information was re-established during the last two years of Pompidou's presidency, the source of effective control of broadcasting was moving away from this ministry towards the office of the President. Thus it was Pompidou who was personally responsible for the appointment of Conte as PDG of the ORTF in 1972.
The 1974 reform confirmed this trend towards presidential control of the broadcasting sector. While by the terms of the 1974 statute it is the Prime Minister or a minister appointed by him (since 1978 the Minister of Culture and Communication) who is responsible for the supervision of governmental policy on broadcasting, in fact the effective source of control is now the Presidency of the Republic. The 1974 reform was drawn up by the President in company with members of his immediate entourage and other specialist advisers. Moreover, it is increasingly the President who is responsible for the key appointments to the state broadcasting services and related media. Formal supervision may still be the responsibility of the relevant minister, but effective control in matters such as top appointments now emanates from the Élysée.

Le Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel

Though the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel was not established by the 1974 statute, a short section is devoted to it in this chapter because, along with the SJTI, the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel constitutes a source of policy advice to the minister with responsibility for broadcasting. Formally set up by the 1972 ORTF statute, the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel was established in March 1973 with the principal task of acting as an advisory body to the Government in the twin fields of broadcasting and telecommunications.

67. See chapter on Appointments.
68. The Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel was set up by article 16 of the 1972 ORTF statute and its organisation and functions were laid down in decree no. 73-325 of March 21, 1973. Its first meeting was held on July 5, 1973. Its existence was maintained by article 34 of the 1974 broadcasting statute.
The membership of the HCA is composed of six parliamentarians (four deputies and two senators chosen by their respective assemblies) and thirty four "highly qualified persons" chosen for their cultural, technical, judicial, professional or trade union backgrounds and all appointed by the Government. Since November 1976 the chairmen of the broadcasting companies, with the exception of the production company, also sit on the Council. The general secretary of the HCA since October 1976 has been Gérard Montassier, Giscard's son-in-law and unsuccessful UDF candidate in the 1979 cantonal elections in the Charentes. The HCA has a very small permanent staff consisting of the general secretary, an assistant and a secretary. It has extremely limited financial resources.

Meeting in full session at least twice a year under the chairmanship of the government minister with responsibility for broadcasting, the HCA acts as a think tank for the Government in the broadcasting field. The main bulk of the Council's work, however, is not done in these infrequent plenary sessions but by small working parties which, acting usually at the Government's request, concentrate on particular aspects of broadcasting policy.

For example, the Council has devoted much of its attention to the thorny problem of the future development of the state broadcasting monopoly. In fact the creation of the HCA was made at the time of the advent of cable television in France when the need was felt by the Government to have a separate body to monitor the cable television experiments. The Council has prepared various reports


70. See chapter on Appointments.

71. The HCA may decide to discuss a topic on its own initiative, but in fact it rarely does so.

72. For more information on cable television and other challenges to the state broadcasting monopoly see chapter on the State Monopoly.
for the Government on the question of the monopoly, dealing with such topics as local radio and, most recently, the development of direct satellite broadcasting. It also played a consultative role in the drafting of the supplementary legislation in 1978 to reinforce the state broadcasting monopoly. 73

Other topics on which the Council has set up working parties have included the drafting of the broadcasting companies' cahiers des charges, the right of reply to persons who have been unjustifiably maligned during a radio or television programme, the role of educational broadcasting, an ethical code for broadcasting (la déontologie audiovisuelle), clandestine advertising, the licence-fee system and copyright legislation.74 Usually the Council's decisions on these matters are not made public, though the report on an ethical code for broadcasters was published.75 The Council's other major public contribution is its annual report on the broadcasting companies' respect of the provisions contained in their cahiers des charges.

The Council exercises no direct control over the operations of the state broadcasting companies. It is appointed largely by the Government, gives policy advice to the Government and generally works within the terms of reference set by the responsible government minister. This is not to say that the HCA is merely the political tool of the minister. The Council's reports are frequently highly critical of government policy.76 Nor is it to call into question the

73. Ibid.

74. Interview with Mme. Fourneret, assistant to the general secretary of the HCA, July 20 1979.


76. For example, the Council's annual reports on the broadcasting companies' respect of the provisions contained in their cahiers des charges have been critical of various crucial aspects of the 1974 reform. See chapter on Criticisms of the reform.
high professional quality of its members. Nonetheless, the HCA is not, as Ruth Thomas would have us believe, "an independent body." As one interviewee remarked: "The Council is not there to make difficulties for the Government." Nor as far as one can judge, has it been a particularly influential body with regard to the major aspects of the Government's broadcasting policy.

The cahiers des charges of the broadcasting companies

One of the major tasks facing the Government in the autumn of 1974 was the drafting of the broadcasting companies' cahiers des charges. Though much more detailed in its provisions than its predecessors of 1964 and 1972, the 1974 broadcasting statute still left unanswered many questions regarding the running of the new companies. These lacunae were partly filled by a whole series of governmental decrees published in the final months of 1974. The single most important document on the functioning of the new broadcasting companies was, however, each company's cahier des charges.

With the exception of the production company, each of the broadcasting companies has its own cahier des charges. The function

77. Members include Jean d'Arcy, former director of television in the 1950s, Pierre Schaeffer, former head of the ORTF's research service, Francis Balle, mass media sociologist, and Philippe Grumbach, director of the news staff at l'Express.

78. R. Thomas, op. cit., p. 99. One sign of independence would be automatic publication of all-Council reports.

79. Interview with Mme. Fourneret, July 20 1979.

80. Jean d'Arcy considered that the HCA had been largely ineffective, while Pierre Schaeffer remarked that the Government wanted the Council to do as little as possible. Interviews with Jean d'Arcy, December 3 1976, and Pierre Schaeffer, July 2 1979.

81. The cahiers des charges are in effect detailed charters. The French term has been retained in this section because the obligations laid down in the cahiers des charges are more specific than those usually found in a broadcasting charter of the BBC type.

82. The SFP has no cahier des charges because of its special administrative status.
of these documents is twofold: to set out the general goals of broadcasting as a public service and to enumerate a series of specific obligations which the companies have to observe to maintain the public service nature of French broadcasting. Through the device of the cahiers des charges the Government can impose obligations on the broadcasting companies in matter of programming without having to intervene in the daily decision-making process.

The basis of the cahiers des charges was laid down in article 15 of the 1974 statute. This article, which because of a series of parliamentary amendments was a much fuller clause than in the Government's original bill, laid down the general framework for the cahiers des charges. The cahiers des charges were to fix the goals of the broadcasting companies with regard to the maintenance of the public service, notably with reference to the development of the transmission networks and the minimum amount of programmes. In addition, each cahier des charges was to determine the programme companies' obligations with regard to news and cultural programmes and also in the field of external services. The programme companies were to favour "creativity" in programming, were to accord a minimum viewing time for political parties and representative professional organisations and were to be governed by strict rules regarding the amount of television advertising time to be allowed to each advertiser.

The content of the cahiers des charges themselves was the subject of consultations between Rossi and his staff on the one hand and on the other the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting, the Haut Conseil

83. See Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, July 25 1974, pp. 3776-3781, for the content of the parliamentary amendments.

84. Article 15 of the 1974 broadcasting statute.

and representatives of the management of the ORTF and of the new broadcasting companies. The initiative, however, was firmly in the hands of the minister and his staff. For example, the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting complained that it had been consulted only when the documents were already at the stage of the final draft. While the new company chairmen were consulted, the final decision lay in the hands of the minister. Contentious issues, therefore, were resolved at ministerial level either by Rossi, Friedmann or Cannac. Issues resolved at this level included the conflict between Radio France and FR3 for the control of the regional radio network and the difference of opinion between the Ministry of Culture and the programme companies on the quota of cultural programmes to be included in the cahiers des charges. Moreover, the cahiers des charges were not contracts freely entered into by the broadcasting companies. The companies could not reject their cahiers des charges even if they wished to do so.

The cahiers des charges were drawn up in late 1974 by Cousin, a member of Rossi's cabinet. He described the process as follows:

"There was no model on which to base the content of the cahiers des charges. They are unique in the world. We started with the statute and the ORTF's public service goals. ... There were meetings between Rossi's staff, the Prime Minister's cabinet and the President's advisers. The heads of the new companies were consulted once the framework of the cahiers des charges had been established. Certain government ministries wanted specific regulations binding on the new companies. There was also

86. Consultation with the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel was not included in the formal provisions of the statute. The Government decided to consult the HCA on its own initiative.


89. Interview with Bertrand Cousin, July 11 1979.

90. A2 threatened to refuse its cahier des charges in early 1975 in protest against its budget allocation for that year which it regarded as being too small. Le Monde, January 4 and 23 1975.
pressure from corporatist interests. For example, the broadcasting unions and the actors' unions pushed for the inclusion of clauses to fix minimum quotas of French produced programmes. The cinema industry applied pressure to ensure the adoption of measures designed to limit the number of films shown by the programme companies and to control the times at which they were shown. Also, the publishers of the television magazines like Télé-7-jours and Télé-poche pushed for the adoption of article 28 which compels the companies to give 3 weeks' notice of their programme schedules." 91

Partly because of the existence of these and similar pressures the cahiers des charges were not published in their final version until April 1975, four months after the new companies had begun their transmission, though according to Cousin the companies knew the content of their cahiers des charges in their more or less definitive version in January.

The preamble of the cahiers des charges, which is the same for all four programme companies, is a very general statement of the public service goals of the state broadcasting services. 92 The four programme companies are to ensure by the diversity and quality of their programmes that as many people as possible are introduced to all forms of culture. They are to provoke the exchange of ideas necessary for the functioning of democratic institutions and to relay and increase the efforts made in the educational field. In addition, they have to strive for quality in both entertainment and news programmes.

These rather vacuous ideals are given some flesh in the main body of the text which imposes specific obligations regarding the programming of the companies. For example, the programme companies were bound

91. Interview with Bertrand Cousin, July 11 1979.
92. The cahiers des charges of the broadcasting companies (excluding the SFP) are obviously not identical in every detail given the different functions the separate companies have to perform. However, the guidelines are similar for all the companies. What follows in the main body of the text is a sample of some of the contents of the cahiers des charges of the two major television companies, TF1 and A2.
to ensure balance and objectivity in news programming. This involved compliance with specific provisions. For example, while the programme companies had to broadcast a programme if the Government so requested them, these programmes would be announced as emanating from this source. The companies also had to comply with particular regulations governing the coverage of parliamentary proceedings, electoral broadcasting, party political programmes and regional news bulletins. 93

The cahiers des charges also laid down certain obligations with regard to general programming. For example, the programme companies were to strive to ensure that 60% of their programmes were of French origin. The total number of feature films which the companies were allowed to screen annually was set out in the cahiers des charges. In addition, both TF1 and A2 had to broadcast a specified number of plays and ballets in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture as well as a specified number of concerts by French orchestras. 94

The total amount of advertising time allowed per day on TF1 and A2, 18 minutes per day on average, was also included in their cahiers des charges. The amount of advertising which any single advertiser could place with either of the two major television companies could not exceed 8% of the respective company's total income from commercial advertising. Advertising was to be confined to special slots and was not permitted to interrupt a programme. 95

94. Ibid, articles 23-35.
95 Ibid, articles 65-81 (TF1) and 64-80 (A2).
Within the companies the application of the provisions contained in the cahiers des charges is supervised by the board of governors. Externally this supervision is carried out by the Service d'Observation des Programmes, which is a part of the SNJT. It is the SOP which ensures that the companies respect the quotas included in their cahiers des charges and which passes on any infringements of these quotas to the attention of the minister with responsibility for broadcasting. The Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel also publishes an annual report on the companies' respect of their cahiers des charges.

The crucial question regarding the cahiers des charges is whether they are an unjustifiable restriction on the autonomy of the broadcasting companies or a necessary safeguard to protect the public service ideals of French broadcasting. Chevallier subscribes to the former opinion, arguing that

"the weight of the cahiers des charges is symptomatic of the desire of the authorities to acquire direct control over programme content ..." 96

Morand and Valter, on the other hand, disagree with Chevallier, arguing that:

"the constraints imposed by the authorities on the autonomy and liberty of expression of the companies are not very rigorous." 97

Five years after the establishment of the new companies, it would appear that Morand and Valter are nearer the truth. The cahiers des charges do indeed restrict the autonomy of the companies, but far less than other aspects of the reorganisation such as the

system of appointments or the budgetary procedure. In any case, many of the provisions contained in the *cahiers des charges* are quite justified as a counter balance to the possible adverse effects of unrestrained competition among the separate companies. In fact, the main criticism which can be directed against the *cahiers des charges* is not that they have restricted the companies too much, but rather that they have largely failed in their protective function of preserving the public service nature of French broadcasting. 98

The 1974-75 budget

One of the major problems which faced the new companies in 1975 was the size of their budgetary allocation for their first year of operation. The complex financial procedure designed to take account of the audience ratings and programme quality of the programme companies could obviously not be applied at the start of their first year in operation. 99 Instead it was left to Rossi and his staff, in particular Jean-Loup Arnaud, to decide the amount of licence revenue to be given to each company. This was carried out on the basis of the figures drawn up in 1974 for the corresponding sectors of the ORTF. 100 The 1975 broadcasting budget was in several respects, therefore, a budget of transition.

Because of the speed with which the reorganisation of the state broadcasting services was to be accomplished and the resultant chaos, the budgetary proposals for 1975 presented to the National Assembly

98. See chapter on Criticisms of the reform.
99. 1974 broadcasting statute, articles 6 and 18-24. See also chapter on Finance.
100. Interview with Jean-Loup Arnaud, July 13 1979.
finance committee in October 1974 contained no details about the projected income or expenditure of the new companies. Indeed Arnaud argued that the lack of information available to Parliament in early autumn was not merely accidental.

"Rossi gave instructions not to give the parliamentarians concerned, such as Le Tac and Caillavet, all the real figures, but only to give them the outlines of the 1975 budget. Rossi feared that the budget might pose problems. The figures given to Parliament, therefore, were slightly sugared (un peu édulcorés). Now that there were parliamentarians on the boards of governors we had to be careful." 102

This state of affairs led the National Assembly finance committee's rapporteur spécial on broadcasting, Le Tac, to complain that he was being asked to present a report on a budget the contents of which he was quite ignorant. In the light of this absence of information and with the other problems caused by the abolition of the ORTF in mind, Le Tac went so far as to ask that the January 1975 deadline be postponed so that the transition could proceed more smoothly. 103 The Government, however, could hardly have been expected to accede to this request.

In any case, more information was forthcoming during November and December 1974, enabling a comparison between the ORTF's budget for 1974 and the projected budget for the new companies in 1975. These figures showed that the estimated income of the new companies in 1975 would exceed that of the ORTF in its last year of operation by 282


million francs, an increase of just over 12%. Nonetheless, the projected 1975 budget was open to criticism on several counts.

First, the cost of collecting the licence revenue was estimated at 148 million francs in 1975 compared with 111 million francs in 1974, an increase of 34%. While the cost of collecting the licence revenue had in 1974 represented 6.6% of the total collected, in 1975 it was estimated that the cost of collection would represent 7.3%. Thus the transfer of the task of licence revenue collection from the ORTF to the Ministry of Finance, far from leading to significant savings as the Chinaud committee had forecast, resulted in an increase in the cost of collection. As a result, there was less money than forecast available for the broadcasting companies.

Secondly, while the Government agreed that the State should reimburse the broadcasting companies for the revenue lost because certain persons were exempted from paying the licence, the amount was calculated by the Government at only 95 million francs. This figure was considered by both the National Assembly and Senate finance committees to underestimate the real cost of these exemptions,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1974</th>
<th>1975</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Licence revenue allocated to state broadcasting excluding cost of collection</td>
<td>1,573</td>
<td>1,773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising revenue</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>2,313</td>
<td>2,595</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(totals in thousands of francs)


which they calculated to be around 130 million francs. While Rossi himself agreed that the figure of 130 million francs was probably the more accurate, the Government's original estimate was adhered to throughout 1975.

However, in fairness it should be noted that even this amount represented 95 million francs more than had been paid in 1974 to the ORTF which had had to bear the cost itself of licence fee exemptions decided by the Government. Moreover, the principle of such reimbursements had been explicitly rejected by the Chinaud report. Therefore, while the reimbursement of licence fee exemptions in 1975 was not as large as it should have been, it was a substantial improvement on the previous practice.

The most virulent criticism voiced against the proposed 1975 budget was that the total amount of revenue from all sources to be allocated among the new companies was insufficient to cover their projected expenditure. In other words, according to the companies and the parliamentary rapporteurs spéciaux the figure of 2,595 million francs in revenue fell far short of the companies' estimated financial requirements.

The four programme companies, for example, had calculated that their minimum financial needs amounted to 2,965 million francs.


Moreover, since the programme companies had underestimated the amounts asked of them for services rendered by the transmission company (658 million francs instead of 532) and by the archive and research institute (111 million francs instead of 54), the gap between the programme companies' estimates and those of the Government in respect of revenue for 1975 was more than 550 million francs. The difference in the two sets of estimates is made clear in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1975 Broadcasting Budget: Revenue</th>
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<tr>
<td>(in millions of francs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original Government Estimates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TF1 608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2 640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR3 732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio France 433</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above table the companies' estimates were based on the projected budget for the equivalent sectors of the ORTF for 1975. Even if to the government figures were added the revenue the companies could hope to make from commercial sales and payments from government ministries for programmes broadcast at their request, the difference between the two sets of estimates was still enormous: over 160 million francs in the case of TF1, 90 million francs in the case of A2, over 100 million francs in the case of FR3 and 90 million francs.

According to Rossi the company estimates of their financial requirements were the following: TF1 - 698 million francs, A2 - 637 million francs, FR3 - 876 million francs and Radio France - 570 million francs.

Figures from different sources are unfortunately not always comparable. However, whatever the differences may be between individual figures, there can be no doubt that a serious difference of opinion existed between Rossi on the one hand and the companies on the other with regard to their financial needs for 1975.
in the case of Radio France. 110

The Government’s prime role in producing this alarming situation was apparent. The cost of the licence had been increased in July 1974 to 140 francs instead of the 150 francs asked for by the last PDG of the ORTF. As a result, the new companies effectively lost around 170 million francs in revenue from both the licence and commercial advertising. Moreover, revenue from the licence was still subject to VAT despite a contrary recommendation made by the Chinaud report. 111 The Chinaud committee had estimated that the imposition of VAT on the licence fee resulted in a net loss to the state broadcasting services of over 50 million francs per annum.

The break-up of the unitary structure of the ORTF had itself led to short-term costs and the companies feared that it might involve long-term costs as well since certain services which had been centralised at the ORTF would have to be reconstituted in each of the new companies. In addition, since the rise in prices during 1974 had been greater than forecast, the estimates were already out of date and it was thought that another 150 million francs would be required just to take account of the rate of inflation.

In reply to these points, Rossi asserted that to the projected revenue of the companies of 2,595 million francs should be added 100 million francs owed to the ORTF by its creditors in excess of the money owed by the Office in payment of its debts. Moreover, he pointed out that the new companies had received substantial programme stocks from the defunct ORTF amounting to 1,700 hours of programmes.


valued at 320 million francs. In addition, the Government announced in late 1974 that the new companies could make certain savings, notably by not extending the length of viewing time, which would bring the difference between the Government's estimates and those of the companies to under 200 million francs instead of the original figure of over 450 million francs. 112

Nonetheless, the plight of the new companies was all too apparent. The two major television companies, TF1 and A2, would have been in a more advantageous position if they had been allowed to produce more programmes by themselves or if they had been permitted to place orders with private production companies as and when they wished. However, because of the enforced relationship between the programme companies on the one hand and the transmission company, the production company and the archive and research institute on the other, the programme companies were compelled by their cahiers des charges to make use of the services of the other three companies and to pay them accordingly.

During 1975 the production company was guaranteed 90% of its costs to be met by the television companies, which were thus compelled against their own commercial interests to subsidise the production company and prevent its going bankrupt. The production company took advantage of this de facto monopoly position to increase its prices by 35%. 113 During 1975 the amount paid by the four programme companies


for the services of the other three companies was as follows:  

### Mandatory expenditure (in millions of francs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paid by:</th>
<th>TDF</th>
<th>SFP</th>
<th>INA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TF1</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR3</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RF</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the case of TF1 and A2 well over half of their projected income was to be paid out in the form of mandatory expenditure to TDF, INA and the SFP, though this did not even ensure the financial stability of these three companies during 1975. The Government controlled the total amount to be devoted to the state broadcasting services, as well as each company's individual allocation. Consequently, while there was a high measure of disagreement among the separate companies over the amount each should pay to the others, the fundamental source of the problem was the inadequacy of resources devoted to the state broadcasting services in toto by the Government.

During 1975 the complaints made by the broadcasting companies in late 1974 were largely substantiated. As a result, the Government was obliged to step in to paper over the cracks which the hastily constructed edifice was now revealing. In the spring of 1975 the Government intervened to increase the total amount of financial resources available to the new broadcasting companies from 2,595 million francs to 2,701 million francs.

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This increase was the result of various minor policy decisions. First, the amount of revenue that TF1 and A2 were allowed to receive from commercial advertising was raised from the original figure of 640 to 690 million francs. The Government succeeded in increasing the total by 50 million francs by reinterpreting the provisions of the 1974 broadcasting statute so that the cost of collecting the licence revenue was now included in the total amount of revenue on which the permitted 25% quota was based.\textsuperscript{115} TF1 was now allowed to receive 410 million francs instead of 400 and A2 280 million francs instead of 240.\textsuperscript{116}

Secondly, the amount of income from sources other than the licence and commercial advertising, such as payment by government ministries for programmes broadcast at their request, was increased from 182 to 198 million francs. The Ministry of Culture agreed to take over the management of three of the former ORTF orchestras from Radio France, though only from 1976 onwards. Finally, the new companies were allowed to borrow a total of 40 million francs to help cover their expenditure costs.\textsuperscript{117}

These steps among others enabled the companies to survive the early months of their first year of operation without a major financial crisis. However, the fact that within such a short space of time after

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{115} Under the terms of article 22 of the 1974 broadcasting statute, revenue from commercial advertising could not exceed 25% of the total income of all the companies put together, excluding the production company. Since 1975 the cost of collecting the licence revenue has been included in this total on which the permitted maximum of advertising revenue is based.
\item \textsuperscript{116} In fact, neither of the two companies attained this higher figure, with TF1 falling short by 10 million francs and A2 by 30 million francs. \textit{Le Monde}, March 14-15 1976.
\end{itemize}
the break-up of the ORTF the Government was obliged to take these supplementary measures at all was evidence that the fears expressed at the end of 1974 regarding the companies' budgetary allocations were well founded, as Arnaud himself freely admitted.118

In any case even the increase in resources did not obviate the need for substantial savings on the part of the programme companies during 1975. Critics, including the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel and the Quality Committee pointed to the increase in the number of cheap programmes such as foreign series and films and the frequency of repeats.119 A cut in the projected extension of viewing time was also made by the programme companies. Radio France, for example, had to abandon certain new programming projects and the purchase of new equipment. To supplement its income A2 proposed to hire out its equipment and screen time to private industrial companies which might wish to make use of the services of a television channel in the morning when normally the screen was blank. The idea was that the companies would use their screen time to diffuse information to their management and staff in Paris and the provinces. However, the scheme was vetoed by the Government who decided that it would be in contradiction with the public service character of the television company as defined in its cahier des charges.120 Thus, it was thanks mainly to cutbacks in projected expenditure coupled with certain adjustments in government policy, that by the end of their first year of operation the new companies, with the exception of the

118. Interview with Jean-Loup Arnaud, July 13 1979.
119. See chapter on Criticisms of the reform.
120. See L'Express, March 10 1975.

A similar proposal was put forward in 1979 by Jean Frydman but was rejected by the Conseil d'État as it infringed the state broadcasting monopoly. See Le Nouvel Observateur, April 30 1979 and Le Matin, August 4 1979.
production company, had established themselves on a reasonably sound financial footing.

Nonetheless, the precarious financial position of the broadcasting companies throughout 1975, and particularly in the early months, revealed the importance of the Government's power to fix the cost of the licence and, in so doing, to control the total amount of financial resources allocated to the state broadcasting services. The only source of income not subject to control by the Government was that gained through sales of programmes to foreign television companies and other commercial spin-offs. This represented only a tiny fraction of the companies' total income. Nor was this financial control confined to the changeover period from the ORTF to the new structure. As we shall see in a later chapter, the Government's power to fix the cost of the licence is only one of a set of financial controls linking the broadcasting companies to the Government. 121

Conclusion

The objective of this chapter was to describe and analyse certain aspects of the liquidation of the ORTF which took place in the autumn of 1974. Two main points have emerged from this analysis. The first concerns the adverse consequences which resulted from the break-up of the ORTF, notably the chaos of the transitional period. Marcel Jullian summed up his impressions of this chaos in the following manner:

"I know scarcely any company which was going to be granted an important budget and which comprised nearly eight hundred staff set up in conditions as bewildering (ahurissantes) as

121. See chapter on Finance.
those which surrounded our launching. The establishment (of A2) resembled that of the provisional government of Bordeaux more than of a national television company. 122

Nor were the consequences of the liquidation of the Office purely short term. For example, certain sectors of the ORTF such as the external services were particularly badly affected by the reorganisation and have never recovered the position they enjoyed at the ORTF. Moreover, the liquidation of the Office had still not been finally completed more than three years after the reform had been put into effect. Thus, in its 1978 report the Cour des Comptes commented:

"... three years after this important reform, the liquidation, the cost of which cannot be exactly known, is not yet complete, and the new companies have been unable to draw up a financial statement of their assets and liabilities at the start of their operations ..." 123

The second point to emerge is the role played in this transitional period and since by the minister with responsibility for broadcasting. Since 1975 this role has been limited to the supervision of policy formulated elsewhere, most notably at the Elysée. During late 1974 this supervisory role was nonetheless quite important. Though not responsible for drafting the reform, Rossi and his entourage were responsible for its implementation. In this chapter we have concentrated particularly on two aspects of this role, namely the drafting of the companies' cahiers des charges and the allocation of their budgets for 1975. In the following chapter we shall examine another crucial aspect of the Government's role in this changeover period: the appointment of top managerial and editorial personnel in the new companies.

CHAPTER 5

Appointments

Political appointments to the key decision-making posts in the state broadcasting services represent a long-standing practice whose origins can be traced back before the foundation of the Fifth Republic. The object of this chapter is to describe and analyse the nature and extent of government intervention in the appointments process to the major posts in the state broadcasting companies set up after the dismantling of the ORTF. After a brief historical introduction on political appointments at the ORTF, we shall examine the appointments made in the autumn of 1974 at the time of the reorganisation and also subsequent appointments made in the first five years of the new companies' existence. Two sections will be devoted to managerial appointments and another to the politically contentious area of news appointments. Another section will consider the question of whether there exists a pattern of Giscardian appointments in the French broadcasting media. Finally, we shall look at the composition and functions of the boards of governors of the separate broadcasting companies.

Three main themes emerge from this study of broadcasting appointments. First, the key managerial and editorial posts in the state broadcasting services have remained highly politicised, particularly in the news departments. Secondly, for both professional and political reasons the appointments made in 1974 marked less of a break with the past than one might have reasonably expected given the incoming Government's professed commitment to change. Finally, while in 1974 appointments to the key broadcasting posts reflected the balance of forces in the governing coalition, after Chirac's resignation from the premiership in August 1976 Gaullist sympathisers of the Chiracian tendency were gradually ousted and replaced by persons of a more Giscardian outlook.
Appointments at the ORTF

Historically one of the most important powers which the French government has exercised in the field of broadcasting has been the power of appointment. Used by the Socialists and Christian Democrats among others during the Fourth Republic to install political sympathisers in the key decision-making posts of the RTF, the power of appointment was then used by the Gaullists at the start of the Fifth Republic to colonise the state broadcasting services at a time when television was only just starting to reach a mass audience in France.¹

This colonisation became particularly intense after the passing of the 1964 statute which marked the establishment of the ORTF. The Minister of Information at the time, Peyrefitte, who had been personally responsible for the drafting of the new broadcasting statute, placed several members of his ministerial cabinet in positions of responsibility at the ORTF and was generally responsible for all important appointments. The "Peyrefitte clan", as this group of appointments came to be called, was merely one example of the Gaullist domination of ministerial, administrative and para-administrative posts in the so-called Gaullist state.²

¹ See chapter on Politics and broadcasting in France before the 1974 reform.
² Members of the "Peyrefitte clan" included Jean-Jacques de Bresson, director of Peyrefitte's cabinet at the Ministry of Information and then director general of the ORTF (1968-1972); Claude Contamine, director of Peyrefitte's cabinet (1962-1964), head of television (1964-1967) and deputy director general of the ORTF and director of the ORTF's external services (1973-1974); Jacques Thibau, deputy director of Peyrefitte's cabinet and then deputy head of television (1965-1968); Georges Riou, technical adviser in Peyrefitte's cabinet and head of the ORTF's general administration (1964-1969); Claude Lemoine, a member of Peyrefitte's cabinet until 1966 and appointed head of the ORTF's public relations in 1968; Bernard Gouley, member of Peyrefitte's cabinet (1962-1964) and then placed in charge of the ORTF's regional network (1964-1970), a post later occupied by Lemoine; Jean Castarède, chargé de mission in Peyrefitte's cabinet (1962-1965) and then director of de Bresson's cabinet at the ORTF from 1970 to 1972. André Astoux, though not a member of Peyrefitte's cabinet, was appointed by Peyrefitte as deputy director general of the ORTF in 1964.
The reform introduced by Chaban-Delmas in 1969 as part of his New Society project did little to modify this practice of political appointments. There were two reasons why this was the case. First, the 1969 reform did not affect the whole of the ORTF. It was restricted to the news departments of the two television channels with the result that the other decision-making posts, including that of director general of the Office, were not touched by the reform. Secondly, even though the reform of the ORTF's news services was intended to cut the umbilical cord linking the Government on the one hand with the ORTF on the other, before the reorganised news departments could begin functioning new directors of news had to be chosen. Since the top management of the ORTF was unaffected by the 1969 reorganisation and as the reform was the personal responsibility of the Prime Minister, the appointment of the new directors of news could not be entrusted to the ORTF management but had to come from the Prime Minister himself. The director of news on channel one, Desgraupes, was rightly viewed as the personal appointment of Chaban-Delmas and his hold over his post came to depend on the latter's tenure of the premiership. As we have seen, when Chaban-Delmas was dismissed from the premiership in July 1972, Desgraupes lost his post immediately afterwards with the winding up of the Chaban-Delmas experiment.  

2. Some of the above have also occupied key posts in the new broadcasting-companies—Contamine was appointed Président Directeur Général of FR3 (1975—-); Riou became financial and administrative director of TF1 in 1975 and was promoted to the post of deputy director general in 1978; Lemoine retained the post he had held since 1972 as head of the regional network; and Gouley, after two and a half years in charge of public relations at TDF, was appointed head of the regional station Paris-Normandie-Centre in October 1977. For more information on the Peyrefitte appointments see J. Montaldo, Tous coupables, Paris, Albin Michel, 1974, pp.144-155; C. Durieux, La Télécratie, Paris, Tema, 1976, pp. 47-52; and A. Astoux, Ondes de choc, Paris, Plon, 1978, pp. 15-25.

3. See chapter on Politics and broadcasting in France before the 1974 reform.
The appointment of Conte as Président Directeur General of the ORTF in July 1972 was the personal choice of President Pompidou who wished to assert his authority over the ORTF by bringing it into the presidential sector of policy-making. However, as we have seen, this attempt proved abortive because Conte sought to use the ORTF as an independent political power base, thereby cutting himself off from the presidential fold.

Up until the 1974 reform therefore, and it hardly seems necessary to labour the point, the system of political appointments to the key broadcasting posts was well entrenched. From 1964 to 1969 and again from 1972 to 1974 those appointed were meant to act as the transmission belts for the smooth execution of government policy within the state broadcasting services. Even between 1969 and 1972, when Chaban-Delmas's policy was intended to grant a high degree of independence to the ORTF news departments, the source of the appointment of the directors of news remained political. It was this system of political appointments, particularly in the field of news, that according to government spokesmen the 1974 reorganization was intended to stop.

The heads of the new broadcasting companies

From the above short historical introduction it is clear that the term "political appointment" requires some form of definition. Otherwise the term can be stretched to cover a variety of cases which are in fact of a quite different order. As used in this chapter the term "political appointment" involves four distinct though interrelated facets: the legal right of appointment granted to the Government, the legal right of dismissal, the source of the appointment in practice and most importantly the practice of appointment with regard to the political loyalties
of those appointed with the aim of ensuring a politically sympathetic management. It is only if this last criterion is satisfied that we shall use the term "partisan political appointment." For example, the choice of Conte as Président Directeur Général of the ORTF in 1972 was undoubtedly a partisan political appointment. On the other hand, the choice of Desgraupes in 1969 as head of news on channel one appears not to have been a partisan political appointment because he was not expected afterwards to serve the interests of the Government.

By the terms of the 1974 legislation the Government's legal right of appointment in the broadcasting companies is quite limited. In the case of the transmission company the Government has the right to appoint the chairman of the board of governors, half the members of the board, and the director general. In the case of the four programme companies the Government appoints the chairman of the board of governors, who in fact also usually performs the function of director general of the company, and two of the six governors including the chairman. As for the production company the appointment of the chairman and, if there is one, of the director general are submitted for the approval of the Prime Minister or a minister appointed by him for this purpose. Finally, with regard to the archive and research institute the Government has the right to appoint the chairman of the governing board, ten of the twenty-two governors and, on the proposal of the chairman, the director general.

4. 1974 broadcasting statute, article 5.
5. Ibid, article 11.
Apart from these appointments the Government has no legal right to appoint persons to other posts in the broadcasting companies. For example, the chairmen of the four programme companies are theoretically responsible for the choice of their own managerial staff.\(^8\) In practice, however, as we shall see in the following section, the Government intervened, particularly in the case of the newcomer to broadcasting, Marcel Jullian, to impose alongside the chairman persons on whom it considered it could rely to maintain the stability of the company.

The 1974 broadcasting statute guaranteed the chairmen of the new companies (with the exception of the production company where no such provision is specifically mentioned in the statute) a minimum three year term in office. Paradoxically while the 1964 ORTF statute had not guaranteed the director general a fixed term of office, in fact between 1964 and 1972 there were only two appointments to this post.\(^9\) On the other hand though the 1972 ORTF statute guaranteed the Président Directeur Général a three year term of office, neither of the last two PDGs had occupied the post for anywhere near the statutory minimum term.\(^10\) The three year security of tenure introduced in the 1972 ORTF statute was reproduced in the 1974 legislation as evidence of the Government's intention to grant the new companies a large measure of autonomy.

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8. 1974 broadcasting statute, article 11.
10. Conte was spectacularly dismissed by Pompidou barely fifteen months after being appointed, while Long who succeeded Conte in October 1973 remained at the head of the ORTF until its break-up in January 1975. See chapter on Politics and broadcasting in France before the 1974 reform.
In fact all the chairmen of the new companies appointed in late 1974 did fulfil their three year term in marked contrast to their immediate predecessors at the ORTF. However, at the end of this period in December 1977 the Government demonstrated that its power to terminate or renew the appointment was by no means an insignificant sanction, since not only can the threat of non-renewal of contract have a restraining influence on the conduct of a chairman in office, but if employed against a holder of the post it can also provide a salutary lesson for future incumbents. At TF1 Jean Cazeneuve was replaced by his director general, Jean-Louis Guillaud, who had in fact been responsible for the running of the company during the previous three years. Guillaud's promotion was made in recognition of his efforts in keeping TF1 stable and in the knowledge that in the crucial period prior to the 1978 legislative elections he could be relied on to keep a firm control of TF1.

The appointment of Maurice Ulrich in December 1977 to succeed Jullian at the head of A2 was a change of a completely different nature. A2 had set out to be the most imaginative of the three television companies, the most open to new ideas and personalities. For example, it was A2 who tried to persuade Jean-Paul Sartre to give a series of programmes on French history. In many ways A2 in 1975 exemplified the hopes and aspirations of the new Giscardian regime with its professed beliefs in change. The reality of the first three years had proved, however, to be extremely disappointing. Along with the other television companies A2 had been severely criticised by President Giscard d'Estaing in 1976 for its lack of creative programming. In addition it had suffered from a series of minor scandals and rumours,

11. See chapter on Criticisms of the reform.
ranging from unfulfilled promises about new programmes to the threat of being hived off to commercial interests. The apparent instability of the company made it an easy target for parliamentary criticism, including the familiar Gaullist complaint that the company's news coverage was too sympathetic to the left-wing opposition.

Unlike Cazeneuve at TF1, Jullian had in 1975 personally taken on the task of running the company. The result of the criticism directed against A2 was the evaporation of the Government's confidence in Jullian's ability to manage the company and consequently the non-renewal of his contract. Since Jullian was the programme company chairman who best personified the electoral promise of change, the non-renewal of his contract in December 1977 marked a major failure for the Giscardian broadcasting reform.

Since the Government had the legal right to appoint the chairmen of the new broadcasting companies, it goes without saying that the source of these appointments in practice was governmental. To be more precise, the choice of the seven chairmen of the new companies was made in the autumn of 1974 by Giscard d'Estaing personally with the advice among others of his deputy general secretary Cannac. 12

Finally, and most importantly, the appointment of the chairmen of the separate companies took into account the political sympathies of those appointed. In the context of French politics it is axiomatic that the heads of the state broadcasting services cannot come from the ranks of the opposition. The 1974 reform proved no exception to this iron law. 13 The political criteria which were most relevant in late


13. There is no reason to suspect that if the Union of the Left had come to power in 1978 this practice would have been discontinued.
1974 were, first, that individually the new heads should be sympathetic to the Giscardian regime and, secondly, that collectively they should reflect the heterogeneity of the new President's parliamentary majority and particularly his dependence on Gaullist party support. 14

The appointment of Jullian (A2) and of Jean-Charles Edeline (SFP) reflected Giscard d'Estaing's commitment to change which had been the major plank of his presidential election campaign. 15 Claude Contamine (FR3) and Jacqueline Baudrier (Radio France) were on the other hand, Gaullist sympathisers. 16 Pierre Emmanuel, the head of the archive and research institute, was also a Gaullist. 17 Cazeneuve (TF1) is more difficult to place in this balance of political forces, but in any case he was merely a figurehead at TF1 and left the running of the company to his director general, Guillaud, another well known Gaullist sympathiser. 18


15. Jullian was a well-known literary figure and an intellectual from the world of culture. Edeline had been responsible for the denationalisation of the state cinema company and had turned it into a profitable concern. He personified the liberal Giscardian ideology of belief in free enterprise.

16. Contamine had been a member of Michel Debré's ministerial cabinet from 1959 to 1962 before joining Peyrefitte's cabinet. Baudrier had distinguished herself during the 1968 strike at the ORTF by maintaining a news service despite strong opposition from the majority of her news staff.

17. Emmanuel was appointed to the political council (conseil politique) of the RPR in November 1979. Le Monde, November 11-12, 1979.

18. Former research director at the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS), Cazeneuve was a former governor of the ORTF and chairman of the Office's programme committee. A well-known sociologist and writer on the mass media, Cazeneuve was appointed permanent French representative at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg after leaving TF1 at the end of 1977. Guillaud had entered the RTF in 1963 after a career in journalism, establishing his Gaullist political credentials as editor of television news between 1963 and 1968. Refusing to participate in the journalists'
The political sympathies of the chairmen of the new broadcasting companies played a primordial role in their appointment. The second factor to be taken into account was their professional expertise. Contamine and Baudrier had both held top managerial posts at the ORTF. Cazeneuve and the new chairman of TDF, Jean Autin, had both been members of the ORTF's board of governors. Finally, while none of the other three company chairmen had had previous experience in broadcasting management, they had all proved their ability in adjacent fields. Thus four out of the seven company chairmen had worked in some administrative capacity at the ORTF. This was in marked contrast to the practice at the ORTF where none of the Office's four director generals had had previous administrative experience in broadcasting before their appointment.

18. (Cont.) strike at the ORTF in 1968, he had instead become a leading member of a civic action committee pledged to defend the Republic and to work for the removal from their posts of those journalists who had supported the strike. As a reward for his loyal efforts he was promoted to the post of deputy head of television news in August 1968 at the time of the purging of the ORTF journalists and was then appointed head of television news in January 1969, a post he held until the reform of the ORTF news departments in September 1969 by Chaban-Delmas. A member of President Pompidou's general secretariat from 1969 to 1972, Guillaud was responsible for coordinating the preparatory studies prior to the establishment of the ORTF's third channel. The successful completion of this task led to his appointment in 1972 as director of channel three, a post he held until the break-up of the ORTF.

19. Contamine had been head of television at the ORTF from 1964 to 1967. Returning to the ORTF in 1972, he occupied the posts of deputy director general and director of the external services. Baudrier had entered the RTF as a journalist in 1948. She had been appointed editor of radio news in 1963 and then deputy director of radio in charge of news in 1968. In October 1969 she worked in television for the first time as director of the news department of channel two. After the passing of the 1972 statute she was promoted to the post of director of channel one until the break-up of the ORTF in 1974.

After Guillaud's appointment as chairman of TF1 in December 1977, three of the four programme companies (TF1, FR3 and Radio France) were all run by people who had had long managerial experience at the ORTF.

20. Edeline had been head of the cinema chain Union Générale Cinématographique from 1971 to 1974. Jullian had been head of various publishing companies including Plon and Julliard, as well as having produced several television programmes. Emmanuel had worked for the French radio service from 1948 to 1958 and was a prominent author and cultural figure.
The change in emphasis towards the appointment at the head of the new companies of people with professional broadcasting experience was accompanied by a move away from the practice of choosing top civil servants to occupy the top post in the state broadcasting services. At the time of the ORTF and before, the post of director general had usually been held by a top civil servant. Partly this was due to the historical origins of French broadcasting, whereby the radio service had been attached to the Ministry of Posts and thus formed part of the French administration. While the legal status of the broadcasting services had been altered in 1959, the tradition of appointing top civil servants to the post of director general had continued. However, of the seven broadcasting companies set up in 1974-75 only two were headed by former civil servants.

If this move away from appointing former civil servants to the top broadcasting posts was intended by the Government as an integral aspect of the 1974 reorganisation, however, then it has manifestly failed to live up to expectations. Even in 1974 while only one programme company was headed by a former top civil servant (Contamine at FR3), the other three programme companies all had at least one former top civil servant.


22. Contamine (FR3) was a graduate of the Ecole Nationale d'Administration, while Autin (TDF) was a graduate of the Ecole Nationale de la France d'outre-mer.
in a key managerial post. 23 Even more revealingly, by the end of 1979 five out of the seven broadcasting companies had as their chairmen former top civil servants. 24

The chairmen of the broadcasting companies chosen in late 1974 were almost without exception partisan political appointments. By the terms of the 1974 statute the Government had the legal right of appointment to the top post in each company and the right of dismissal after a period of three years. The source of these appointments in practice was presidential since Giscard d'Estaing personally supervised the appointments to these posts. Furthermore, the appointments were made with the political

23. These included: Xavier Larère, director of A2; Noel Sanviti, director of the administrative and financial services of FR3; Gabriel de Broglie, director of the administrative and financial services of Radio France; and Georges Riou, director of the administrative and financial services of TF1. Larère, Sanviti and de Broglie were all graduates of ENA, while Riou had been an administrator in various government services.

24. FR3 and TDF were still headed by Contamine and Autin respectively. Jullian was replaced as chairman of A2 in December 1977 by Ulrich, who had graduated from the Ecole Nationale de la France d'outre-mer and had been the head of the cabinet of two Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Jean Sauvagnargues and Louis de Guiringaud. Edeline was replaced at the head of the SFP at the beginning of 1979 by Antoine de Clermont-Tonnerre, a member of Rossi's cabinet in 1974 and responsible for supervising the implementation of the 1974 broadcasting reform. Emmanuel was replaced at the head of INA by de Broglie in May 1979.

If one remembers that Guillaud who replaced Cazeneuve at the head of TF1 in December 1977 had been a member of Pompidou's cabinet, by 1979 Baudrier was the only company chairman who had not held a politico-administrative post prior to appointment at the head of a broadcasting company.
sympathies of those appointed very much in mind. At the head of the programme companies only Jullian was an unknown political quantity and he barely survived the guaranteed three year term. The 1974 reorganisation of broadcasting did little, therefore, at the level of the company chairmen to modify the system of partisan political appointments which had been in evidence since the foundation of the Fifth Republic and before.

Nor was the reform a radical break with the past in terms of the professional background of those appointed. Four out of the seven company chairmen appointed in 1974 had been associated in one form or another with the discredited ORTF. By 1979 this figure had increased to five out of seven. Moreover, the shift away from the appointment of former top civil servants to the top broadcasting posts which was apparent in 1974 had by 1979 been abandoned.

The appointment of key managerial staff in the new companies

While at TDF the Government was legally entitled to appoint both the chairman of the board of governors and the director general of the company, in the four programme companies the newly appointed company chairmen were

25. Cazeneuve, the chairman of TF1, was also a political unknown. However, unlike Jullian at A2, Cazeneuve allowed Guillaud as director general to assume responsibility for the everyday running of the company.
given statutory freedom to appoint the other members of the management. By the terms of article 11 of the 1974 broadcasting statute the Government had no legal right of appointment to these posts, nor did it claim any such power in practice. In fact, however, the much vaunted autonomy of the chairmen was belied by the advice and pressure exerted on them from ministerial sources including Rossi's cabinet, the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior.

For example, at FR3 Contamine chose his own team which was then submitted to Rossi for his approval.²⁶ At Radio France Baudrier "was advised to take Gabriel de Broglie" as director of the administrative and financial services.²⁷ At TF1 Guillaud's appointment as director general was made at the behest of the Prime Minister, Chirac.²⁸ Guillaud's practical managerial experience at the ORTF, not to mention his solid Gaullist credentials, was regarded as the necessary complement to the rather academic background of the company chairman, Cazeneuve.

Similarly at A2 Xavier Larère's appointment as director showed the Government's intent to preserve managerial continuity with the defunct ORTF.²⁹ In contrast to Jullian, Larère was a proven administrator in both the political and broadcasting fields. As Jullian admitted himself, Larère was appointed at the request of the Government.

²⁹. A graduate of ENA, Larère had been an adviser in two government departments before entering the ORTF in 1964 as technical adviser to the director general. From 1968 to 1969 he had been head of the director general's cabinet, before being placed in charge of the coordination of the two television channels (1970-1972). Head of the production services from 1972 to 1973, his last post before the break-up of the ORTF had been as head of the television programme purchases department.
"I was told by Rossi the three people I had to take as my directors. Baudrier and Contamine knew the ORTF. I didn't. Prior to January 1975 I did not know personally the people chosen as my directors. For me the experience was an adventure. Therefore, I accepted all the restrictions without really thinking about them. I accepted the three directors too quickly. But the names of the directors of all the programme companies were to be announced to the press simultaneously. Therefore, I could not really have delayed. Larère, Jammot and Marque were suggested to me by the Government. \"" 30. 

At both TF1 and A2, therefore, the official second in command in the company's hierarchy was a man politically acceptable to the Government, with politico-administrative experience in ministerial cabinets and managerial experience at the ORTF.

Once the chairman and his immediate subordinate had been selected, there appears to be little evidence of ministerial intervention in the appointments process, with the notable exception of the top posts in the news departments. Partly this was attributable to the Government's confidence in the company chairman and his director or director general to fill the lower managerial posts with people who were not politically antipathetic to the new regime. -It was also due to the decreased- political sensitivity of these secondary appointments. The lower down the company hierarchy one goes, the less important political criteria become, with more emphasis being placed on technical competence reinforced by personal acquaintance. \". In the other managerial posts apart from those of the chairman and director/director general, therefore, the important considerations were the appointee's professional experience at the ORTF and the personal contacts he had managed to build up there.

At TF1, for example, Georges Riou was appointed director of the administrative and financial services. A member of the "Peyrefitte clan", Riou had since 1964 been employed in managerial posts at the ORTF. He was

30. Interview with Marcel Jullian, September 19 1979. See also M. Jullian, op. cit., pp. 129-134.
therefore well-known to Guillaud and it was on his recommendation that Riou was brought to TF1.\textsuperscript{31} TF1's organisational structure was based on a tripartite vertical division of responsibilities: programming – Guillaud, administration – Riou and news – Henri Marque, with Guillaud in overall charge.\textsuperscript{32}

The internal organisation of A2 was more flexible. Jullian refused to create a separate post of director general as Cazeneuve had done at TF1. Larère was given charge of the company's financial administration. As far as programming was concerned Jullian preferred to appoint a personal adviser and to establish a programme committee which would be responsible for the company's programme scheduling. Jacques Chancel was chosen by Jullian to be his personal adviser. A well-known radio and television producer at the ORTF, Chancel was a personal friend of Jullian and had already worked with him at the Julliard publishing company.\textsuperscript{33} The programme committee also contained a personal friend of Jullian, Charles Baudinat, together with producers from the ORTF including Armand Jammot, Claude Barma and Pierre Tchernia.\textsuperscript{34}

One of the most striking features of the appointments to the managerial posts in the new companies was the overwhelming reliance on

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(31).] A former member of Peyrefitte's cabinet, Riou was director of the ORTF's general administration (1964-1969) and later director of financial control (1972-1974).
\item[(32).] \textit{Le Monde}, January 7 1976.
\item[(33).] Chancel had been a producer at the ORTF since 1968 and was well-known to the public for his radio programme Radioscopie and his television show \textit{le Grand Echiquier}. During the 1974 presidential election campaign Chancel had conducted a long radio interview with Giscard d'Estaing. He had been director of the series \textit{Idee fixe} at the Julliard publishing company of which Jullian was the head.
\item[(34).] Baudinat had been co-author with Jullian of the television series \textit{Les Fargeot}. Prior to his appointment as head of A2 Jullian dined at Baudinat's house and from his account of their conversation it is evident that the two men were friends. M. Jullian, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 57-59.
\end{enumerate}
persons who had had long working experience at the discredited ORTF. On the one hand this is scarcely surprising since it would have been impossible to carry on a regular broadcasting service without retaining many of the ex-ORTF's programming and administrative staff. Administrators with experience in the state broadcasting services were retained because their jobs were not in politically sensitive areas and because in any case the new Giscardian regime did not have the personnel to replace them. On the other hand, the lack of change in managerial personnel hardly seemed in keeping with the new President's electoral promise of reform. With only a few exceptions, those who were given managerial posts in the new companies had held similar posts at the ORTF, while of those who had held managerial posts at the ORTF, a large proportion were given similar posts in the new companies.  

35. Most ORTF managerial staff were given posts in the new companies. (For TF1 and A2 see the text). At FR3, for example, Maurice Cazeneuve, former director of channel two at the ORTF (1968-1971) and television producer, was appointed director of FR3's national television network. René Han, former deputy director of broadcasting for the overseas departments and territories and later director of the television department of the ORTF's external services, was appointed head of broadcasting for the overseas departments and territories. Noel Sanviti, a member of the PDG's advisory staff (1972-1974), was appointed director of the administrative and financial services of FR3. Finally, Claude Lemoine, head of regional broadcasting under Guillaud at channel three (1972-1974), retained the same post at FR3 after the break-up of the ORTF. At Radio France, Pierre Wiehn retained the post he had occupied since 1972 as director of France Inter. Yves Jaigu, programme adviser for documentaries on channel one (1972-1974), moved with Baudrier to Radio France where he became director of France-Culture. Finally, Gabriel de Broglie, head of the legal department and general secretary of the administrative services at the ORTF (1972-1974), was appointed director of the administrative and financial services of Radio France. 

Apart from appointments in the news departments, the only person of note not given an appointment in the new broadcasting companies was Pierre Sabbagh, director of channel two at the ORTF.
The further down the hierarchy in each of the new broadcasting companies, the more important became the role played by personal acquaintance and career experience at the ORTF. During the last few months of 1974 the new company chairmen and their directors were competing against each other to bring people they had known at the ORTF to work for their company. Teams were quickly formed, with sometimes a section moving en bloc from the ORTF to one of the new programme companies. A member of A2's programme planning staff described the procedure as follows:

"Having occupied various posts at the ORTF I knew Larère, Chancel and others, and they all knew me. At the time of the break-up of the ORTF the top people looked for those they knew personally to take up posts in their companies. ... In the programmes department at A2 I had to build up a staff under me from scratch because the trained staff went to TF1 with Guillaud and Zbinden. This meant that TF1 started out with an advantage over us. ..." 36

Specialist staff were particularly in demand, and both Guillaud and Larère took advantage of their long experience at the ORTF to bring specialists to TF1 and A2. 37

Cazeneuve's replacement by Guillaud and Jullian's by Ulrich - at the head of TF1 and A2 respectively in December 1977 did not radically alter the allocation of managerial posts made in late 1974. Though some alterations were made in function and status, there were very few.

36. Interview with Mme. Mirette Savelli, May 17, 1977. Former head of the ORTF's programme planning sector, Jacques Zbinden had been made responsible for programme planning at TF1 by Guillaud in 1975.

37. Guillaud, for example, brought Claude Désiré, a programme adviser on channel two, to be head of TR1's fiction section. Guillaud also brought several of his staff from channel three to work at TF1, including programme advisers Mme. Eliane Victor and Arnaud Tenèze. Larère brought Jean Rouilly to be general secretary of production at A2. He also brought Henri Perez, who had worked under him in the production section of the ORTF, to be managing director under him at A2. Other appointments made on Larère's recommendation included those of Jacques Rousseau, former administrative head of channel one, to the post of head of financial and commercial affairs and Mme. Jacqueline Furbeyre, former head of the legal affairs department at the ORTF, to the post of head of the personnel and legal department. Perez in turn brought Maurice Geoffroy, former head of technical services on channel two, to be head of the technical services at A2.
changes in top personnel. At TF1 Guillaud was appointed chairman of the board of governors and director general after being director general for the previous three years. Riou, director of the administrative and financial services (1975-1977), was promoted to the post of deputy director general. Jean Leclerc, former administrative head of channel two at the ORTF, whom Guillaud had brought to TF1 in 1975, was appointed director of production at TF1 in January 1978. Certain structural changes were made in the organisation of the company, but the key personnel remained the same, most of them Guillaud's personal appointees. These included Mme. Monique Trnka, general secretary for programmes, Francis Mercury, head of the documentary department, Jean-Michel Hepp, head of the variety department, Tenèze, head of the theatre and music department, Mme. Victor, in charge of TF1's afternoon programmes and programmes for the young, Zbinden, head of the purchases department, and Désiré, joint head of the company's fiction department. Guillaud summed up his view of his associates at his first press conference as company head:

"My team is the same since the time of channel three (at the ORTF), ... You cannot do this sort of work with people you haven't confidence in." Le Monde, January 19 1978.

At A2 Larère was reappointed director general of the company, a post he had held since his promotion in January 1977. Chancel lost his post as personal adviser to the company head when Jullian left, but remained a member of the new programme committee. Jammot lost his post as directeur des spectacles, which had been created in June 1976 and was now abolished. He too, however, was appointed to the new programme committee. Paul Peyre, former assistant director for programme coordination at the ORTF and then director of external affairs at A2, was appointed general secretary in charge of coordinating the work of A2's production units.

At FR3 Lemoine, director of the regional network, was promoted to the post of director general, second in command to Contamine. Bertrand Cousin, graduate of ENA and director of Contamine's cabinet at FR3 from 1975, was appointed general secretary of the company. Both Han and Sanviti retained their posts as deputy director, head of broadcasting for the overseas departments and territories, and director of the administrative and financial services respectively. Maurice Cazeneuve, director of FR3's national television network from 1975, left this post to resume his former profession as a television producer.

At Radio France de Broglie, director of the administrative and financial services, was promoted to the post of director general under Baudrier before moving in the summer of 1979 to be chairman of INA. Wiehn and Jaigu remained directors of France-Inter and France-Culture respectively. Jean Izard, formerly head of the personnel department under de Broglie at the ORTF and then assistant director responsible for general administration under de Broglie at Radio France, was appointed director of administrative, professional and social affairs in January 1978.

At TDF Autin retained his post as head of the company, while Maurice Rémy was also reappointed director general of the company for a further three years.
The extent to which managerial personnel at the ORTF were given similar posts in the new broadcasting companies in 1974-75 is one of the most important points to emerge from this section. Once the very few posts at the top of the different companies' hierarchies had been allocated with due regard to the balance of political forces within the Government's parliamentary majority, the secondary posts were filled largely on the basis of professional criteria without the need for external intervention by government ministers. Political acceptability and professional experience fused together at this level of appointments, reinforced by the important role played by personal acquaintance.

**News appointments**

The most politically sensitive sector within any broadcasting organisation is the news department. The appointments process to the key posts in the news departments of the four-programme companies affords, therefore, an excellent criterion by which to judge the validity of the Government's proclaimed commitment to the principle of the independence of the broadcasting companies from external interference. As in the field of general managerial appointments the company chairmen were theoretically free to choose the directors of their news departments. This statutory independence was emphasised in a letter from Giscard d'Estaing to the programme company chairmen in January 1975.

"The authorities do not intend to run [name of the company] through you. They delegate this role to you in its entirety until the end of your term of office. That is why they must establish relations with your company, as they do with the other important media of press and information, that is to say by a periodic exchange of views on their initiative or yours regarding the most important problems in the life of [name of the company], but without ever interfering in your managerial and news broadcasting responsibilities. If you
come across any exception to this principle which I regard as fundamental, I ask you to bring it to my attention personally." 39

Yet in practice this freedom of appointment was severely restricted and abused by ministerial interventions particularly from the Ministry of the Interior. During late 1974 the Minister of the Interior, Poniatowski, and one of his advisers, André Mousset, exercised a power of veto over appointments to the top news posts. 40 At the same time they supervised the removal of a number of journalists suspected of being unsympathetic to the new regime. 41 Taken together these measures were indicative of the Government's determination to establish a framework within which news content could if necessary be regulated without recourse to the crude forms of direct censorship which had characterised the Government's relationship with the ORTF during de Gaulle's presidency.

As in the field of general managerial appointments the Government's desire to ensure the selection of politically reliable news personnel did not necessarily require the overt exercise of power since some company chairmen were unlikely in any case to appoint people of whom the Government disapproved. At TF1, FR3 and Radio France the company chairmen (or in the case of TF1 the director general, Guillaud) did not need external pressure from ministers or their staff to make the politically correct choice. Guillaud, Contamine and Baudrier had had long professional experience in top managerial posts at the ORTF where they had demonstrated their ability and willingness not to seek conflict


41. See chapter on the Reallocation of ORTF staff.
with the Gaullist authorities. Moreover both Guillaud and Baudrier were journalists by career and already had their own news staff at channel three and channel one respectively.

At TF1, therefore, Guillaud readily accepted as director of news Henri Marque, who had turned down the opportunity to go to A2. Christian Bernadac moved along with Guillaud from channel three at the ORTF to TF1 where he retained the post of news editor. Jacques Alexandre, who had been assistant director at channel one in charge of news, was appointed documentary advisor at TF1 and head of Guillaud’s cabinet. Roger Gicquel, former assistant director of radio at the ORTF in charge of radio news, became TF1’s main news reader. Finally among the news staff several high ranking journalists accompanied Guillaud.

42. Marque had been press attaché to the cabinets of Antoine Pinay (1950-1952) and General Corniglion-Molinier (1953-1954), before joining Paris-Presse as assistant head of the politics desk in 1955. He had been editor of Nouveau Candide (1962-1965) and then of Paris-Presse—L’Intransigeant—France-Soir (1965-1970). Marque had worked at the ORTF in the late 1960s as joint producer of a magazine programme with Pierre Charpy, who was later to become director of the Gaullist-newspaper La Nation. Marque’s last post before joining TF1 was as editor of the politics desk at the peripheral radio station RTL.

43. Bernadac had been assistant editor in the news department of channel one at the ORTF under Pierre Desgraupes before moving to channel three in late 1972 as news editor. Guillaud was director of channel three at this time. (In an internal reshuffle Bernadac was replaced as news editor by André Celarie in November 1979. Le Monde, November 14, 1979.)

44. Alexandre had a long journalistic career at the ORTF. Promoted in 1968 after refusing to join with the journalists on strike, he became Baudrier’s assistant in the channel two news department in 1969. He then moved with Baudrier from channel two to channel one in 1972. Alexandre left TF1 in 1976 to take up the post of press secretary to the Prime Minister, Raymond Barre.

45. In 1961 Gicquel had been a journalist for the newspaper Parisien Libéré, before moving to France-Inter after the purges of 1968. At the end of 1969 he became responsible for France-Inter’s daily press review. In April 1973 Conte appointed him assistant director of radio in charge of news, a post he held until the break-up of the ORTF when he moved to TF1 to become the company’s main newscaster.
and Bernadac in their move from channel three to TF1.

At Radio France Baudrier appointed as director of news a fervent Gaullist, Michel Péricard, who had worked alongside Baudrier since 1969. Along with some other journalists Péricard moved with Baudrier from channel one at the ORTF to Radio France at the time of the break-up of the Office. His immediate subordinates in the news department of the radio company included Jacques Perrier and Robert West.

At FR3, whose national news department is of relatively minor importance in comparison with the news departments of TF1 and A2 and with FR3’s own regional news centres, Claude Lefèvre was appointed

46. Jean Barberousse, Claude Lagaillarde, Francis Mercury, Robert Villeneuve and several other journalists-and news cameramen accompanied Guillaud and Bernadac in their move from channel three at the ORTF to TF1.

47. Péricard had worked at the RTF and then at the ORTF since 1945. He had been editor of Baudrier's news team on channel two (1969-1972) and had then moved with Baudrier from channel two to channel one to become editor and head of the politics desk on the ORTF's main channel (1972-1974). Péricard accompanied Baudrier from channel one to Radio France in January 1975.

A Gaullist candidate in the 1971 municipal elections, Péricard was elected in the 1977 municipal elections as Gaullist mayor of Saint-Germain-en-Laye. Later in the same year he was voted on to the central council of the RPR, which led to his resignation from his post as director of news at Radio France. In the 1978 legislative elections he was successfully elected as Gaullist deputy for the second constituency of the Yvelines department. Earlier in his career Péricard had been a member of several Gaullist ministerial cabinets: that of M. Missoffe (Youth and Sport, 1966-1968); of M. Guéna (Information, then Posts and Telecommunications, 1968-1969) and of M. Fons (Agriculture, 1969).

48. About half a dozen top journalists went with Baudrier and Péricard from channel one at the ORTF to Radio France. Among them was Joseph Paletou who was appointed head of the politics and economics desk in the news department.

49. Perrier had been a journalist for the right-wing newspapers L'Aurore and Minute and then for the weekly magazine L'Express before joining Radio France in 1975. He had taken a pro-Giscard d'Estaing stance during the 1974 presidential election campaign. West had been responsible for news programming on France Culture prior to the break-up of the ORTF.
director of news on the national channel.  

In contrast with the spirit of calm in which appointments to the top news posts were made at TF1, FR3 and Radio France, there was a succession of minor storms at A2 in the autumn of 1974. Despite the fact that the viewing figures for channel two's main evening news bulletin had tripled over the previous two years from 1972 to 1974, the director of news, Jean Lefèvre and the news editor, Jean-Claude Heberlé were both transferred and in effect demoted on the recommendation of the Minister of the Interior. The deputy news editor at channel two, Jean-Pierre Elkabbach, was also transferred to become editor of France-Inter at Radio France.

Since Jullian was unable to give Marque the financial guarantees the latter required before accepting the post as director of news at A2, the chairman of the company decided instead to appoint Jacques Sallebert, former director of radio at the ORTF and at the time without a post in the reorganised broadcasting structure.

50. Claude Lefèvre entered the ORTF in 1964 and in 1969 became a member of the Baudrier news team on channel two. In June 1973 he was appointed to the regional news station for the Loire valley region, before being appointed head of national news at FR3 in January 1975. Claude Lefèvre was a former member of the Gaullist parallel police force, the SAC.

51. Jean Lefèvre was appointed A2's correspondent in the United States in January 1975. It appeared likely that Jean-Lefèvre and Heberlé were being punished for having given in the eyes of the new regime overly sympathetic coverage of Chaban-Delmas during the 1974 presidential election campaign. C. Durieux, op. cit. pp. 83-84. This view was confirmed by Jullian in an interview with the author on September 19 1979.

52. Sallebert had started work on French radio as far back as 1940. He had helped produce the first television news bulletin in 1949 and in 1971 had been appointed head of the ORTF's radio services. In 1973 he had come into conflict with the Minister of Information, Malaud, over the supposed left-wing tendencies of certain members of staff of France-Culture. It was this unsubstantiated charge which probably led to his not being offered a post in the reorganised broadcasting structure in the first instance. Just prior to his resignation from A2 in 1976 Sallebert stood successfully as an independent candidate in Cannes in the cantonal elections of that year with the active support of the local Gaullist party. In the same year he was appointed director general of the peripheral television station Télé-Monte-Carlo.
appointment Poniatowski sought to mitigate its effect by ensuring the selection of a politically reliable news editor. The candidacies of Philippe Gildas, presenter on France-Inter, Michel Bassi, former head of the politics desk at Le Figaro, and Roger Gicquel, Sallebert's assistant in the radio services of the ORTF, were all rejected by the Government. 53

"The Government, through the 1974 statute, declared that it was liberalising (broadcasting). But it was afraid of this machine which throws politicians into a cold sweat. Everybody knows that in the early days I tried to bring journalists like Gildas, Gicquel and Bassi (to A2). I was strongly advised against the three of them because they had been labelled (undesirable) or because they were a little left-wing. ..." 54

Finally, Georges Leroy, who had resigned from the peripheral radio station Europe 1 in October 1974 at the time of the Siégel affair, was chosen by Jullian to fill the vacant post of news editor. 55

53. Gildas had been editor of the Desgraupes-news team on Channel One at the ORTF from 1969 to 1972. While there he had blotted his copybook by refusing to cover a ceremony which Mme. Pompidou was attending. Apparently this intransigence to cooperate with the authorities was sufficient to scuttle his candidacy for the post of editor at A2 in 1974. Gildas is at present news editor at Europe 1.

Gicquel moved from the radio services at the ORTF to become the main news reader at TF1! Bassi was turned down because he was considered a Chabanist. Later, however, he was given a post at the Elysée as assistant to Jean-Philippe Lecat, the Elysée spokesman! In May 1977 he was appointed head of the pro-Giscardian propaganda organisation, Association pour la démocratie, and in 1978 became director-general of Radio-Monte-Carlo.

Interview with Marcel Jullian, September 19 1979. See also Le Monde, November 24-25 1974.


55. Leroy resigned from Europe 1 in sympathy with the station's director general, Maurice Siégel, who had been dismissed from his post by the head of Sofirad, Denis Baudouin, on the orders of Chirac. During his interview with the author, Jullian could not explain why the Government agreed to Leroy's appointment. For more information on the Siégel affair see chapter on the State Monopoly.
Even before the new broadcasting companies were operational, therefore, A2 gave the Government the greatest cause for anxiety in the key area of news appointments. In large part this was due to the more independent stance adopted by the newcomer to broadcasting management, Jullian, who appeared to believe the Government’s own propaganda regarding the independence of the companies from government interference. In stark contrast to its direct competitor TF1, whose top news staff remained unchanged throughout the first three year period of transmission, A2 continued to project an image of instability and constant flux. Thus, from January 1975 to December 1977 A2 had four different directors of news: Sallebert, Leroy, Baudinat and Elkabbach, with all of them adopting different formats in a bid to improve the viewing figures for A2’s main evening news programme.

The appointment in January 1977 of Elkabbach as director of news provides an excellent example of the manner in which government pressure may be exerted on a programme company in the field of broadcasting. To understand the causes of Elkabbach’s appointment and its consequences for A2’s news staff it is first of all necessary to describe and analyse the instability at the top of the news department in the two year period prior to Elkabbach’s selection. The causes of this instability are diverse and complex, involving professional and personal as well as political considerations.

At the end of 1974 Sallebert was appointed by Jullian as director of the news department with Leroy as news editor. Sallebert, however, never really took to his new responsibilities and as early as mid-1975 Leroy, Sallebert’s nominal second in command, was given the task of running the department and producing the main evening news programme. Sallebert retained his post as director of news until April 1976.
when he resigned from A2 to become director general of Télé-Monte-Carlo. From mid-1975 to mid-1976, therefore, Leroy, and not Sallebert, was responsible for A2's news programming.

In June 1976, following an internal reorganisation of the company, Leroy was officially appointed director of news. Ironically, at the very moment when Leroy appeared to have consolidated his position, he found himself once again occupying only the second top post in the news hierarchy. This was due to the fact that the internal reform which had been the occasion of his promotion to the post of director of news (directeur de l'information) had also lead to the creation of a completely new post, directeur de l'actualité, which had overall responsibility over A2's news, documentary and magazine output. This position of news overlord was given to Baudinat, who thus became Leroy's official superior.

Annoyed at once again being only second in command, Leroy resigned from A2 in September 1976. News programming then became the responsibility of Baudinat with the help of his news editor, Jean-Marie Cavada. In fact it was Cavada who in the final months of 1976 was in charge of A2's main evening news programme, since Baudinat was in the process of being implicated in a bribery scandal which finally led to his resignation from the company. Baudinat's enforced resignation in turn opened up the way for Elkabbach's return to television as director of news at A2 in January 1977.

The succession of changes at the head of A2's news department could possibly be explained with reference to personal and professional considerations. Inevitably, however, such instability was not without political reverberations. Partly attributable to the poor viewing figures

56. Baudinat was accused of accepting money from the company which hoped to build A2's new headquarters.
for the company's main evening news programme compared with that of TF1, the lack of stability at the head of A2's news team had itself contributed to this worrying state of affairs.\textsuperscript{57} In the early months of 1975 A2's main evening news programme failed to maintain the viewing figures of its predecessor at the ORTF, \textit{INF 2}. Moreover, after Leroy's departure the figures, which had shown some improvement during late 1975, plummeted with the result that by late 1976 the average audience for A2's main evening news broadcast was around 15\% of the possible viewing public compared with about 30\% on TF1. This low level of popularity was particularly worrying for A2's management, and not only for reasons of prestige. Since the peak advertising time on both TF1 and A2 is immediately before and after the main evening news programmes, screened simultaneously between 8.00 and 8.30 p.m., any long-term decline in the viewing figures for the news broadcasts can have a significant effect on advertising revenue.\textsuperscript{58}

The endemic instability at A2 was brought to a head by Baudinat's enforced departure at the end of 1976, since the internal organisational crisis at A2 was now accompanied by a serious political crisis in the electoral appeal of the presidential coalition. Already Gaullist and Giscardian candidates had done relatively poorly in the cantonal elections of March 1976. Moreover during the summer political differences between President Giscard d'Estaing and his Gaullist Prime Minister, Chirac, had become amplified, culminating in the latter's resignation from the premiership in August. By late 1976 the Giscardian wing of the Government and the President himself could

\textsuperscript{57} See tables 5.ii and 5.iii.
\textsuperscript{58} See chapter on Finance.
hardly relish the prospect of the forthcoming municipal elections to be held in March 1977 at which candidates of the governing coalition were opposed by those of the Socialist–Communist left while in Paris the majorité itself was split into rival Giscardian and Gaullist camps. Moreover, with the crucial 1978 legislative elections and the strong possibility of defeat at the hands of the united left only just over a year away, the President and his supporters were naturally anxious to stabilise the situation at A2.

Thus, in January 1977 the director of the company, Larère, was promoted to the newly created post of director general. Jullian defended this decision on the grounds that the promotion had been under consideration for some time and was intended to give Larère equal status to Guillaud at TF1. The timing of the decision, however, led several of A2’s staff to regard the promotion as evidence of the Government’s displeasure with Jullian’s management and of its desire to restore order within the company. This view can only have been reinforced when Jullian’s contract as chairman of A2 was not renewed at the end of 1977.

Larère’s promotion was overshadowed, however, by Elkabbach’s appointment as director of news. It is easy to understand why A2 required a new director of news to replace the discredited Baudinat. Nor was there the least doubt that Elkabbach had the professional experience in broadcasting to take on the post. However, at first sight it appeared difficult to explain his selection on political grounds.


60. Elkabbach had joined the staff on France-Inter in 1961. Disciplined after the 1968 strike, he was moved to Toulouse and then became the ORTF’s correspondent in Bonn. He was assistant editor on channel two’s news team from 1972 to 1974 and edited the magazine programme Actuel 2. After the break-up of the ORTF he moved to Radio France where he became editor of France-Inter and presented the magazine programme 13-14.
After all Elkabbach had been transferred from his post as deputy editor of channel two's news team following the break-up of the ORTF. Furthermore, this step could not have been made on professional grounds since the viewing figures for channel two's news programme had shown a substantial increase over the 1972-1974 period. Certainly Elkabbach's success at Radio France played a part in influencing the Government's choice, as did Elkabbach's long-standing desire to return to television. By themselves, however, they were hardly sufficient. More importantly by late 1976 Elkabbach had established his political credentials with the Giscardian regime.

Elkabbach's appointment in January 1977 illustrated the return to presidential favour of the supporters of Chaban-Delmas and the emergence of a Giscard-Chaban axis in opposition to the Chirac-dominated Gaullist party. As a leading member of channel two's news team at the ORTF from 1972 to 1974, Elkabbach had been suspected of favouring Chaban-Delmas' candidacy to the presidency in 1974 and along with other suspected Chabanists had been a minor victim of Giscard d'Estaing's presidential victory. Indeed, Jullian recounted that on arriving at A2 "... the capital sin in the eyes of the witch-hunters was to have been regarded as a chabanist." Elkabbach's appointment as director of news at A2 was evidence that after Chirac's resignation from the premiership, Chaban-Delmas and his presumed

61. The news department on channel two at the ORTF from 1972 to 1974 contained a significant rump of the original Desgraupes team which had been the news team on channel one between 1969 and 1972. The reform which had led to the creation of the Desgraupes team in 1969 had been the personal responsibility of the then Prime Minister, Chaban-Delmas.

supporters were no longer out of favour with the Giscardian regime. This was later confirmed by Chaban-Delmas’ election to the presidency of the National Assembly with Giscardian support in the face of opposition from the Chirac-led RPR. 63

Whatever the external political reasons for Elkabbach’s appointment, there is no doubt that the choice was not made inside A2. Jullian did not know Elkabbach personally and displayed no enthusiasm about his appointment. At first the chairman of A2 rejected the suggestion that the appointment had been forced on him by strong external pressure: "... the choice ... is totally and without reservation that of the chairman of the company." 64 Later, however, Jullian admitted that the Government had played an influential role in the selection of almost all the directors of news, 65 and that Elkabbach had been appointed to prepare the ground for the 1978 legislative elections. 66 Though it proved impossible to ascertain whether Elkabbach’s appointment was made by the President personally, by a member of the presidential staff or by a government minister, it is certain that it was made by a member of the Giscardian administration and not by the chairman of A2. 67 It is fair to state, therefore, that Elkabbach’s nomination represented a "partisan political appointment."

The immediate consequence of Elkabbach’s appointment was the formation of his own personal news team. Though the key posts of director of news and news editor had been filled by various incumbents

63. Le Monde, April 5 1978. A sign that Elkabbach had returned to political favour by late 1976 was the fact that Giscard d’Estaing allowed himself to be interviewed on Elkabbach’s radio programme in December barely a month before the latter’s appointment to A2.

64. Antenne 2: Minutes of the Comité d’entreprise, extraordinary meeting, February 7 1977.


66. Interview with Marcel Jullian, September 19 1979. Jullian described Elkabbach as a "faithful servant of the authorities."

67. The appointment was generally regarded by broadcasting journalists
since the break-up of the ORTF, Jullian had always been opposed to staff changes in the main body of the news department. 68 Consequently, neither Sallebert, Leroy or Baudinat had sought to make major changes in news staff, preferring to work with those journalists reallocated to A2 after the break-up of the ORTF. 69

Elkabbach, however, set as one of his conditions of acceptance the proviso that he would have full powers over the choice of his news team. Louis Bériot, who had worked with Elkabbach at France-Inter, was made news editor by Elkabbach, and his was only the most important of several personal appointments made by the new director of news in early 1977. 70 At the same time several top members of the old news team were effectively demoted by Elkabbach. For example, Cavada, news editor under Baudinat, was removed from his post in what appeared to be the settling of a personal score. 71 The reorganisation of the news

67. and interested politicians as having been made on the strong recommendation of a member of the presidential staff. Jullian, in an interview with the author, attributed responsibility to the Elysée staff and not to the President of the Republic personally.

68. There was, and is, a strong trade union membership among A2's news staff. Approximately 80% are trade union members compared with less than 50% of TF1's news team.

69. See chapter on the Reallocation of ORTF staff.

70. Bériot had been assistant editor at France-Inter under Elkabbach where he had been producer of the magazine programme Questions pour un samedi.

Jean-Claude Mangeot was appointed assistant editor. Noel Copin became head of the politics desk, while Georges Bortoli was made head of the foreign news desk. Elkabbach also made use of outside consultants to provide specialist information, a practice he had developed at Radio France. L'Humanité, February 8 1977 and Téléciné, no. 217, April 1977.

71. About a dozen members of the former news team were downgraded or resigned, including Claude Manuel (assistant editor), Christian Dutoit (technical editor), Christian Guy (assistant editor), Didier Lecat (assistant head of the politics desk), Michel Thoulouze (sector head), Jean Lanzi (editor responsible for the weekend news programme) and Benoît Gelot (assistant editor for magazine programmes).
department mainly affected former members of the Desgraupes team, with the result that of the few former members of the Desgraupes team who still remained in the news department at A2 none held a major position of responsibility following Elkabbach's appointment.  

Elkabbach's appointment at A2 left a vacant position at Radio France. Jean Lefèvre took over responsibility for the midday magazine programme on France-Inter in January 1977 and was simultaneously appointed assistant director of news at Radio France under Péricard. In June of the same year, following Péricard's election to the central committee of the RPR, the director of news at Radio France was forced to resign. Péricard was then replaced by Lefèvre who in the space of six months had made a spectacular comeback after his demotion in late 1974 following the break-up of the ORTF.

The reasons for Lefèvre's appointment to the top news post at Radio France were, as in the case of Elkabbach, not immediately apparent. Certainly Péricard had to be replaced once he had decided to embark overtly on a political career. Moreover, Lefèvre had all the necessary

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71. Cavada had worked on channel two from 1972 to 1974 alongside Elkabbach and had gone to A2 after the break-up of the ORTF. During this five year spell Cavada had successively held the posts of news presenter and head of the foreign news desk, assistant editor, magazine editor and news editor.

72. Manuel, Dutoit, Guy, Thoulouze and Gelot had all been members of the Desgraupes team at the ORTF (1969-1972).

73. Lefèvre had had a long career in French broadcasting. Director of the regional station at Strasbourg (1966-1969), channel one's London correspondent (1969-1972), he was then appointed assistant director in charge of news on channel two (1972-1974). After the break-up of the ORTF he became A2's Washington correspondent (1975-1977) before coming to Radio France in January 1977. The management of Radio France indicated that Lefèvre had been brought to their company in January to cover the eventuality of Péricard's departure. Péricard was given the post of inspecteur général which he held from July until the end of December 1977. He resigned completely from Radio France at the beginning of 1978 to devote himself to his election campaign in the Yvelines where he successfully stood as an RPR candidate in the 1978 legislative elections.
professional experience for the post. His appointment to Radio France immediately prior to the 1977 municipal elections and his promotion a mere nine months before the 1978 legislative elections in place of a recognised Gaullist indicated, along with Elkabbach's appointment, that Giscard d'Estaing and his entourage were more than ever keen to appoint persons sympathetic to the Giscardian regime in these key broadcasting posts. While the appointment of Lefèvre and, to a lesser extent, Elkabbach seemed paradoxical after their transfer in 1974, it was noticeable that their return to favour coincided with the run-up to the 1978 elections and a significant change in the relationship between the Gaullist and Giscardian wings of the governing coalition.74

The appointment of Elkabbach in particular demonstrated the very real limits on the freedom of manoeuvre of the chairmen of the broadcasting companies in the politically sensitive field of news programming. In some cases these limits were readily accepted by the company chairmen, with the result that overt interference by the Government was unnecessary. In other cases constraints were imposed by the Government either in the form of ministerial veto or positive recommendation. In any event whether overt or covert, willingly accepted or not, the existence of these constraints belied the Government's guarantees regarding the autonomy of the broadcasting companies.

74. Following Lefèvre's appointment as director of news at Radio France in July 1977 various changes of personnel took place in the upper echelons of the news department. The assistant director of news under Péricard, Jacques Perrier, resigned from the company immediately, as did François Bonnemain, assistant editor. (Bonnemain was to coproduce with Péricard a television programme on TF1 Le France défigurée in early 1978).

Perrier's post was taken by Michel Tauriac. Tauriac had been assistant editor on France-Inter and then in the news department on channel one. After the break-up of the ORTF he had moved to Radio France as editor responsible for special duties and adviser to the head of the company. Gilbert Denoyan and Jerome Bellay were appointed assistant editors. The major survivor from Péricard's news team was West who became general secretary of the news department.
The President's men?

A charge increasingly made during the Giscardian presidency has been that Giscard d'Estaing is engaged in a process of placing his political supporters in key decision-making posts in the broadcasting media and related organisations as part of a deliberate attempt to colonise the ministerial, administrative and para-administrative power bases in the French political system.\(^75\) Asked at a presidential press conference in June 1978 about the development of a "UDF state" in place of the previous "UDR state", Giscard d'Estaing replied quite categorically:

"...there is not, on my part, any desire to do anything other than apply my rule: that is for each post I look for "the best", and you have only to see that, in all the appointments which have taken place during the past few years, my idea is that everywhere we should appoint the best. I do not know if the best have in common a political preference. ..."\(^76\)

In the preceding section we analysed the overriding influence of the authorities in the choice of top news staff in the state broadcasting companies. In this section we shall argue that far from being random events these appointments form part of a coherent strategy. Particularly since Chirac's resignation from the premiership the number of Giscardian appointments to key broadcasting posts has steadily increased to the point where one can speak of a pattern of control via presidential appointments.

\(^75\) See, for example, the criticisms made by the Socialist, Communist and Gaullist members of the parliamentary committee of inquiry on the state of the French mass media. *Journal Officiel, Documents Assemblée Nationale*, 1979, no. 1289, Rapport fait au nom de la commission d'enquête sur les conditions de l'information publique, présenté par Claude Martin, dépôt publié au *Journal Officiel* du 18 septembre 1979.


\(^76\) Presidential press conference of June 14 1978. *Le Monde*, June 16 1978. The UDF (Union pour la Démocratie Française) is the federation of Giscardian, Centrist and Radical parties which provides the parliamentary support for the policies of President Giscard d'Estaing.
Apart from Elkabbach, other Giscardian appointments include Xavier Gouyou-Beauchamps, former head of the Élysée press service, as head of Sofirad in April 1977\(^7\); Yves Cannac, the President's deputy general secretary, as head of the Havas advertising agency, which has a controlling interest in Radio Télévision Luxembourg, in June 1978\(^8\); Michel Bassi, head of the Giscardian propaganda organisation Association pour la démocratie in the run-up to the 1978 elections as director general of Radio-Monte-Carlo in November 1978\(^9\); Gerard Montassier, Giscard d'Estaing's son-in-law and unsuccessful UDF candidate in the 1979 cantonal elections, as head of the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel in October 1976\(^8\); Roland Faure, former head of the petty bourgeois

\(^7\) A graduate of ENA, Gouyou-Beauchamps was from 1969 chargé de mission and then technical adviser in Giscard d'Estaing's cabinet at the Ministry of Finance. In 1974 after Giscard d'Estaing's election to the presidency he was appointed head of the Élysée press service until August 1976 when he became prefect of the Ardèche department. Gouyou-Beauchamps replaced Denis Baudouin at the head of Sofirad in April 1977. For more information on Sofirad see chapter on the State monopoly.

\(^8\) A former member of the cabinet of Chaban-Delmas at Matignon and then deputy general secretary on President Giscard d'Estaing's staff at the Élysée, Cannac had been largely responsible for drafting the 1974 broadcasting reform which broke up the ORTF. His appointment as head of the Havas advertising agency in June 1978 was significant because Havas owns 15\% of the shares in the company Audiofina which itself owns 54\% of the shares in Radio Télévision Luxembourg. Thus, through Havas the French government has a voice in the running of RTL and in the appointment of top managerial staff there. In 1979 Cannac prepared a special report on France's role in the development of satellite broadcasting. For more information on this see chapter on the State monopoly.

\(^9\) Bassi was appointed deputy director general of Radio-Monte-Carlo in May 1978 in preparation for his appointment to the post of director general at the end of the year. Former head of the politics desk and then deputy editor of Le Figaro, Bassi had from September 1976 to May 1977 been assistant to Lecat, the Élysée spokesman. In May 1977 he had left the Élysée to take up the new post of head of l'Association pour la démocratie, a propaganda organisation for the President and the UDF set up after the 1977 municipal elections to rally support for UDF candidates in the forthcoming 1978 legislative elections. Following Bassi's appointment at Radio-Monte-Carlo there was a reshuffle amongst the station's top managerial staff. A new director of news was appointed, Jacques Paoli, and a newly created post of general secretary was filled by Antoine Schwartz, a former member of Raymond Barre's cabinet.

\(^8\) See chapter on the Liquidation of the ORTF.
newspaper *l'Aurore* and press representative on A2's board of governors, as director of news at Radio France in September 1979; Jean-Marie Cavada as head of national news at FR3 in September 1978; Henri Pigeat as head of the French news agency *Agence France Presse* in October 1979; Alain Quintrie-Lamothe as deputy director general of *Sud-Radio* in August 1979; Patrice Duhamel as head of the politics desk at TF1 in the autumn of 1976; and Jacques Rigaud as head of *Radio Télévision*.

81. A journalist by profession Faure became editor of *l'Aurore* in 1963 and remained in this post until his resignation in November 1978. From January 1975 Faure was press representative on the board of governors of A2.

82. Former news editor at A2 before Elkabbach's appointment as director of news, Cavada was appointed assistant director of FR3 in charge of national news and of the regional news of the Paris-Ile-de-France station in September 1978. He replaced Claude Lefèvre, the former editor of national news who was appointed regional director of the station Lorraine-Champagne-Ardennes.

83. Pigeat was a graduate of ENA and a former member of the cabinets of Pompidou (Prime Minister) and Malaud (Civil Service and Information). In 1973 he became general secretary of the comité interministériel pour l'information, a government information service. He became head of its successor, the délégation générale à l'information in 1975 after working under Denis Baudouin for a year and a half as his deputy at the DGI. In April 1976 he became deputy director general of *Agence France Presse*, a position he held until his promotion to the top post in October 1979.


84. *Le Monde*, August 31 and September 5 1978

85. In several interviews with broadcasting journalists Patrice Duhamel was most often cited as the archetypal Giscardian journalist.
Luxembourg in October 1979. 86

Three important points are common to the above appointments. First, all concern important decision-making posts, managerial or editorial, in the broadcasting media or related organisations. Secondly, all date since Chirac's resignation from the premiership and most have taken place since the crucial 1978 legislative election victory of the Giscardian-Gaullist coalition. Lastly, all the above appointments form part of the colonisation of the broadcasting media by supporters of the Giscardian regime. In the cases of Gouyou-Beauchamps, Cannac and Bassi, those appointed had formerly been part of the President's own staff at the Elysée. In other cases it was clear that those chosen were at the very least not antipathetic towards the Giscardian regime.

While Giscard d'Estaing himself denied the charge that there was a pattern of Giscardian appointments to key posts in the broadcasting media, his parliamentary supporters were less evasive. Replying to criticisms made by the RPR members of the parliamentary committee

86. At Radio Télé Luxembourg after the departure of Jean Farran, director general of the station, in September 1978 and of Christian Chavanon, administrateur délégué and de facto head of the station, barely a fortnight later, the French government attempted to place one of its own men in the top post at RTL, despite the fact that unlike its links with Europe 1, Radio-Monte-Carlo and Sud-Radio, Sofirad does not have any shareholdings in RTL.

The appointment of Cannac at the head of the Havas advertising agency was intended to help in this manoeuvre (see above). However, the French government met with considerable opposition from the Luxembourg government, with the result that a permanent appointment was not made until one year after Chavanon's departure. The board of governors of the parent company of RTL gave as the reason for this long delay the fact that the two candidates originally proposed by the French government were "too obviously Giscardian." Le Monde, March 4-5 1979.

It was only in October 1979 that Rigaud was appointed administrateur délégué of RTL. A graduate of ENA and member of different ministerial cabinets, Rigaud's most recent post was as chargé de mission in the cabinet of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jean François-Poncet, who himself had previously been Giscard d'Estaing's general secretary at the Elysée.
of inquiry on the French mass media which reported in September 1979, the UDF committee members affirmed that since the State was the sole shareholder in the national broadcasting companies and in Sofirad and the major shareholder in the Havas agency and certain radio stations, it was logical that it should be the State, and therefore the Government, which should have the role of appointing the management of these companies according to its own criteria. Documenting the Gaullist colonisation of the broadcasting services during the first twenty years of the Fifth Republic the UDF committee members then went on to make the following illuminating comment:

"... Therefore, one has to be very naive or suffer from a curiously selective amnesia to find in the present situation a worrying innovation. For what reasons should something which was natural twenty five or ten years ago suddenly become scandalous? Other systems of appointment would undoubtedly be possible and perhaps better, in the tradition of the anglo-saxon democracies. One must, however, understand that they have never been adopted in our country where the weight of tradition is quite different." 88

In other words, far from denying the criticisms made by the Gaullist committee members among others, the UDF committee members accepted the validity of the charge and defended the practice by reference to tradition. In essence their argument was that if it had been alright for the Gaullists to appoint their men to the key broadcasting posts between 1958 and 1974, then there was no reason to expect the Giscardian regime to do otherwise. While the UDF committee members then sought to modify this view somewhat by stating that the authorities appointed the new sets of management "to apply the new policy of liberalising the media", this seemed only a token acknowledgement of the supposed changes introduced by the 1974 reform. Their views certainly contrasted with the optimistic appraisal of the objectives of the reform made by ministers at the time of the break-up of the ORTF.


Boards of governors: composition

Each of the broadcasting companies which replaced the ORTF possesses its own separate board of governors. Since there is no central body in the new broadcasting structure, it follows that there is no board of governors with overall responsibility for the administration of the state broadcasting services. With the exception of the production company, the composition of the boards was explicitly laid down in the 1974 legislation, after being the subject of impassioned debate in Parliament. 89

The transmission company has a sixteen member board. 90 Of the sixteen governors twelve are appointed by the Government, with eight chosen directly as governors plus the chairmen of the four programme companies sitting as of right. In addition there are two parliamentary representatives (one deputy and one senator) and two staff representatives on TDF's governing board. The members of the board of governors are appointed for three years and the chairman, who is also the de facto managerial head of the company, is appointed by the Government from among the members of the board. The term of office of the eight representatives of the State may at any time by decision of the Government be put to an end.

The archive and research institute has twenty-two governors. Ten are appointed directly by the Government, six represent the other broadcasting companies, two governors represent the staff and four are appointed in recognition of their competence in the field. The members of the board are appointed for three years, except in the case of the State representatives whose mandate may be ended at any time. 91

89. See chapter on Parliamentary control.
90. 1974 broadcasting statute, article 5. See also Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, decree no. 74-795 of September 24, 1974.
The boards of governors of the four programme companies have only six members, two of whom, including the chairman are appointed by the Government. 92 This minority of government appointments to the governing boards of the four programme companies seemed at first sight to reflect the Government's desire that once established the companies should not be susceptible to governmental interference. In particular, this minority representation contrasted sharply with the practice at the ORTF where at least half the members of the board of governors had been appointed by the Government. 93

The method of appointment of the other four governors on each board, however, worked against the possibility of the two government appointees finding themselves in the minority on any important policy decision at board meetings. For example, the representative of the press on each of the four programme company boards is also chosen by the Government. The representative of Parliament is elected in a joint meeting of the social and cultural affairs committees of the National Assembly and the Senate. 94 A balance is maintained between both parliamentary chambers and between the majorité and opposition in the election of the parliamentary representatives for the six governorships, one in each of the four programme companies and two in the transmission company. However, in both 1975 and 1978 two of the three parliamentary representatives from the ranks of the opposition were placed at TDF where they were vastly outnumbered by the government appointees. 95

92. 1974 broadcasting statute, article 11.
93. See tables 5.iv and 5.v for the numerical composition of the boards of governors of the ORTF (1964-1974) and of the new broadcasting companies. (1974-)
95. From 1975 to 1977 the two parliamentary representatives at TDF were Roger Gouhier (Communist deputy) and Georges Lamousse (Socialist senator), and after 1978 Guy Ducoloné (Communist deputy) and Claude Fuzier (Socialist senator).
The representatives of Parliament on the boards of governors of the three television companies were all drawn from the ranks of the majorité in both 1975 and 1978, while only in one programme company, Radio France, was the parliamentary representative on the governing board a member of the opposition parties. The staff representative is chosen by the Government from lists of at least three candidates drawn up by each of the recognised broadcasting trade unions. Finally, the representative of the world of culture, who must come from the cinema industry in the case of FR3, is chosen by the other five governors.

In short, therefore, even in the programme companies where representatives of the State are apparently in the minority on the boards of governors, the reality is very different. As in the transmission company, it is virtually unthinkable that on any major policy decision the two state representatives would ever find themselves in a minority at board meetings. The fact that the chairman of the board is chosen by

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96. Among the representatives of the majorité a balance is preserved among the constituent parties. Since 1975 the parliamentary representatives on the governing boards of TF1, A2 and FR3 respectively have been Pierre-Roger Gaussin (réformateur deputy), who was replaced by Gérard Longuet (UDF deputy) after losing his seat at the 1978 legislative elections; Robert-André Vivien (Gaullist deputy); and Michel Miroudot (Giscardian senator). At Radio France the parliamentary representative since 1975 has been Jacques Carat (Socialist senator).


98. Ibid, article 4. See tables 5.vi and 5.vii for a full list of the governors of the programme companies since 1975.
the Government and not, as the opposition parties wished, elected by the other governors merely reinforces the dominant position of the state representatives.

Boards of governors: functions

The functions of the boards of governors of the transmission company and the programme companies were set out in article 17 of the 1974 statute.99

"The boards of governors ... lay down the general guidelines of company policy within the framework set by the cahiers des charges. They vote the budget ... which must be balanced and supervise its implementation. The boards of governors of the radio and television companies ensure the quality and morality of the programmes. They guarantee the objectivity and truthfulness of the news presented and ensure the expression of the major trends of opinion and currents of thought." 100

Wide sweeping as these powers appear to be, the boards of governors in fact play a very minor role in the long-term policy formulation of the companies and almost no part in their everyday management. They generally meet only once a month at most for a morning or afternoon. The governors have, with the exception of the chairman who is also usually the managerial head of the company, neither the time nor the expertise to challenge effectively the decisions of the company's management even if they wished to do so. As one interviewee remarked, the board of governors is an administrative not a managerial body. 101

99. Article 17 of the 1974 broadcasting statute reproduced almost verbatim the terms of article 7 of the 1972 ORTF statute, which itself copied the provisions of article 4 of the 1964 ORTF statute which had instituted the creation of a board of governors for the state broadcasting services.

100. The functions of the board of governors of TDF were made more explicit in decree no. 74-795 of September 24 1974. For the functions of the board of governors of INA see decree no. 74-946 of November 14 1974.

101. Interview with Jean-Loup Rosset, secretary to the board of governors of TF1, September 14 1979.
A member of the board of governors at TF1 agreed that the board does not run the company, make staff appointments or make detailed choices. Moreover, it was apparent from this interviewee that the board meetings of TF1 are dominated by Guillaud and the contrôleur d'Etat. One of the governors at A2 complained that the board had insufficient time or information to discuss the company's budget properly, that the board was consulted after the programme schedules had been drafted and that it previewed only five or six programmes per year. A governor at Radio France agreed with this assessment of the powers of the board, arguing that the board is consulted or merely informed of many of the crucial decisions affecting the running of the company. He gave as an example of this practice the fact that the board was told about the appointment of Roland Faure as director of news in place of Jean Lefèvre after the event. In short, the role of the governing boards is essentially to rubber-stamp decisions already taken by the company's management, the same role that the board of governors apparently fulfilled at the ORTF.

Conclusion

The power of appointment which the Government enjoys in practice far exceeds the minimal statutory rights contained in the 1974 broadcasting legislation. The legal right of appointment to and dismissal from the top

102. Interview with Gérard Longuet, parliamentary representative on the board of governors of TF1, September 6 1979.
103. Interview with Jean Favre, trade union representative on the board of governors of A2, September 10 1979.
one or two posts in each of the broadcasting companies has in practice been extended without any basis in law to cover other key posts, most crucially in the news departments of the four programme companies. Moreover, it is clear that appointments to the top managerial and editorial posts have been made with regard to the political loyalties of those appointed with the overall aim of securing a politically sympathetic management, especially at the head of the separate news departments. Partisan political appointments, in short, form one of the most important control mechanisms the Government possesses.

Undoubtedly Giscard d'Estaing and his supporters would have been keen to fill as many posts as possible with persons sympathetic to the new Giscardian regime, as previous Gaullist administrations had done with their supporters at the ORTF. The new President, however, had less freedom of manoeuvre than his predecessors for both professional and political reasons. To maintain the functioning of the state broadcasting services, which included three television channels and a comprehensive radio network, it was necessary to draw on the skills of many administrators, frequently with Gaullist sympathies, who had worked in managerial posts at the ORTF. They in turn frequently appointed to subordinate managerial positions their own acquaintances from the Office.

More importantly, however, the political constraint on Giscard d'Estaing's freedom of manoeuvre was that the President initially depended on the Gaullist party in Parliament to pass the Government's proposed legislation and on the Prime Minister and leader of the Gaullists, Chirac, to organise and rally this Gaullist parliamentary support. 106 As the quid pro quo for this Gaullist backing in the

National Assembly, some Gaullist supporters were given key posts in the new broadcasting companies. For both professional and political reasons, therefore, the top managerial and editorial posts in the new companies were manned to a large extent by personnel from the defunct ORTF.

Since the first wave of appointments in 1974–75, however, the political constraint has been modified by Chirac's resignation from the premiership in August 1976 and the increasingly critical stance adopted by the Gaullist party towards the President and his government. Within the Government the balance of power has shifted more clearly towards the Giscardians and their allies and this has been reflected in appointments to the broadcasting companies and related organisations. Throughout 1978 and 1979, Chiracian Gaullists have been steadily replaced by persons more favourable to the Giscardian regime. Even where no change in the person holding the post has taken place, as is the case at the head of FR3 and Radio France where Contamine and Baudrier retained their posts as company chairmen at the end of 1977, this is because, in the words of one interviewee, "... they have seen the way the wind is blowing." Since the company chairmen are chosen by the Government they not unnaturally regard themselves as responsible to the Government. In short, the tradition of control through partisan political appointments, the origins of which can be traced back to the Fourth Republic, has gone largely unchecked by the 1974 reform.

107. Interview with Bertrand Cousin, June 29 1979. In any case, of course, Contamine is more associated with the "Giscardian" supporters in the RPR such as Peyrefitte.
CHAPTER 6
Reallocation of ORTF staff

The 1974-75 reform had immediate and far-reaching consequences for the staff of the state broadcasting services and particularly for their capacity to organise effectively in trade unions. The break-up of the ORTF into seven separate companies was regarded by many trade union militants as designed to hamper union and inter-union activity. In the long term there was the possibility that trade unionists would feel increasingly cut off from their colleagues in the other companies. This would mean that the use of traditional sanctions such as the strike could be more easily isolated by the Government and broadcasting management within one company, thus making it a much less effective weapon. In the short term the splitting up of the ORTF caused the unions to reform their own organisational structures. As a result, during the early months of 1975 the various trade unions were more preoccupied with reorganising themselves and rebuilding their membership than with open confrontation with the new sets of management. 1

The most immediate problem which the broadcasting unions had to deal with, however, was the changeover from the ORTF to the new companies which were due to begin their operations in January 1975. Given the circumstances in which the 1974 reform had taken place, there was a widespread fear among the staff that the reorganisation would lead to a sharp decline in the number of those employed in the state broadcasting services. The main task facing the broadcasting unions in late 1974, therefore, was to defend as best they could the employment of ORTF staff in the new companies.

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1. See chapter on the Broadcasting Unions.
Reduction in staff numbers

During the debate on the broadcasting reform bill in the National Assembly in July 1974 Rossi was at great pains to deny that the proposed reorganisation would necessarily lead to a reduction in the number of staff employed in the state broadcasting services. Introducing the bill in the Assembly Rossi asserted that,

"The fact that temporary measures are included in the text ... is not based on a deliberate desire to reduce staff numbers, but arises simply from the necessity to lay down a relevant judicial procedure to cover the hypothetical situation of certain staff not finding a post in the new companies. ... ... I repeat that nobody in the present state of affairs can make a prediction regarding the future (staff) needs of the new companies." 2

Only after the demands for staff by the new companies had been satisfied, Rossi argued, would it be known whether there would be any redundancies.

Yet despite these ministerial assurances to the contrary there can be no doubt that one of the Government's objectives in splitting up the ORTF was to cut the number of broadcasting staff. Both Marceau Long, PDG of the ORTF at the time, and Jean-Claude Perier, vice-chairman of the Staff Reallocation Committee, admitted that the Government's aim was to reduce the size of the broadcasting staff. 3 The Chinaud report, published immediately prior to the Government's decision to dismantle the ORTF, had after all attributed the supposedly inefficient management of the ORTF in part to the excessive numbers of staff and particularly to the number of temporary staff employed by the Office. 4 In vain the broadcasting unions pointed out that in terms of size of staff the ORTF was no worse off than its counterparts in other western European


   Interview with Jean-Claude Perier, September 13 1979.

4. Chinaud report, 1974, chapter III section 2, pp.103-131, "L'absence de véritable politique du personnel". As in other sections of the report the Government was also blamed for this state of affairs, though this was rarely evoked by ministerial spokesmen at the time of the reform.
The belief that the ORTF was grossly overstaffed was strongly held in ministerial circles and became apparent as the opposition of the trade unions to staff cuts intensified in the autumn. For example, referring to journalists made redundant by the reorganisation, the Prime Minister, Chirac, stated quite unequivocally:

"We must be clear about this: the principal function of the television companies is not to pay, from a budget largely based on the viewers' licence revenue, an excessive number of staff."

With the aim of facilitating the cutback in staff the Government included in its reform bill a series of special provisions which superseded the measures usually applied in the case of a company undergoing reorganisation and rendered obsolete the procedure regarding redundancies set out in the 1964 ORTF staff statute and subsequent decrees. These special provisions included both particular clauses covering specific categories of ORTF staff and a general clause dealing with the Office's statutory staff. Staff not covered by the 1964 ORTF staff statute were excluded from the provisions of the 1974 broadcasting statute.

5. The broadcasting unions based this claim on figures provided by the ORTF management in 1972. These showed the following:

ORTF - 13,386 employees, BBC - 23,753, ARD (W. Germany) - 16,200, RAI (Italy) - 10,850. When programme hours were taken into account the broadcasting unions calculated that the ORTF was the least well off of the above four broadcasting organisations in terms of staffing. L'Humanité, November 29 1974. See also Presse Actualité, no.96, December 1974.


7. J. Chevallier, La radio-télévision française entre deux réformes, Paris, Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1975, pp.277-281. Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, decree no.64-738 of July 22 1964. This was the ORTF staff statute applied to staff permanently employed at the ORTF: the statutory staff. See also, Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, decree no.69-1023 of November 12 1969. See chapter on the Broadcasting Unions.


9. Ibid., article 31.
Officially classified as temporary staff, whether in fact they were so or not, these employees suffered very badly from the break-up of the ORTF, with many of them not finding posts in the new broadcasting companies. 10

In this chapter we shall first look at those provisions of the 1974 statute which deal with specific categories of staff employed at the ORTF such as civil servants and licence fee collection personnel. Then will follow a section on the reallocation of the general statutory staff. A third section will examine more closely the reallocation of ORTF journalists among the new companies. The broadcasting unions' reaction to the staff cuts will be the subject of a fourth section. Finally, we shall consider whether the 1974 reorganisation has in fact led to a decrease, either absolute or relative, in the numbers of those employed in the state broadcasting services.

This chapter comes to two main conclusions. First, the reallocation of broadcasting staff which took place in late 1974 was a short term measure carried out for political rather than administrative reasons. Secondly, in the case of the journalists in particular the reallocation involved partisan political sanctions.

Measures affecting specific staff categories

The first means adopted by the Government to cut the numbers employed in the state broadcasting services was to transfer certain staff away from broadcasting and place them under the responsibility of another employer, in this case the State. For example, article 27

10. Temporary staff (occasionnels, pigistes) were not covered by article 31 of the 1974 statute, with the exception of certain journalists who worked on a permanent basis at the ORTF.
of the 1974 broadcasting statute applied to those members of the ORTF's staff who had chosen to remain civil servants after the RTF's change of legal status in 1959 to that of a public corporation of an industrial and commercial character (établissement public à caractère industriel et commercial). Employed in administrative posts at the ORTF, these civil servants were to be reintegrated within the mainstream civil service. The only way for these employees to avoid this compulsory transfer was to opt for the ORTF staff statute in the last few months of the ORTF's existence and so be subject to the reallocation procedure for the ORTF's general statutory staff. If not, they were guaranteed a post in a civil service department.

By the provisions of article 28 those members of the ORTF's staff under 60 years old who had in the past relinquished the status of civil servant in favour of the ORTF staff statute could, if they so wished, agree to be transferred back to the civil service. In this case they too were guaranteed a civil service post. If, on the other hand, they chose to remain employed in broadcasting they also were subject to the provisions of the reallocation procedure along with the rest of the statutory staff. 11

11. The procedure for the transfer of civil servants and former civil servants from the ORTF to the civil service was laid down in decree no. 74-792 of September 24, 1974. A committee was set up under the chairmanship of Jean-Claude Perier to supervise the transfer during the first six months of 1975: La commission de reclassement des fonctionnaires et anciens fonctionnaires de l'ORTF. This committee held 13 full meetings between January and June 1975. In his report to the Prime Minister dated June 28, 1975, Perier complains of the ambiguities of the 1974 broadcasting statute, the inadequacy of documentation on the civil servants to be reclassified and of the reluctance on the part of the various administrative departments to take on staff who had worked in the broadcasting services for anything up to 15 years or more. Nonetheless, despite these difficulties the reclassification of civil servants and former civil servants would appear to have gone ahead without any major difficulties or dissension.
By the terms of article 29 of the 1974 statute employees in the licence revenue collection department of the ORTF, whether civil servants or statutory staff, were to be transferred mainly to the Ministry of Finance, which now assumed the task of collecting the licence fee.\textsuperscript{12} Only full-time staff at the ORTF were concerned by this article, with temporary staff effectively being made redundant. The transfer was compulsory for the full-time staff. As a result, many of the ORTF's employees became civil servants despite the fact that most of them had never previously worked in the civil service in any capacity.\textsuperscript{13} According to Paul L'Ollivier, who assisted the working group in the preparation of the decrees on the reallocation of ORTF staff, the execution of article 29 and the subsequent decree posed particular administrative problems since the Ministry of Finance did not want to take on the ORTF staff, while in many cases the staff themselves did not want to be transferred.\textsuperscript{14}

The last clause to deal with a specific category of staff was article 30. This article provided for the compulsory early retirement (\textit{la position speciale}) of all statutory staff over the age of 60, unless they had dependent children or relatives. Statutory staff over 55 years old could volunteer to benefit from early retirement. In the original bill submitted to the National Assembly the Government's proposals had been even tougher than those finally included in the statute. The bill provided for the compulsory retirement of statutory staff over 60 years old.\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{12} This transfer had been one of the recommendations of the Chinaud report, 1974, pp. 165-166, which had mistakenly predicted that a simpler and cheaper licence collection would result.

\textsuperscript{13} The procedure for the transfer of the licence collection staff was laid down in decree no. 74-1107 of December 26 1974.

\textsuperscript{14} Interview with Paul L'Ollivier, July 13 1979.
staff over the age of 60 and of journalists and musicians over the age of 55, though those between 55 and 60 could be kept on "in the interests of the service." It was only during the debate in the Assembly that the Government accepted an amendment, which was then passed without a public vote being taken, which made 60 the age at which all staff should be compulsorily retired. The application of article 30 posed severe psychological problems for many of the staff affected, who were now forced to retire from employment at an earlier age than they had envisaged. On the other hand, some staff came off financially better than if they had been re-employed in one of the new companies and were glad to leave. Some staff over 55 even took the option of volunteering for premature retirement.

Articles 27, 28, 29 and 30 were designed to reduce the number of staff employed in the state broadcasting services. 217 staff were transferred to a post in the civil service, over 1,000 were moved from the ORTF's licence revenue collection department to the Ministry of Finance and 914 persons were prematurely retired, some of them voluntarily. However, the effect of the application of these articles was very largely symbolic. Though no longer employed in the state broadcasting services the staff affected by articles 27-30 of the 1974 statute were either given a post elsewhere in the public service or


benefited from early retirement. The real financial saving, therefore, was limited, since in either case the State continued to pay these staff. Thus the citizen in his role as a television viewer might have thought to save money by the application of these measures, but only to spend more in his role as a taxpayer.

**Reallocation of general statutory staff**

The vast majority of the ORTF's statutory staff did not fall into any of the specific categories covered by articles 27-30. The provisions governing their re-employment in the state broadcasting services after the break-up of the ORTF were outlined in article 31. This article prescribed a special procedure for the allocation of ORTF staff to the new broadcasting companies with the major provision being that the re-employment of ORTF staff in the new companies would be based on the perceived staff requirements of the heads of these companies. Two different procedures for the reallocation of staff were set down in subsequent decrees published in the autumn. One procedure dealt with the reallocation of general statutory staff such as technicians, administrators and production and ancillary staff. The other procedure applied to journalists and musicians.\(^{19}\)

For general statutory staff the procedure laid down in the decree was as follows. The heads of the new broadcasting companies, with the exception of INA, were to make their staff requirements known to the PDG of the ORTF before October 14 1974.\(^{20}\) He was to pass on these requirements to the new broadcasting companies.

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20 *Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets*, decree no. 74-793 of September 24 1974, article 1.
staff requirements to the chairman of the Staff Reallocation Committee. It was the task of this committee to allocate staff to the new broadcasting companies. The Staff Reallocation Committee was composed of the chairman and vice-chairman, both members of the Conseil d'État, and representatives of the ORTF, the new companies and the broadcasting unions. In order that the possible non-participation of the union representatives would not invalidate the committee's decisions, the committee was deemed to be quorate when at least half of its members were present. Finally, the criteria used by the committee in its deliberations in the likely event of supply outweighing demand were the classic ones of, first, length of service at the ORTF and, secondly, the number of dependent children. Erwin Guldner and Jean-Claude Perier were appointed by Rossi as chairman and vice-chairman of the committee respectively.

For the reallocation of the ORTF's general statutory staff the

21. Ibid, article 2. The PDG of the ORTF officially allocated the staff to the new companies.

22. Ibid, article 3. See table 6.1 for the composition of the Staff Reallocation Committee.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid, article 4.

25. Guldner had followed a politico-administrative career. A member of several ministerial cabinets during the Fourth Republic, he was elected mayor of Sceaux, a residential suburb of Paris, in 1959 and re-elected in 1965 and 1971. Since 1967 he has also been a conseiller général in the Hauts-de-Seine department.

Perier had followed a career in the French judiciary, being appointed director of the gendarmerie in 1962. Following the break-up of the ORTF he was appointed a member of the committee responsible for administering the broadcasting right of reply and also became chairman of the Quality Committee. In 1976 he was appointed director of the cabinet of Olivier Guichard, minister of Justice. Though officially vice-chairman of the Staff Reallocation Committee, there is no doubt that Perier rather than Guldner was its de facto head.
committee held 8 official meetings throughout November and December. Its decisions were passed on to Long who notified staff of their new post or redundancy during the third week of December 1974, barely a few days before the new companies were to begin their operations. With the exception of FO the broadcasting unions (SCORT, SNRT-CGT, FSU and SIRT-CFDT) refused to participate actively in the work of the committee though they did attend its meetings as observers.

Instead the broadcasting unions proposed talks with the PDG of the ORTF and the heads of the new broadcasting companies to discuss all the problems relating to staff posed by the break-up of the ORTF. These problems included the staff requirements of the new companies, the fate of the permanent non-statutory staff (pigistes contractuels), the content of the new staff contracts and the alternative employment proposals made to staff not reallocated to one of the new companies. In refusing to participate in the work of the Staff-Reallocation Committee the broadcasting unions also wished to show their protest against the provisions of

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26 The 8 meetings were as follows:

- November 6 and 15: ORTF executive staff (cadres de direction)
- December 11: cadres administratifs and cadres de production
- December 12: technical staff
- December 13: computer staff
- December 16: minor administrative staff
- December 18: production staff
- December 19: general workforce (personnels ouvriers)

A meeting was also held on December 18 to reallocate the ORTF musicians and choristers.

Source: Report made by the chairman of the Staff Reallocation Committee to Rossi, dated January 28 1975.

27. Report made by the chairman of the Staff Reallocation Committee to Rossi, dated January 28 1975.

See chapter on the Broadcasting Unions.
the 1974 statute which in their eyes amounted to a collective redundancy measure and yet excluded staff made redundant from the protection laid down in the code du travail.

Rossi was explicitly opposed to general negotiations between the unions and the different sets of management because they would have infringed the spirit of the 1974 statute and its creation of separate companies. The only course left to the unions, therefore, was to demonstrate their opposition publicly in the form of strikes and work stoppages during the last few months of the ORTF's existence. However, given the committee's terms of reference and procedural rubric, the refusal of the broadcasting unions to nominate representatives was a symbolic gesture of little effect.

It is important to remember the context in which the discussions of the Staff Reallocation Committee took place. The 1974 statute had to be applied in a hurry so that the new companies could start operating at the beginning of January 1975. The heads of the new companies had to estimate their staff requirements in conditions of extreme uncertainty.

"In order to determine their staff requirements, the heads of the new companies would have had to know the size of their budgetary allocations, the content of their cahiers des charges, the results of the division of the central departments of the ORTF, the sharing out of production between the channels


29. See section on trade union reaction to the staff cuts.

30. Perier thought that the unions ought to have participated in the work of the Staff Reallocation Committee. In his eyes the unions were trying to change the terms of the statute when the battle had already been lost. Interview with Jean-Claude Perier, September 13 1979. However, one can appreciate the difficulties the unions faced in not wishing to be seen to condone redundancies.
and the production company, the allocation of buildings
and of ORTF property and equipment, etc. Yet with regard
to many of these questions uncertainty reigned up until
the beginning of December 1974." 31

Thus, the estimated staff requirements originally drawn up by the
new company heads had to be revised downwards when the Government
imposed its strict budgetary constraints on the companies for 1975.32

With length of service at the ORTF the major criterion there was
no attempt by the Staff Reallocation Committee to evaluate the
professional ability of the staff. Length of service was not only
a traditional criterion to employ in the reorganisation of a company,
it was also, given the tight time schedule to be followed, the only
one feasible in the circumstances. The ORTF was in chaos and there
were over 11,000 staff to be considered for reallocation to the new
companies. The criterion of length of service could be applied both
simply and objectively in a short period of time. This does not mean,
however, that its application posed no problems to the committee.
Staff residing in Paris, the French provinces and the overseas
departments and territories were not interchangeable. The heads of
the new companies frequently did not want to take on staff consid-
ered undesirable for professional reasons. Moreover, in certain cases
staff had to be retained because they were indispensable to the new

31. Report made by the chairman of the Staff Reallocation Committee

32. In reply to questions by trade union representatives as to how
she had drawn up the staff requirements for Radio France,
Baudrier confessed that the figure was hypothetical since she
did not as yet know the size of the company's budget or the

33. For example, Guillaud, the new director general of TF1, wanted
to choose his staff on the basis of his opinion of their
professional ability. Interview with Jean-Claude Perier,
September 13 1979.
companies. This sometimes entailed reducing the length of service required for the re-employment of that particular category of staff and thereby compelling the companies to take on other persons who were quite dispensable.  

The reallocation of statutory staff was carried out category by category, with varying demands for staff depending on the category in question. For example, because of the compulsory retirement of ORTF staff over the age of 60 and the transfer of civil servants back to the civil service, demand in some categories was greater than supply. This was the case in respect of executive staff (cadres de direction, cadres administratifs and cadres de production) and technical staff. On the other hand, in the case of minor administrative staff and general workers supply outweighed demand. Many staff were transferred only on paper. Thus, in general those staff who prior to the reorganisation had worked in the production services of the ORTF were allocated to the new production company, the SFP. Their place of work, the studios at Buttes-Chaumont, remained the same. Those employed in the radio services of the ORTF were in general allocated to the new radio company, Radio France. Similarly, those employed in the ORTF's transmission services or in the regional stations were with few exceptions transferred to the new transmission company, TDF, and to the regional programme company, FR3, respectively. On the other hand, the two major television companies, TF1 and A2, did not simply take on the staff from channels one and two at the ORTF.

For the top posts personal acquaintance played an important role

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34. Report made by the chairman of the Staff Reallocation Committee to Rossi, dated January 28 1975, p.10.
in deciding who was allocated to which company. The new company heads were often solicited for preferential treatment by some, while in other cases they or their immediate subordinates picked out suitable candidates. Specialist staff were most in demand. Most staff, on the other hand, had no choice in the allocation to their new company. While some ORTF departments were transferred to a new company en bloc, others, particularly the central departments were broken up. The reallocation procedure was variously described by both staff and management representatives as "every man for himself", "like a slave market", "completely chaotic" and "anarchy". Near the end of the reallocation procedure some sections of staff were being reallocated on the basis of which of the new companies was nearest their home!

The staff reallocation procedure laid down in the 1974 broadcasting statute and subsequent decrees replaced the procedure set out in the 1964 ORTF staff statute in cases of staff transfers and redundancies. The commission paritaire of the ORTF was not consulted

35. For example, Maurice Geoffroy, head of technical services on channel two at the ORTF, was wanted by TF1, A2 and the SFP. He was eventually allocated to A2. Minutes of the meeting of the Staff Reallocation committee to reallocate the cadres de direction, November 6 and 15 1974.

36. For example, the top staff in the ORTF's audience research department were dispersed among the new companies. Jacques Durand, head of the audience research service (1972-74), became assistant director of the new central audience research service, the Centre d'études d'opinion. Mme Nicole Casile went to TF1 as head of its audience research department, Michel Demaison went to A2 to fulfil the same role there and Michel Souchon joined the research department at INA.


38. Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, decree no. 64-738 of July 22 1964, articles 56 and 57; decree no. 69-1023 of November 12 1969, article 2.
as it had been in cases of individual redundancies since 1969.\textsuperscript{39}

The comité central d'entreprise, set up in 1969 as part of the Chaban-Delmas reform of the ORTF, was not consulted either, despite the fact that it was supposed to discuss measures affecting staff numbers.\textsuperscript{40}

Thus, by instituting a new procedure for the reallocation of ORTF staff among the new companies the Government was able to circumvent the protective measures gained by the staff in 1964 and 1969.\textsuperscript{41} For example, while by the terms of the 1964 ORTF staff statute any member of staff made redundant as part of an overall cut in staff benefited from priority treatment in the event of staff being taken on at the ORTF within six months of the redundancy measure, no similar guarantee of priority treatment was included in the 1974 broadcasting statute.

Article 31 of the 1974 statute included the provision that staff who were not reallocated to one of the new broadcasting companies could request to be transferred to a state controlled company, public corporation or administrative department.\textsuperscript{42} Those members of staff who were not reallocated and did not make such a request were automatically made redundant as from January 1 1975. If those who did ask to be transferred were unsuccessful, then they too were automatically made redundant as from July 1 1975. A committee was set up under the chairmanship of Perier to administer the transfer of non-reallocated staff to state run services,

\textsuperscript{39} Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, decree no. 69-1023 of November 12 1969, article 2, modifying articles 10-14 of decree no. 64-738 of July 22 1964. For an analysis of the role of the commissions paritaires at the ORTF, see chapter on the Broadcasting Unions.

\textsuperscript{40} Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, decree no. 69-1023 of November 12 1969, article 14, replacing articles 63-65 of decree no.64-738 of July 22 1964.

\textsuperscript{41} C. Floch, La réorganisation d'une entreprise publique et les relations du travail: le cas de la radiodiffusion et télévision française, unpublished mémoire de DES, University of Paris I, 1976, pp. 81-100.
but in the event very few staff had to be transferred in this way.\(^{42}\)

It is difficult to obtain precise figures about the number of ORTF staff, excluding journalists, who were not originally re-employed in one of the new broadcasting companies. Hundreds of temporary staff, whose cases were not included in the deliberations of the Staff Reallocation Committee, lost their jobs after the break-up of the ORTF. Of the statutory staff, excluding journalists, employed at the ORTF 538 were originally not allocated a post in the new broadcasting companies.\(^{43}\) Excluding journalists and temporary staff, the original total of ORTF staff (civil servants, former civil servants, licence revenue collection staff, employees prematurely retired, and redundancies) not given a post in the broadcasting companies amounted to around 3,000.

However, once the new companies had come into operation their management realised that they had underestimated their staff requirements. Consequently, within the first six months of 1975 many of those staff originally not allocated a post were in fact taken on by the new companies. During this early period exchanges of staff among the companies were common as new teams were constituted. By the end of their first year the companies had re-employed almost all of the ORTF's statutory staff and it was not long before they in their turn were being criticised for being overstaffed. The ORTF's temporary staff, on the other hand, were not readily employed by

\(^{42}\) Interview with Jacqueline Furbeyre, June 16 1977. According to Paul L'Ollivier, July 13 1979, staff transferred in this way were given a very raw deal in that the proposals made to them were inferior to the post they had held at the ORTF.

\(^{43}\) This is the figure in the report made by the committee to Rossi, dated January 28 1975, p.9a.
the new companies and along with certain journalists they suffered most from the 1974 reform. Civil servants, former civil servants, staff in the licence collection service and staff prematurely retired were also hard hit, psychologically if not always financially. Moreover, even if few of the ORTF's statutory staff did not find employment in one of the new companies, the fear of being made redundant which pervaded the Office in late 1974 adversely affected the resurgence of trade union activity during 1975.

Reallocation of ORTF journalists

The reallocation of the ORTF's technical, administrative and general staff was largely overshadowed by the procedure to reallocate the ORTF journalists among the new companies. In the first instance over 250 journalists out of a total of just over 1,000 were not given a post in the new companies. This cutback in the number of journalists was motivated by two considerations. First, the reduction-in-numbers was made in line with the Government's wider objective of reducing the size of the broadcasting staff in general. The journalists could hardly expect to be spared the consequences of this aspect of the Government's broadcasting policy, particularly as they had been singled out for special criticism in the Chinaud report. 44 More significantly, 

44. Chinaud report, 1974, pp. 114-118. This section entitled "Les journalistes offrent un bon exemple de l'ensemble des errements de la politique du personnel de l'Office" is an attack on the number of journalists employed at the ORTF. The section concludes "... a large number of full-time journalists are seriously under-employed, or even not used at all." (p.118) According to Presse Actualité there were 1,400 journalists employed at the ORTF including part-timers. This compared with 1,500 at the BBC and 2,400 in the German broadcasting services. J. Buisson, "Requiem pour un office", Presse Actualité, no. 96, December 1974.
there is evidence that the Government availed itself of this opportunity to try and remove from the state broadcasting services a number of trade union activists, particularly in the largest journalists' union, the Syndicat National des Journalistes (SNJ), and suspected political opponents of the Giscardian regime, both left-wing supporters and Gaullists.

The reallocation procedure for the ORTF journalists was different from that used for the technical, administrative and general staff in two respects. First, the size of the Reallocation Committee was reduced from 18 to 11 members. Secondly, and more importantly, the major criterion to be employed in the reallocation of the journalists was that of professional ability (aptitudes professionnelles). Length of service and number of dependent children were in the case of the journalists to be secondary considerations.

The committee held four meetings on November 4 and 25 and December 3 and 13 1974. Perier had been given the task by Guldner of preparing the ground for the reallocation of the journalists. Only statutory journalists were considered by the committee with the result that even "permanent temporaries" (pigistes permanents) were not included in the committee's deliberations. The first problem the committee faced, leaving aside the question of the non-participation of the trade union representatives, was how to implement the provisions of the decree. Perier discovered that there was no recognised grading

45 Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, decree no. 74-794 of September 24 1974, article 3. See table 6.ii for the composition of the committee. 8 of the 11 members proposed in the decree were directly or indirectly appointed by the Government.

46. Ibid, article 4.

47. Minutes of the meeting of the Reallocation Committee held on November 4 1974. Statutory journalists were covered by the provisions of decree no. 64-739 of July 22 1964. There were 250-300 pigistes permanents at the ORTF. SNJ tract, November 14 1974.
system for the ORTF journalists. Therefore, he proposed that the ORTF news directors and the news directors of the new companies should classify the journalists on the basis of past performance and future utility respectively. When questioned about this, Perier remarked that "after all these people were their bosses." 

A points system was thus established with a maximum of 30 for past performance and 20 for future utility. The journalists were then classified on this scale from 0 to 50 points. At the end of the first classification 788 journalists had more than 30 points. This figure was below the estimated requirements made by the new companies on October 18, 1974 of 816 journalists. After further discussion the total was then raised from 788 to 842. At this stage of the process 261 journalists were not reallocated to one of the new companies after obtaining less than 30 points.

Understandably the journalists' unions (CFDT, FO and SNJ) viewed the whole reallocation procedure with suspicion and a deep mistrust of the Government's motives. After all the journalists had suffered before during reforms of the ORTF, most notably in the 1968 backlash and after the passing of the 1972 ORTF statute. Though allowed by the decree

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48. Ibid, p.5 and interview with Perier, September 13 1979

49. Interview with Perier, September 13 1979

50. Minutes of the meeting of the Reallocation Committee held on November 25 1974.

51. Ibid.

52. In 1968 over 100 journalists were affected by the sanctions taken by the Government in response to the strike at the ORTF. For a list of those sacked and demoted see Le Monde, August 14 1968.
In 1972, according to the SNJ, about 20 journalists were sacked and others demoted following Conte's appointment as PDG of the ORTF and the ending of the Desgraupes "experiment". Le Journaliste, no. 139, September-October 1972.
to appoint three representatives to the committee, only FO sent a delegate, with the other unions refusing to attend even in an observer capacity.\textsuperscript{53} For its part the SNJ refused to nominate a representative and denounced the committee’s deliberations as a political charade.\textsuperscript{54}

The proceedings of the Journalists’ Reallocation Committee were described in an interview by the FO representative, Roger Michaud:

"FO discussed whether to send a representative to sit on the Reallocation Committee. We had semi-official talks with the ORTF management beforehand. The SNJ and the CFDT both refused to participate in the Committee’s discussions. FO decided to send a representative to see how things worked out. ... I went as the FO representative in an observer capacity. FO’s position was that we would not refuse a general discussion, but that we would not be a party to any disguised redundancies. ... Guldner and Perier arrived with the attitude that all they had to do was execute the provisions of the statute. Later they came to realise the difficulties involved. The management of the ORTF had already drawn up lists of those journalists they wanted to keep. Guldner and Perier decided that they could not simply endorse the decisions of the ORTF management. Therefore, they devised the points system. ... The procedure was fixed so that certain journalists would be retained and others made redundant. At the start of the first meeting we were given a sheet with each journalist’s marks noted down. It was obvious that the decisions had already been made before the committee officially met. ..." \textsuperscript{55}

The provisions of the 1964 ORTF journalists’ statute, which had been strengthened in 1969, were superseded by the terms of the 1974 reform.\textsuperscript{56} The redundancies were considered to be collective rather than individual, with the result that the specialist commission paritaire dealing with the transfer and sacking of journalists was not

\begin{itemize}
\item[53.] Minutes of the meeting of the Reallocation Committee held on November 4 1974.
\item[54.] SNJ communique dated November 5 1974.
\item[55.] Interview with Roger Michaud, June 20 1977. Perier specifically denied the charge that the journalists had already been reallocated before the meetings of the committee. Interview with Jean-Claude Perier, September 13 1979.
\item[56.] Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, decree 64-739 of July 22 1964 and decree no. 69-1024 of November 12 1969.
\end{itemize}
consulted. The sole forum for discussion available to the journalists' unions was the Reallocation Committee itself, since the Government steadfastly refused to enter into negotiations directly. In refusing to participate in the work of the Reallocation Committee, the journalists' unions found themselves at the end of November 1974 faced with the fait accompli of a severe cutback in staff and a purge of the ORTF news teams. Perier severely criticised the unions for not participating in the work of the committee. Yet it is difficult to see what they could have achieved given the composition of the committee and the terms of reference laid down in the decree. In their opinion they could not have been expected to condone through participation decisions which adversely affected the interests of their members.

This reduction in the number of journalists employed in the state broadcasting services came as a cruel blow to a profession already suffering from a high rate of unemployment. The journalists' unions argued that the number of journalists employed at the ORTF was in proportion to the Office's news output. It was certainly ironic that only recently the ORTF management had refused to agree to the unions' demands for a maximum five day working week on the grounds of a shortage of staff.

More important than the overall cutback in the number of journalists employed in state broadcasting, however, was the fact that trade union activists and suspected political opponents of the new regime were

57. Perier asserted that the unions made a great mistake in not coming to the meetings of the committee, arguing that they could have defended their case better if they had attended. Interview with Jean-Claude Perier, September 13 1979.

58. SNJ Section ORTF, L'ORTF, le pouvoir et les journalistes, Paris, 1974, p. 84.
hardest hit by the reallocation. The unions complained that of the journalists not reallocated to one of the new companies an excessively high proportion were trade union activists. Thus, while only half the journalists employed at the ORTF were trade union members, two thirds of those originally not re-employed by one of the new companies belonged to a trade union. The SNJ, by far the largest of the broadcasting journalists' unions, lost over 100 members in the reallocation procedure. Guldner and Perier denied any inherent procedural bias against trade union activists, arguing that from the reports on the journalists given to them by the news directors and editors they had taken account of professional ability only "and of nothing else". Certainly there is no evidence that these two civil servants did not carry out their task according to the letter of the decree. However, the decree itself was not a neutral device, and it was increasingly apparent that Guldner and Perier were being used to give credibility to decisions already made elsewhere. The representatives of the new companies on the committee had all worked at the ORTF and knew which journalists did not have the seal of approval of Poniatowski, Minister of the Interior and Giscard's right hand man.

The SNJ's losses originally included six members of the national

59. See the CFDT and PS communiqués in Le Monde, November 29 1974.


61. On the reports on certain journalists of the external services seen by the author there was no mention of any political criteria being employed to rank the journalists. This reinforces Perier's view that at his level political criteria played no part in the re-employment of the journalists. However, it does not mean that political criteria played no part at any stage in the process.

bureau of the union's ORTF section and twelve representatives of the union in the regional broadcasting stations where the SNJ was particularly strong.\footnote{The six members of the national bureau originally not re-employed in the new companies were Frédéri Astoux, Jean Calvel, Cécile Philippe, Josiane Roméro, Raymond Sedbon and Richard Someritis. SNJ communiqué, December 5 1974. See also Le Journaliste, no. 149, October-November 1974.} In these regional stations three members of the SNJ's national bureau were originally not re-employed in the new regional programme company, FR3. All three were reinstated after pressure had been exerted on the management, but two of the journalists involved were transferred to other stations. One moved from a large news department in Marseille to a much less important one in Orléans, while the other was transferred from Nice to Bordeaux. Both left fellow journalists and union colleagues to move to an unfamiliar news team in a different regional station.\footnote{Astoux was transferred from Marseille to Orléans and Jean-Jacques Filleau was moved from Nice to Bordeaux. Interview with Michel Barre, SNJ representative at FR3, June 14 1977.} Other SNJ representatives did not find a post in the reorganised structure. For example, the representatives in Rouen and Besançon were not reallocated in the original process and were not fortunate enough to be saved by the union's militant action throughout November and December 1974.\footnote{Annette Vial (Besançon) and Josiane Roméro (Rouen). Interview with Edouard Guibert, general secretary of the SNJ's ORTF section, May 31 1977.} Neither of these two journalists has worked in the state broadcasting services since the break-up of the ORTF.

Other SNJ militants were transferred to INA, well away from the news departments of the radio and television companies. A
journalist with Socialist sympathies, Christian Colombani, was not reallocated on professional grounds and is now employed on the politics desk of *Le Monde*.\(^{66}\) Even those SNJ activists who were allocated a post in one of the new companies, particularly those only reinstated after the application of union pressure, were not given positions of responsibility within the new structure. For example, one SNJ representative recounted his own story as follows:

"I worked in the external services of the RTF and then the ORTF from 1956 to 1974 and became assistant editor in the central news division. In the autumn of 1974 the authorities wanted to sack me, but they did not have the right as I was a staff representative. I was reinstated, but was placed as far away from the news team as possible. Despite the fact that I had never worked in television I was transferred from the external services to A2. But I have never worked in the news department at A2 though I have applied to do so several times. At the moment I am responsible for the company handbook and the company newspaper, that's all. I still keep in touch with colleagues in the news team, but my career as a journalist has been ruined."\(^{67}\)

The very top representatives of the journalists' unions were given a post in the new companies. For example, Edouard Guibert, general secretary of the SNJ's ORTF section was reallocated to A2. However, in an act of solidarity with those journalists who had not been offered a new post Guibert refused to accept his new position and voluntarily resigned from the state broadcasting services.\(^{68}\) Since the break-up of the ORTF he has been working on a freelance basis and has not worked for any of the new broadcasting companies in his capacity as a journalist. Ironically in early 1977 he was employed

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\(^{67}\) Interview with Richard Someritis, May 20 1977.

\(^{68}\) See *Le Journaliste*, no. 150, March-April 1975, for the text of Guibert's letter of resignation.
as a teacher by INA to help in the training programme for young journalists attached to A2. The reallocation procedure, therefore, affected the SNJ more than the other journalists' unions and within the SNJ it was the activists rather than the leadership who were hardest hit.

The announcement by the Reallocation Committee that 261 statutory journalists were not to be given a post in the new companies produced an immediate reaction on the part of the journalists' unions. Following the second meeting of the committee on November 25 the journalists' unions called their members out on a strike which quickly spread to other sections of the ORTF's staff. There was no official notice of the strike as required by the 1972 ORTF statute, nor did the journalists agree to broadcast a normal news programme as they were legally obliged to do by the requirements of the 'minimum programme.' Instead only very short news bulletins were broadcast, consisting of still pictures and a voice speaking off screen.

Attacking the illegality of this action, Chirac ordered the occupation of the news studios by the police to keep the striking journalists out. The minimum programme was restored and the strike ended on December 2, the day before the third meeting of the Reallocation Committee. Partly due to the pressure exerted by the journalists' unions, the number of journalists not reallocated to the new companies


70. Interview with Daniel Estève, CFDT representative at A2, September 20 1979.

71. For an explanation of the "minimum programme" see chapter on the Broadcasting Unions.

72. For a chronological account of the strike, see Témoignage Chrétien, December 5 1974.
fell from 261 to 182. Moreover, as we have seen, the SNJ succeeded in having many of its representatives reinstated, though usually to less favourable posts.

However, though the SNJ succeeded in defending many of its representatives in the end, there seems little doubt that in the first instance the reallocation procedure was designed to remove these journalists from the state broadcasting services. This is not to say that Guldner and Perier were themselves responsible for this anti-trade union bias in the reallocation procedure. On the contrary, their bona fides is not in question. Perier in particular went beyond the strict terms of the legislation to try to save several journalists from redundancy, including temporary journalists not considered by the official Reallocation Committee. Moreover, the trade unions themselves far from holding Perier responsible thanked him for his efforts on their behalf in a private letter dated December 30 1974.

The real source of the problem lay in the terms of reference imposed on Guldner and Perier by the relevant decree. The importance attached to the subjective criterion of professional ability meant that the reallocation of ORTF journalists was open to all sorts of personal and political abuse. The lack of official files kept on these journalists at the ORTF further weakened the possibility that the criterion of professional ability would be respected. In the

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73. Minutes of the meeting held on December 13 1974.

74. As always it is difficult to be precise about the number of journalists who were not given a post in one of the new companies. See table 6iv for the SNJ's own tentative estimate.

75. Perier showed me the letter during our interview on September 13 1979.
absence of these files Perier was obliged to rely on the representatives of the ORTF news management on the one hand and on the news directors of the new companies on the other. In certain cases these were the same people and in all cases they shared the same general political outlook. Thus, by the time the committee came to reallocate the journalists, Perier had little room for manoeuvre, though the little he did have he used well.

Trade union reaction to the staff cuts

Not surprisingly the various measures taken to reduce the number of staff employed in the state broadcasting services met with strong opposition from the various broadcasting unions, the high point being the general strike which took place at the end of November. This strike, which started among the journalists and quickly spread to other sections of staff, marked the culmination of the unions' opposition to the 1974 statute which began in July and continued up to the final days of the ORTF.

The broadcasting unions had been opposed to the break-up of the ORTF since the publication of the Government's proposals in the summer. In fact, they had always been in favour of preserving not only the state monopoly, which they regarded as the best means of maintaining the public service nature of French broadcasting, but also the unitary structure of the ORTF. Hence the broadcasting unions had opposed the decentralising provisions of the 1972 ORTF statute and a fortiori the splitting up of the ORTF into separate companies. A unitary structure, within which programme schedules would be complementary rather than competitive, was in their eyes a necessary prerequisite if programme standards were to be maintained or even improved.
However, though the unions cast themselves in the role of protecting the interests of the viewer, there is no doubt that they also wished to protect their own vested interests. Several of the unions had built up strong organisations at the ORTF, which would come under threat if the ORTF were itself to disappear. For example, the Fédération Syndicale Unifiée was particularly strong among the ORTF technical staff, while the SNJ was the most representative of the journalists' unions. For these and other broadcasting unions the break-up of the ORTF would, they feared, pose serious problems of organisation. The unions each might have to build up seven separate organisational structures in place of one. There was the danger that the reform would lead to staff in different companies being cut off from, and in some cases even being opposed to, each other. Inter-union activity, which had been common at the ORTF under the aegis of the Intersyndicale, would in all probability be seriously impaired. In the short term the unions' prime concern was to protect their members' jobs and to fight any proposed redundancies. For all these reasons, therefore, the broadcasting unions were pledged first to oppose the statute itself and, once this was seen to be a futile exercise, at least to mitigate the most undesirable consequences of the reorganisation for the staff of the ORTF.

The main instrument of union opposition to the reform was the Intersyndicale, which was responsible for putting forward the demands of the different unions to Rossi. The principal demand made by the

76. See chapter on the Broadcasting Unions.

77. The Intersyndicale grouped together representatives of the following unions: the FSU, SNRT-CGT, SIRT-CFDT and SNJ. See chapter on the Broadcasting Unions.
The Intersyndicale in late 1974 was that all the staff employed at the ORTF should be given a post in the new companies. In addition, the broadcasting unions wanted the advantages gained by the staff at the ORTF with regard to salary scales and qualifications to be maintained in the new companies while they also pressed for a single staff statute for the staff in all seven companies, journalists excluded. Moreover, the Intersyndicale wanted to discuss these demands within the framework of negotiations covering all the measures relevant to the ORTF staff.

Rossi, on the other hand, steadfastly refused to enter into any such negotiations, pointing out that they would be in flagrant contradiction with the decentralist ethos of the 1974 statute. As a result of the Government's intransigence on this matter, the broadcasting unions were compelled to defend their case piecemeal before different interlocutors: Rossi, the PDG of the ORTF, the heads of the new companies and the chairman and vice-chairman of the Staff Reallocation Committee. None of these meetings came anywhere near to satisfying the demands of the unions and on October 8 a general strike call was made by the Intersyndicale with only a minimum programme being broadcast. The CGC, CFTC and FO, however, refused to participate in this strike which lasted three days.

Partial strikes and stoppages continued to affect the ORTF throughout the autumn, culminating in the journalists' strike on November 25 and the general strike on November 29 in opposition to the announced redundancies. During the general strike strains began to

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78. Le Monde, October 1 1974.
appear within the Intersyndicale on the question of the best tactics to adopt in defence of the interests of the staff. The FSU was opposed to an unlimited general strike, favouring instead partial strikes confined to particular categories of staff. The FSU leadership feared that the continuation of the general strike might lead to a lock-out of the staff by the ORTF management, in which case the staff would have no further weapons at their disposal. The SNRT-CGT, on the other hand, favoured the use of the general strike on the grounds that a concerted attack on the staff of the ORTF required a concerted response by them. 79

This divergence over tactics within the Intersyndicale certainly did not help the cause of the broadcasting unions in their opposition to the application of the 1974 statute. But in any case their freedom of manoeuvre was extremely limited. As negotiations with the different parties involved proved increasingly futile, the unions were compelled to resort to strike action. This may have helped save the jobs of some staff, but the overall effect remained marginal. On the other hand, strikes were universally unpopular with the viewers whose major concern was for an uninterrupted service. The broadcasting unions complained that they received very little active support from the political parties of the left, who were accused of allowing the Government's case to go by default; though it is not at all clear what the Socialist and Communist parties could have done in any case. 80 Finally, even the staff themselves were frequently

ambivalent in their attitude to opposition to the reform. In several cases, as the unions found to their cost, once an individual had been reallocated to one of the new companies, his (or her) ardour for the struggle waned.

During December 1974 only partial strikes were carried out at the ORTF, affecting notably the Christmas holiday programmes. As the ORTF moved inexorably towards its demise the unions concentrated on saving as many staff as possible from redundancy, with some success. However, as the changeover date to the new companies approached other problems had to be considered. Of these the most immediate was how the separate unions would organise themselves in the new companies in the face of seven different sets of management.

Conclusion: reduction in staff numbers?

The 1974 reform was regarded by the broadcasting unions as a move directed against the ORTF staff in general and against the unions in particular. The Government's wish was that with the introduction of new smaller companies less staff would be required to run the state broadcasting services than had been employed at the overmanned ORTF. The unions, on the other hand, argued that the ORTF was not overstaffed when compared with equivalent broadcasting organisations in other European countries.

It is true that the steps taken in late 1974 did cut the number of people employed in the state broadcasting services. However, partly this was due to staff being transferred on to other pay rolls, particularly in the case of the licence collection staff
transferred to the Ministry of Finance. Other staff (civil servants, former civil servants) though no longer employed in a post connected with broadcasting still had to be paid by the State after 1975. In any case the reduction in staff numbers was only a short term cutback, with the result that two years after the reorganisation the staffing levels in the new companies were on a par with those at the ORTF in its last year.

It might be argued that the increase in the number of staff employed in the state broadcasting services since January 1975 can be justified by the extension of viewing time on the television channels during the same period. However, this would be to establish a correlation between manpower levels and programme output which was not investigated in 1974 when the ORTF was constantly being criticised for being overstaffed. In any case the fact that in the early months of 1975 the new companies already realised that they had underestimated their staff requirements and started to take on former ORTF staff who had not been reallocated indicates that from the very beginning the cutback in staff was not justified, or at the very least had been exaggerated.

In the absence of any correlation between staff numbers and programme output it seems much more likely that the cutback in staff at the end of 1974 was an integral part of the new Government's policy to discredit the ORTF and reorganise the state broadcasting

services into new smaller units. In addition, the general reduction in staff afforded the new regime the opportunity to seek to rid the state broadcasting services of journalists considered undesirable because of their trade union activities or political views. It is noticeable that though since 1975 the number of journalists employed by the new companies has risen from 928 to 1,116 in 1978, there has been no ministerial outcry comparable to that directed against the journalists in the autumn of 1974. In short, the reduction in staff appears to have been a political rather than administrative exercise, especially in the case of the journalists where political rather than professional considerations were of paramount importance.

82. Source: Annual budgetary reports of the National Assembly Finance Committee on broadcasting, rapporteur spécial: Joel Le Tac.


2 volumes: Volume 2

by

Raymond Kuhn

Ph.D. thesis

University of Warwick

Department of Politics

July 1980
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Section 3

The new broadcasting companies
CHAPTER 7

The broadcasting unions

Once the partially successful rearguard action against the cutback in staff had been fought, the broadcasting unions faced other more long term problems connected with the break-up of the ORTF. First, there was the question of organisation within the new decentralised framework. During the first few months of 1975 the different broadcasting unions had to reform their organisational structures to cope with the changed set of circumstances posed by the 1974 statute. Secondly, during 1975 also the unions had to negotiate collective staff agreements in each of the programme companies and at the SFP. Replacing the 1964 ORTF staff statute, these agreements were due to come into effect at the beginning of 1976. Finally, in any calculations about recourse to industrial action the unions had to take account of the new anti-strike provisions introduced by the 1974 statute and reinforced by supplementary legislation in 1979.

This chapter contains sections on each of these problems facing the broadcasting unions in the new companies. A concluding section then examines the efficacy of the unions' response to these problems with reference to the dispute which took place at the production company during 1978-79 when, faced with heavy financial losses, the SFP's management threatened to make redundant a sizeable proportion of the company's workforce.

In this chapter we shall argue that one of the objectives of the 1974 reform was to weaken the broadcasting unions, which were held responsible for many of the problems of the ORTF. First, the break-up of the ORTF was intended to reinforce divisions within and between the broadcasting unions. Secondly, the content of the collective
agreements was designed to reduce the unions' role in negotiations with management. Finally, the anti-strike provisions of 1974 were supposed to minimise the efficacy of industrial action on the part of the unions, as was the supplementary legislation introduced in 1979. In short, one intended consequence of the 1974 reform was to minimise the unions' effective capacity for opposition within the broadcasting companies.

Broadcasting union organisation

The most striking aspect of the trade union organisation at the ORTF was its sheer diversity. The historical and ideological cleavages which had prevented the formation of a unified trade union movement at the national level were apparent at the ORTF with the CGT, the CFDT and FO all represented within the state broadcasting services. In addition, the ORTF contained powerful trade unions not affiliated to one of the big confederations. The most important of these "house unions" was the FSU, itself an amalgam of four smaller professional unions each representing a distinct category of staff. The broadcasting services' journalists were also organised in separate unions, either attached to one of the national confederations, the CFDT or FO, or autonomous, as in the case of the SNJ. Thus the lack of unity in the French trade union movement at the national level was exacerbated by demarcation on professional lines within the ORTF to produce an extremely fragmented trade union organisation at the Office.


2. The FSU was made up of le Syndicat Unifié des Ouvriers (SUO); le Syndicat Unifié des Techniciens (SUT); le Syndicat Unifié des Administratifs (SUA); and le Syndicat Unifié des Personnels Artistiques (SUPA).
The main broadcasting unions represented at the ORTF were:

1. Fédération Syndicale Unifiée (FSU);
2. Syndicat National de Radio et de Télévision (SNRT-CGT);
3. Syndicat Interprofessionnel de Radio-Télévision (SIRT-CFDT);
4. Syndicat National Force Ouvrière (FO);
5. Syndicat des Cadres de l'Office de Radio-Télévision (SCORT);

Of these six unions the FSU, SNRT-CGT, SIRT-CFDT and the SNJ frequently grouped together in militant action within the Intersyndicale of the ORTF. The three most representative unions were the FSU, the SNRT-CGT and the SNJ. All the broadcasting unions at the ORTF were highly centralised organisations with a unified hierarchical structure, and together they represented over 60% of the Office's staff. However, there were important differences between them as will become clear when we look at the most important ones in turn.

The autonomous broadcasting union, the FSU, was strictly speaking a federation of four separate professional unions representing technicians, administrative staff, actors and general workers. By far the most important of these four unions was the Syndicat Unifié des Techniciens (SUT) which alone represented approximately 80% of the ORTF's technical staff. As a result of this dominance among the technical staff the FSU was able effectively to paralyse the ORTF by preventing the

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3. Thomas gives a figure of around 30 separate unions at the ORTF "differentiated both by skills and professions and by political allegiance to national union organisations..." R Thomas, Broadcasting and Democracy in France, London, Crosby Lockwood Staples, 1976, p.62.

4. Ibid.

transmission of programmes. Thus during 1973, immediately prior to the break-up of the ORTF, 72% of the strike calls were proposed by the technical staff and the FSU backed the overwhelming majority of them. 6 The FSU represented overall about 50% of the ORTF's statutory staff and was, therefore, the most important union at the ORTF.

An immediate consequence of the break-up of the ORTF was the decision by the autonomous FSU to affiliate to the CFDT. In fact this particular step had been under discussion among the leaders of the FSU since the upheavals of 1968. Following the strike at the ORTF in May-June of that year and the reprisals taken against the staff, the FSU decided that it would be in its interest to affiliate to one of the large trade union confederations. 7 The publication of the Paye report in 1970, with its recommendations in favour of decentralising the ORTF, and the passing of the 1972 ORTF statute reinforced the desirability of such a move in the eyes of the FSU. During the early 1970s, therefore, the FSU conducted negotiations with both the CGT, from which it had originally broken away in the 1950s, and the CFDT. 8 At the 1972 FSU congress the decision was taken to affiliate to the CFDT though the decision was not carried out until 1974 during the very last days of the ORTF's existence.

The break-up of the ORTF obviously precipitated the execution of the decision by the FSU to affiliate to the CFDT since the FSU leadership recognised the danger of remaining an autonomous union

concentrated largely in only one of the new broadcasting companies, the transmission company. If this had been allowed to happen, the FSU would have found its previously dominant position seriously at risk, isolated as it would have been from staff in the other companies. The decision to affiliate to the CFDT posed problems, however. The FSU had the choice of being absorbed by the SIRT, which it refused, or joining with the SIRT to form a new union. At a congress held on December 14, 1974, the FSU and the SIRT agreed to join forces in a new broadcasting union, le Syndicat Unifié de Radio et de Télévision (SURT-CFDT).

The fusion of the small CFDT union, the SIRT, and the large autonomous union, the FSU, was not without its problems. The FSU had not always associated itself with the strike action of the SNRT-CGT and SIRT-CFDT during the final months of the ORTF's existence and this led to some disgruntlement among many SIRT activists. For example, the SIRT section in the production services of the ORTF refused to attend the December congress because over the previous two weeks it had been taking part along with the SNRT-CGT in strike action which the FSU had refused to support. Within the SIRT opponents of the fusion produced a manifesto condemning the position of the FSU with regard to strike action at the ORTF and criticising the lack of debate within the SIRT prior to the congress decision. However, while some SIRT activists refused to join the new union, the fusion was accepted by six out of the nine members of SIRT's executive bureau and by a majority of its ordinary members, who preferred to see the SIRT merge with the FSU.

9. The SIRT, which had come into existence after the events of May 1968, was a relatively small union with under 1,000 members, mostly those technicians who did not belong to the FSU and some journalists. Le Monde, March 3 1975.
rather than witness its decline through its membership being dispersed among the new companies. 10

The structure of the newborn SURT-CFDT was decided on during its first congress held in June 1975. The SURT is organised on the basis of sections d'entreprise, one for each of the separate broadcasting companies, which deal with the internal problems relevant to their particular company. Problems common to all the broadcasting companies are dealt with by the bureau national which is composed of a general secretary, the secretaries of the sections d'entreprise and two elected members. Above the bureau national is the conseil syndical national composed of the members of the bureau national and four advisers from each of the broadcasting companies. This body meets every two months and is responsible for the execution of the decisions made by the SURT congress which meets every two years. As far as the everyday running of the union is concerned, therefore, the important bodies are the sections d'entreprise and the bureau national. As regards the organisational structure of the SURT, it should be noted that while prior to the break-up of the ORTF the TSU was split into professional categories (technical staff, administrative staff, etc.), the SURT is now split up along the lines of the break-up of the ORTF. The organisational division is no longer between professional categories of staff but between the different companies set up by the 1974 broadcasting reform. 11


11. Statuts du SURT-CFDT.
The SNRT-CGT had about 3,500 members at the ORTF and was particularly strong in the production services and among the general workforce. It represented around 30% of the staff on the committees with staff representation. After the break-up of the ORTF the new structure of the SNRT-CGT was adopted at its congress in April 1975. Like the SURT-CFDT, the SNRT-CGT decided to organise itself in sections d'entreprise, one for each of the separate broadcasting companies. A federating body was retained to deal with common problems. 12

FO and SCORT were both small unions at the ORTF with few members compared with the FSU or the SNRT-CGT. FO represented about 10% of the staff on the staff-management committees and drew its membership largely from among the administrative staff and the journalists. SCORT represented about 5% of the staff and was naturally strongest amongst middle-management. After the reform of the ORTF, FO also chose to establish sections d'entreprise while at the same time retaining a central co-ordinating body.

Finally, the SNJ had members not only at the ORTF but also in the peripheral radio stations and in the national and regional press. Its ORTF section was by far the largest of the journalists' unions at the Office with approximately 600 members from 1,200 journalists. It represented over 60% of the ORTF's journalists on the management-staff committees and was especially strong in the regional stations and in the radio services. 13 An autonomous union like the FSU, the SNJ was one of the first unions to reorganise itself after the break-up of

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the ORTF. The centralised ORTF section was replaced by five sections in those companies which employed journalists (TFI, A2, FR3, Radio France and INA), while a federating body was set up to co-ordinate the work of the individual sections.\textsuperscript{14}

The two principal unions in the new broadcasting structure, therefore, the SURT-CFDT and the SNRT-CGT, as well as FO and the SNJ, reorganised themselves on the same lines as the break-up of the ORTF with one important distinction. While the Government eschewed the establishment of any central body to co-ordinate the running of the separate companies, the unions each set up its own co-ordinating body to link the work of the various \textit{sections d'entreprise} and to deal with problems common to all the companies. For example, with regard to the question of staff training the \textit{bureau national} of the SURT-CFDT ensured that the same demands were put forward in each company so that common standards could be maintained.\textsuperscript{15}

Structural reorganisation was only part of a wider problem of reconstruction facing the broadcasting unions in early 1975. Other aspects of the same problem were the need to replace members, particularly activists, no longer employed in the state broadcasting services and the necessity to find members willing and able to represent the union in a particular company section which was frequently being built up from scratch. The replacement of the ORTF's unitary structure by seven separate companies would of itself have placed a great strain on the manpower resources of the smaller unions such as FO. To this must be added the fact that as a result of the reorganisation of the state

\textsuperscript{14} Le Journaliste, no.157, September/October/November 1976.

\textsuperscript{15} Interview with Jacques Rochet, February 24 1977.
broadcasting services and the concomitant reallocation of staff, certain unions had seen the number of their members and activists drastically reduced through redundancies, transfers and early retirement schemes. For example, FO had many members among the licence collection service of the ORTF and was adversely affected by the transfer of these staff to the Ministry of Finance. FO was also disproportionately hit by the compulsory premature retirement of staff over the age of 60. The SNJ had also lost many members and activists as a result of the reallocation of ORTF journalists to the new companies and yet now had to organise itself in five different companies rather than just one.

Moreover, the unions were hampered in their task of reconstruction by the fact that their opposition to the 1974 statute and to the reallocation of ORTF staff among the new companies had, with few exceptions, been in vain. This overall failure of their activities during the final months of the ORTF's existence did not help in the recruitment of new members. This was particularly true in the case of the SNJ who found it impossible to replace the members lost in the reallocation of journalists in late 1974. Journalists newly recruited to the broadcasting companies after 1975 tended to remain non-unionised or to join a journalists' union affiliated to one of the large confederations, most notably the CFDT-journalistes, rather than become members of the autonomous SNJ. Some members of the SNJ even transferred their allegiance to the CFDT-journalistes, in particular at TFI. As a result, while in 1974 the SNJ had between 500

and 600 members, by 1976 the membership totalled nearer 300-400.17

Even the large SURT-CFDT and SNRT-CGT unions had problems at the beginning to find enough activists prepared to fill the many staff representative posts created by the break-up of the ORTF. This was especially the case in the smaller companies such as TFI and A2. At FR3, Radio France and the SFP there was a certain continuity in staff from the equivalent sectors at the ORTF, with the result that in general these companies posed the unions comparatively fewer problems. At TFI and A2 the situation was different. For example, the chief representative of the SURT-CFDT at A2 commented that,

"At A2 the SURT-CFDT had a lot of problems at the beginning. The union's organisation was established around me personally as I was the only member of the CFDT bureau allocated to A2. The CGT and FO had even greater problems than us, especially the CGT.... When I arrived at A2 there were CFDT members whom I didn't even know. Therefore for the first year or so we concerned ourselves with sorting out things inside each company. We had very little time for contact between companies..... At A2 the comité d'entreprise has twelve members and there are also twelve staff delegates (délégués du personnel). At the beginning we had great difficulty in finding enough people to represent the staff in these posts. However, at the end of the first year we had succeeded in adapting to the new system." 18

It is impossible to obtain accurate figures regarding trade union membership in the new broadcasting companies compared with that at the ORTF. However, it is possible to show the relative strengths and

17. As always it is impossible to be precise about membership figures of the broadcasting unions, since the natural tendency on the part of union representatives is to inflate them beyond recognition. The figure of 600 in 1974 was given by both Edouard Guibert (May 31 1977) and Richard Someritis (May 20 1977) in interviews. Official SNJ figures put the total membership as high as 435 in 1976, but this seems an unduly optimistic estimate. See Institut Français de Presse et des Sciences de l'Information, Le Droit Professionnel de la Presse, annex - rapport d'enquête sur l'action des syndicats dans les organismes de radio-télévision, p.27. Guibert estimated the total membership of the SNJ in 1977 at around 380.

weaknesses of the separate unions in the new structure. On the basis of the 1977 election results for staff representatives on the comités d'entreprise and staff delegates, the most representative union overall is the SURT-CFDT, which has majority support in the three television companies and in the transmission company. The SNRT-CGT is the best supported union in the production company and in the archive and research institute, while in the radio company the two main unions are almost equally balanced. Essentially these two unions have preserved their power bases from the ORTF since the SNRT-CGT is still strong among the production staff at the SFP, while the SURT-CFDT draws its strength from among the technical staff at TDF, TFI, A2 and FR3.

Collective agreements: technical and administrative staff

Apart from the structural reorganisation to cope with the problems posed by the new decentralised broadcasting system, the main task facing the broadcasting unions during 1975 was the negotiation of collective agreements (conventions collectives) in each of the four programme companies and at the SFP. Replacing the ORTF staff statute of July 1964, these collective agreements were in theory to be negotiated separately in each of the five companies concerned. Thus in keeping with the decentralist ethos of the 1974 reform there was to be no common collective agreement to cover conditions of employment and staff-management relations in all the companies.

While staff statutes are the general rule in public bodies, collective agreements are the accepted form of staff contracts in private

19. Elections were held on May 12 1977. Trade union representatives interviewed confirmed that these elections reflected the traditional strengths of the two main unions.
enterprise. Their introduction into the state broadcasting companies was indicative, therefore, of the Government's desire to move towards a more commercial approach in labour relations by making the management of the different companies rather than the Government responsible for staff policy. Officially the Government, therefore, was adopting a non-interventionist stance very much in keeping with the declared objectives of the 1974 reform, since whereas a staff statute is imposed by the Government in the form of a decree without any formal negotiation with the staff, a collective agreement is negotiated between the management and staff of the respective company. Moreover, collective agreements allow for greater flexibility within the company, particularly with regard to salary scales and promotion.20

As at the ORTF the new companies relied on the co-operation of a wide range of professions in the making and transmission of radio and television programmes: administrative staff, technicians, journalists, musicians, producers and actors. This diversity had prevented the drafting of a common statute to cover all categories of staff at the ORTF. Thus, from 1964 to 1974 the ORTF's administrative staff, technicians and general workforce were covered by the 1964 staff statute,21 while because of their specific contributions the ORTF's journalists and musicians each benefited from separate staff statutes.22

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Because of their different legal status as public corporations (Établissements publics) TDF and INA each retained staff statutes imposed on them by the Government and similar in content to the 1964 ORTF staff statute. Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, decree no. 75-1216 of December 24 1975 (TDF staff statute) and decree no. 75-1352 of December 31 1975 (INA staff statute).


22. Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, decree no.64-739 of July 22 1964 (Journalists' statute) and decree no.63-427 of April 22 1963 and decree no.69-1143 of November 28 1969 (Musicians' and choristers' statute).
Television producers (réaliseurs) and actors (artistes-interprètes) on the other hand were not covered by staff statutes at the ORTF, but negotiated separate agreements regarding conditions of employment with the ORTF management. Finally, temporary staff were not covered by a staff statute either.

The 1974 broadcasting reform did, however, mitigate this diversity of staff by removing one professional category which had been employed at the ORTF: civil servants. No civil servants were employed as such in the new broadcasting companies. The 1974 reorganisation, therefore, broke finally with a tradition whose origins can be traced back to the earliest days of broadcasting in France.

After the end of the second world war and the establishment of the state broadcasting monopoly in 1945, many of the staff employed at the RTF were civil servants. When in 1959 the RTF changed its legal status to that of a public corporation with an industrial and commercial character, the status of the broadcasting staff was altered accordingly. Some staff opted to retain their position as civil servants and continued to be covered by the civil service staff statute (statut général de la fonction publique). This ever declining minority, numbering around 1,000 in 1970 and about 300 in 1974, stayed on at the RTF and then the ORTF until the reorganisation when either they were reintegrated within other branches of the civil service, or

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23. See chapter on Criticisms of the reform.

There were also some staff employed on a contract basis (agents contractuels de droit public) as well as journalists covered by their own distinct staff statute.
prematurely retired, or opted to be covered by the 1964 ORTF staff statute prior to the reallocation of the Office's staff among the new companies. 25

After 1959 the majority of the RTF staff were covered by a broadcasting staff statute, which distinguished between 200 different functions within the state broadcasting services. 26 Special bipartite committees (conseils paritaires spécialisés) were established composed of an equal number of staff and management representatives. These bipartite committees were consulted of right on certain staff matters, notably internal recruitment, disciplinary questions, individual redundancies and some staff transfers. 27

This broadcasting staff statute of February 4 1960 was replaced by a new staff statute in July 1964, following the establishment of the ORTF in June of that year. 28 The 1964 ORTF staff statute applied to over 75% of the Office's staff, including administrative staff, technicians and production staff. In certain key respects the broadcasting unions considered it to be more restrictive than its predecessor, particularly as the role of the bipartite committees was severely circumscribed. They were now confined to giving their opinion on very limited disciplinary matters, with redundancies being

25. The estimate of 1,000 civil servants at the ORTF in 1970 comes from the Paye report, 1970, p.247. See chapter on the Reallocation of ORTF staff.


27. Ibid, article 15.

excluded from their field of competence. 29 According to Charles Debbasch,

"The 1964 (staff) statute.... sought to increase the powers of the management over the staff.... It gave the management very wide powers with regard to conditions of staff recruitment, promotion,.... and termination of contract." 30

The 1964 ORTF staff statute was in turn modified in 1969 as part of Chaban-Delmas' reform of the ORTF following the strike by broadcasting staff in 1968. By the terms of the new supplementary decree the special bipartite committees had their powers extended to cover promotion and individual redundancies, powers they had already enjoyed between 1960 and 1964.31 Bipartite committees in the regional stations were also created with more limited functions. The 1969 decree also provided for the setting up of a central works committee (comité central d'entreprise) which was to meet once a quarter and had a consultative role.

".... on matters affecting the organisation, management and general running of the corporation and in particular on policy measures likely to affect the number or allocation of staff, work schedules, or the conditions of staff employment, with the proviso that these matters remained within the competence of the board of governors and the general management of the ORTF." 32

In addition, the central works committee had to be consulted in advance regarding any plans to reduce staff numbers and was to give its opinion on the planned measure, though this provision was not put into

29. Ibid, article 14.
30. C Debbasch, op. cit. pp.139 and 130.
32. Ibid, article 14 modifying articles 63-65 of the 1964 ORTF staff statute.
effect when the ORTF was being dismantled in late 1974.

The break-up of the ORTF necessarily made the 1964 ORTF staff statute obsolete and required the drafting of new regulations governing the conditions of employment and staff-management relations in the new companies. Staff in the two public corporations, TDF and INA, were to be covered by separate staff statutes imposed by government decree. The staff of TFI, A2, FR3, Radio-France and the SFP were to be covered by separate collective agreements in each of the respective companies. Neither the new staff statutes nor the collective agreements could adversely affect the gains made by the workforce at the ORTF in terms of salary scales, sickness benefit and industrial accident benefit. Moreover, length of service at the ORTF was to be recognised by the new companies, particularly in the event of possible redundancies. 33

The first company to begin negotiations on the new collective agreements was A2 where meetings between representatives of staff and management were held as early as February 1975, barely a month after the new companies had started to function. Eleven meetings took place before the summer break and a further twenty-six before the end of the year. 34 In many respects, therefore, A2 was used as a model by both the staff and management in the other companies where negotiations did not begin in earnest until the autumn.

This late start in the other companies proved a crucial factor

33. 1974 broadcasting statute, article 25.

34. Minutes of the meetings to discuss the collective agreements (Antenne 2), February 21 1975 – December 22 1975.
in the negotiating process. By the terms of article 32 of the 1974 broadcasting statute the staff in the new companies were to remain covered by the 1964 ORTF staff statute until December 31 1975 at the latest. If by the end of 1975 the collective agreements had not been signed by management and staff representatives then the staff could negotiate individual contracts. While in theory, therefore, the two sides had a full year in which to negotiate the collective agreements in the five companies concerned, in practice the negotiations were compressed into the space of two or three months. Consequently, with the exception of A2, the discussions were superficial and the unions had little time in which to put pressure on the different sets of management in pursuit of their demands. The possibility of individual contracts coming into effect after December 31 if the collective agreements were not successfully completed by that date was a strong incentive for the staff representatives to reach a speedy conclusion to the negotiations.\(^{35}\)

Both the SURT-CFDT and the SNRT-CGT tried with the support of left-wing deputies Jack Ralite (Communist) and Robert Fabre (Left-wing Radical) to have the December 31 deadline postponed.\(^{36}\) Joel Le Tac (Gaullist) also defended the unions' case by emphasising the late starting date of the negotiations and asking Rossi for an extension of the December 31 deadline.\(^{37}\) Rossi, however, refused to countenance any postponement, arguing tongue in cheek that it was in the staff's

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35. C. Floch, op. cit., p.115.

36. See the SURT-CFDT's letter to the Minister of Labour, M. Durafour, appendix 7.i. See also, Le Monde, December 12 1975.

own interests that the collective agreements be negotiated as quickly as possible so that they would benefit from conditions of employment which were legally secure. 38

In keeping with the decentralist ethos of the 1974 reform and the much vaunted independence of the new companies, negotiations between staff and management were to be conducted separately in each of the five companies concerned. Officially the Government was not involved in these negotiations and no central co-ordination was envisaged. In practice, however, there were interpersonal contacts among the management representatives of the five companies, many of whom had been professional colleagues at the ORTF, to establish a common policy on certain key issues. In addition, Rossi, his ministerial staff and the SJTI, intervened when necessary to co-ordinate the response of the different sets of management so as to prevent the unions playing one company off against another in an attempt to derive maximum benefits. For example, the interministerial committee responsible for the co-ordination of salaries in state enterprises (la commission interministérielle de co-ordination des salaires), attached to the Ministry of Finance, ensured that salary scales for similar functions in all the companies should be comparable. 39

Intervention by the Government in the autumn of 1975 disrupted negotiations in all the companies, particularly at A2 where the main union involved in the discussions, the SURT-CFDT, was pleased at the progress made before the summer break on several points, including

However, when negotiations began in the other companies the Government stepped in to block certain proposals, even after they had been agreed to by both staff and management representatives in the company concerned. A result of this overt intervention was that at A2, for example, Jullian had to apologise for the volte-face imposed by the authorities.

Despite the ritualistic denials by Rossi, there is abundant evidence from broadcasting union representatives, management and civil servants that the Government infringed the spirit of its own statute by intervening to block certain proposals in the negotiations between staff and management on the collective agreements. A member of A2's management team during the discussions remarked:

"If in theory the collective agreements were to be negotiated separately in each company, in practice this was not the case. We did not start off from scratch, but from the position of a formerly unified company, the ORTF. The trade unions were intent on providing a concerted front in the negotiations and so we had to do so as well. We could not allow the trade unions to play each company's management off against the other. Thus, while the collective agreements in the companies are not identical, they do resemble each other. Apart from interpersonal contacts between the different sets of management, there was also a certain governmental co-ordination."

It was this blocking action by the Government which in part precipitated the strike action by the broadcasting unions in November-December 1975. The SURT-CFDT and SNRT-CGT frequently combined forces in strike action in an attempt to push home their demands on the various

41. Ibid.
42. Le Quotidien de Paris, December 20-21 1975.
sets of management representatives. Both major unions were opposed to the proposed personalisation of salary scales, while both favoured the maintenance of the social benefits gained at the ORTF and the preservation of participatory bodies such as the bipartite committees.

The two largest unions, however, were by no means united as to the best strategy to follow to achieve these desired objectives. Indeed their division was reminiscent of the split over strike action which had taken place in the final months of the ORTF's existence. The SURT-CFDT favoured the negotiation of a single collective agreement to cover all the broadcasting companies with the exception of the public corporations, TDF and INA. The SURT-CFDT leadership defended this stance to the membership by emphasising that the strength of the broadcasting staff was dependent on its unity.

"...which guarantees us the most: a national agreement applicable to more than 10,000 workers or company agreements covering groups of 800 to 3,000 workers at most?"\(^{45}\)

In a letter to the Minister of Labour, M. Duraufour, the SURT-CFDT reiterated its demand for the negotiation of a national agreement, stressing that the recruitment, training and qualifications of the staff in the separate companies were similar and should therefore be governed by common regulations.\(^{46}\)

The SURT-CFDT demand for a national agreement to cover all the broadcasting companies with the exception of TDF and INA echoed a recommendation of the Paye report published in 1970:

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\(^{44}\) See chapter on the Reallocation of ORTF staff.


\(^{46}\) See appendix 7.i for a copy of this letter.
"In the event of the Office's evolving towards a decentralised structure, these collective agreements should remain common to the whole (communes à l'ensemble). They could be supplemented by particular company agreements (conventions d'établissement particulières)." 47

However, the Paye report had recommended decentralisation within an overall unitary structure. Since the 1974 broadcasting reform had specifically rejected any such unitary structure, the SURT-CFDT's demands for a common agreement was a non-starter as it was totally out of step with the spirit of the reform.

The SNRT-CGT, on the other hand, while in favour of a collective agreement common to all the companies, was opposed to the negotiation of a national collective agreement. It preferred to negotiate a collective agreement company by company so as to use any advantage gained in one company as a bargaining counter in discussions with the other companies with the overall objective of extracting the most possible from the different sets of company management. Moreover, the SNRT-CGT hoped that in those companies where it was strong, most notably at the SFP, it would negotiate a superior agreement than the SURT-CFDT in the programme companies and thus prove its negotiating strength. However, because of the interpersonal contacts between the different sets of management and the overall governmental co-ordination, this strategy was as doomed to failure as that of the SURT-CFDT. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, that the collective agreement at the SFP differs only marginally from those in the four programme companies.

Just as the break-up of the ORTF had been pushed through with indecent haste, so the negotiation of the collective agreements in the

different companies, with the exception of A2, was carried out under severe time pressure. The December 31 deadline made the unions wary of allowing the negotiations to drag on into 1976 for fear that they would lose out from the legal vacuum thus created. Therefore, despite dissatisfaction expressed by the unions on various substantive points, the collective agreements were signed at the SFP on December 29 1975, at TFI, A2 and Radio France on December 31, and at FR3, where the discussions had run into the greatest difficulties, on January 6 1976.

Major differences in content between the new collective agreements on the one hand and the ORTF staff statute on the other were immediately denounced by the unions, except in the few cases where there was noticeable improvement. This proved the case, for example, with regard to social benefits with the new collective agreements giving the broadcasting staff better rights to maternity leave, holidays, sickness benefit, and the like.

Most substantive differences were, however, criticised by the broadcasting unions. For example, they condemned the fact that the criterion of length of service was now to be downgraded with respect to promotion and salary increases. This meant that the managements of the different companies now had greater freedom of manoeuvre in these areas. They would be in a position to promote staff on grounds of merit with less emphasis attributed to the criterion of length of service. The unions opposed this personalisation of salary scales

48. The different sets of management were intent on reducing the importance of the criterion of length of service and on introducing the possibility of differentiating between members of staff with the same length of service. Interview with Jacqueline Furbeyre, June 16 1977.
on the grounds that the subjective criterion of merit could be used to discriminate unfairly among staff with the same length of service.

Another bone of contention was the move towards a system whereby staff were considered qualified to perform a variety of functions which previously had been strictly demarcated. This system of polyvalence meant, for example, that a lighting technician could be asked by the management to perform the duties of a sound technician if the latter were indisposed through illness, strike activity or for any other reason.

Moreover, the special bipartite committees, whose powers had been extended in 1969, were not set up in the five companies whose staff were covered by the collective agreements. Their role was to be partly fulfilled by the creation of a system of staff delegates (délégués du personnel) who nonetheless have more limited powers than the bipartite committees. Thus, while the staff delegates receive information about matters relating to staff, they are not consulted beforehand nor do they give an opinion on disciplinary questions or promotions. The unions were violently opposed to the abolition of the bipartite councils which they regarded as a useful, if limited, body for staff-management consultation.

Not all trade union representatives, however, regard the abolition of the bipartite committee as weakening the power of the unions vis-à-vis management. Thus while Maurice Billy, the SURT-CFDT representative at TFI, bemoaned the lack of a bipartite committee in his company, his counterpart at A2, Jean Favre, did not regard the absence of this body as particularly damaging.
"At the ORTF many problems were settled outside the framework of the bipartite committee in any case. At A2 we have fewer problems now. Even if certain internal problems are not discussed within a bipartite committee, this is not serious. The staff delegates are informed about promotions and if they don't agree with them we can always come out on strike." 49

The SNRT-CGT representative at A2, Mario André, agreed with Favre's analysis.

"At A2, which is a small company, we get to know about sackings, promotions, etc., just as quickly as we would if we had a bipartite committee." 50

On the other hand, the lack of a bipartite committee is felt more in the larger companies such as the SFP and FR3, particularly as in the latter case the company performs a variety of functions rather like a mini-ORTF.

In addition to staff delegates the staff at TF1, A2, FR3, Radio France and the SFP are also represented on their respective company's works committee (comité d'entreprise). The works committee looks after the welfare needs of the staff, supervising the running of holiday camps for children, staff canteens and other social facilities. It can also make suggestions to management with regard to matters affecting the staff in the company, though the management does not have to accept any recommendations the committee may make in this respect.

Originally the Government was opposed to the establishment of a central works committee to look after the common welfare needs of ex-ORTF staff on the grounds that a common co-ordinating committee would be in contradiction with the aims of the 1974 reform. However, in


50. Interview with Mario André, May 2 1977.
late 1976 the Government relented and an inter-company works committee (comité inter-entreprises) was set up to co-ordinate the work of the separate works committees regarding the provision of welfare facilities. 51

Collective agreements: journalists

The collective agreements analysed above applied to administrative staff, technicians and production staff in the companies concerned. Musicians and choristers, who in the new structure were attached to Radio France, had their own separate collective agreement to take account of their distinctive contribution and requirements. The journalists employed in the new companies also had separate collective agreements from the rest of the broadcasting staff, and in keeping with the objectives of the reform a separate collective agreement was negotiated for the journalists in each of the four programme companies. 52 Thus, the specific role of the journalists within the state broadcasting services was once again confirmed, since at the RTF and then at the ORTF the journalists had always been treated as a distinct professional group.

Prior to the change of status of the RTF in 1959 the journalists in the state broadcasting services were governed by the provisions of their statute of March 1 1949. The main feature of this statute was

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51. SURT-CFDT document, Union Action, October 1976, p.17. The collective agreements in the five companies were renegotiated at the end of 1977. Demands made by the broadcasting unions at this time were very similar to those made at the end of 1975: the establishment of bipartite committees, the abolition of the system of polyvalence and stricter professional qualifications. The changes introduced in 1975, however, have not been modified. See Le Monde November 23 and December 21 1977.

52. Journalists attached to INA were covered by the collective agreement of the programme company which officially employed them.
the creation of a bipartite committee representing management and journalists which was to be consulted on all matters relating to recruitment, promotion, sacking and collective or individual conflicts. 53

"This bipartite committee served the interests not only of the journalists but also, and I am tempted to write especially, those of the company since it allowed particular problems to be dealt with before they degenerated into public conflicts at a time when the management had to face up to the growth of radio and television news programmes." 54

The journalists' statute of November 7 1960, which followed the change of status of the RTF to that of a public corporation of an industrial and commercial character, adopted many of the provisions of the statute of 1949. However, in return for certain "permanent temporaries" being given a contractual status, the union representatives accepted in the negotiations which preceded the drafting of the statute a reduction in the powers of the bipartite committee. 55

The journalists' statute of November 7 1960 was in turn revised when the ORTF was established in 1964. The 1964 ORTF journalists' statute, imposed by the Government, was considered by the journalists' unions to be regressive compared with its predecessor, particularly with regard to the balance of forces between management and staff.

The role of the journalists' bipartite committee was considerably reduced. By the terms of the 1960 journalists' statute the bipartite committee was competent in matters of promotion and individual redundancies and was consulted in cases of conflict between one or more journalists.

53. Report of the Commission consultative des Journalistes (Commission Fromentin), June 12 1973, p.4. This committee was set up in January 1973 by Arthur Conte to examine the role of the journalists at the ORTF. It was composed of six members of the ORTF management and six representatives of the journalists' unions. The report was produced in June 1973.

54. Ibid. Statement by Pierre Fromentin, chairman of the committee.

and the management. 56 On the other hand, the 1964 ORTF journalists' statute restricted the powers of the bipartite committee to specific disciplinary cases with the result that the power of the journalists' representatives was very considerably weakened. 57

It was not until 1969 that the journalists' bipartite committee had its powers extended in a reversal of the downward trend started in 1960. Following the long strike by ORTF journalists in 1968, the 1964 ORTF journalists' statute was modified as part of the Chaban-Delmas reform of the ORTF. 58 The journalists' bipartite committee was now to be consulted on certain promotions, disciplinary matters and individual redundancies. 59

The ORTF employed well over 1,200 journalists in the early 1970s. These were divided into three categories depending on their terms of employment: The first category, numbering about 800 in 1972, was governed by article 1 of the 1964 ORTF journalists' statute and employed on permanent contracts. The second category, comprising only about 40 journalists, was made up of those journalists who, under the terms of article 2 of the 1964 ORTF journalists' statute, were engaged for a limited period of time on fixed contracts which could be renewed every three months but could not exceed two years in length. 60 The third category included those journalists who, in theory at least,

56. Ibid, article 13. See also the report of the Commission Fromentin, 1973, pp.4-5.

57. Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, decree no.64-739 of July 22 1964, articles 13, 36 and 37. See also the report of the Commission Fromentin, 1973, p.5.


60. ORTF 73, Paris, Presses Pocket, p.591.

61. J. Chevallier, La radio-television française entre deux reformes, Par Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1975, p.46.
were employed on a temporary basis only. The numbers in this last category were impossible to calculate, but certainly exceeded 500.62

In fact many of these so-called temporary journalists were employed permanently at the ORTF and so benefited unofficially from the title of "permanent temporaries" (pigistes permanents). As Thomas points out, this system of employing "permanent temporaries" "had developed partly to circumvent the insufficient quotas of personnel set by the Ministry of Finance."63 In other words, in the interests of economy the ORTF management had to employ "temporary" rather than statutory journalists, with the added advantage that the former had no guarantee of long-term employment. In 1973 the journalists' unions, notably the SNJ, succeeded in persuading the ORTF management to bring about 200 of these "permanent temporaries" under cover of the 1964 ORTF journalists' statute on the barely contestable grounds that they were de facto permanent employees of the Office. However, as we have seen, many temporaries, a large proportion of whom were also regularly employed at the ORTF, did not benefit from this change of contractual status and they were among the journalists most severely affected by the reallocation of journalists which took place at the end of 1974.64

The ORTF journalists' statute differed both from the ORTF staff statute and from the collective agreement which applied to journalists who worked in the press. In effect the journalists employed in the state broadcasting services were considered to be journalists of the

62. R. Thomas, op. cit., p. 61, puts the figure as high as 800.
63. Ibid.
64. See chapter on the Reallocation of ORTF staff.
ORTF rather than merely journalists at the ORTF, in that they were subject to different regulations from their colleagues in the press. This distinction is of crucial importance. The successive statutes of the state broadcasting journalists have in effect sought to give them a special status which takes account of the public service nature of the French broadcasting services.

The ORTF management sought to justify this distinction between ORTF and press journalists by stressing that the former had special responsibilities due to the pervasiveness of the television medium. Since the main evening news bulletin on channel one was regularly watched by 12-13 million viewers, the ORTF journalists had to cultivate "a habit of prudence and even of reserve." The distinctiveness of the task of the broadcasting journalists as put forward by the ORTF management was an accurate reflection of Pompidou's view of the ORTF as "the voice of France". Giscard d'Estaing's explicit rejection of this concept in 1974, therefore, seemed a good omen for the journalists' unions who had been pushing for the broadcasting journalists to be treated as journalists at and not of the ORTF.

Prior to the break-up of the ORTF at the end of 1974 the terms of employment of the broadcasting journalists were governed by the 1964 ORTF journalists' statute as modified in 1969. In the new broadcasting companies the journalists had to negotiate with the managements of the four programme companies separate collective agreements due to

65. ORTF 73, p. 590.
66. See chapter on Politics and broadcasting in France before the 1974 reform.
come into effect on January 1, 1976.

The demands of the journalists were most vociferously put forward by the SNJ, still the most representative union among the broadcasting journalists. It called for the application in all four programme companies of the national collective agreement for press journalists backed up by an agreement within each company to take account of the specific needs of broadcasting. This long-standing demand reflected the journalists' desire to be treated as journalists working in the state broadcasting services with similar professional goals as their press colleagues rather than as a group with special responsibilities because of the role of television as the most important mass medium in France.

As part of its demand for the preservation in the new companies of the benefits gained at the ORTF, the SNJ demanded the maintenance in each of the programme companies of a journalists' bipartite committee. This demand, if acceded to, would have allowed the journalists to have a greater say in management policy decisions affecting the journalists' conditions of employment, promotions, recruitment, transfers and redundancies. In addition, the SNJ called for a reform of the journalists' salary scale and of their training facilities, as well as for an improvement in certain social benefits and the introduction of the five-day week.

Negotiations in all four programme companies were punctuated by strike action during December 1975 as the unions sought to exert

68. Le Journaliste, no.150, March-April 1975.
69. These demands for a more powerful bipartite committee had recently been put forward by the unions to the Commission Fromentin. See the report of the committee, meeting of April 9, 1973, pp.1-14.
pressure on the different sets of management. Discussions progressed more smoothly at A2 than in the other three companies, though even here problems arose when the management was compelled by Rossi to backtrack on concessions already made. In the face of governmental co-ordination of the different managements' responses the journalists' unions failed to secure their major demands. Thus, while there were some references to the national collective agreement for press journalists in the collective agreements of the state broadcasting journalists, these scarcely satisfied the latter's demands for the full application of the collective agreement for press journalists to their colleagues in broadcasting.

Most importantly, the journalists' bipartite committees were not set up in the new companies, with the result that representation of the journalists in staff-management discussions was restricted to a system of staff representatives and delegates to the works committee on the same terms as those governing the general staff. The lack of bipartite committees was a huge blow to the SNJ and the other journalists' unions. Their absence in the new structure was scarcely offset by the improvement in certain social benefits under the new agreements as compared with the 1964 ORTF journalists' statute.

72. These demands were reiterated when the collective agreements came up for renegotiation at the end of 1977. See Le Monde, June 29 1977.
As one SNJ communique commented:

"The management are taking back in quality what they are giving us in quantity. They want to make of the journalists slightly better off workers, but also more submissive ones." 75

Anti-strike provisions

The 1974 reorganisation sought to limit the power of the trade unions to disrupt the broadcasting services by minimising the consequences of strike action on the programme schedules of the radio and television companies. In this respect the 1974 legislation extended the provisions of the 1972 ORTF statute, which itself had been condemned by the broadcasting unions as a severe restriction on their right to strike. Moreover, in 1979 the anti-strike provisions of the 1974 statute were themselves strengthened in the wake of a series of disruptions in transmissions caused by the unions' reaction to the financial crisis in the production company.

Under the terms of the 1972 ORTF statute, continuity of those elements of the broadcasting service essential to the fulfilment of the Office's tasks was to be maintained by each of the television channels and radio networks in the event of strike action by any section of the ORTF's staff. The président directeur général of the Office would decide which staff were indispensable to the running of the service during a strike and would have to continue working. 76

Between 1964 and 1971 the minimum service which was broadcast during strike action had consisted solely of the main evening news

75. SNJ communique, Faut-il signer la convention collective? December 30 1975.
76. 1972 ORTF statute, article 11.
bulletin. In 1964 the ORTF management had instructed the staff that during strike action the news bulletin was to be shown as usual at 8.00 p.m. to be followed by a film or films up to 10.30 p.m. However, the broadcasting unions successfully protested against this step and in February 1966 the Conseil d'État abolished the obligation to show a film as part of the minimum service. Notwithstanding this decision, in early 1971 the ORTF management sought to impose separate news bulletins in the event of a strike and the screening of a film after the news. Prior to 1972 the minister with responsibility for broadcasting and the ORTF management had the authority to fix the content of the minimum service, while the Conseil d'État was empowered to decide on the legality of their decisions.

The interpretation of the anti-strike provisions of the 1972 ORTF statute made by the Minister of Information and the président directeur général of the ORTF was expressly designed to increase the requirements of the minimum service. The Office's radio networks were to broadcast a common programme during normal hours of transmission with news bulletins at the usual times. The three television channels had also to screen a common set of programmes in the evening consisting of a film or variety programme, followed by a cultural programme. Channels one and two were to show separate news bulletins, which were

77. J. Chevallier, op. cit., p.40
78. Arrêt du Conseil d'État du 4 février 1966, reproduced in Droit Social, no.11, November 1966, pp.565-566. This decision of the Conseil d'État referred to the inadequacy on its own of "Loi du 31 juillet 1963 (no.63-777) relative à certaines modalités de la grève dans les services publics" and confirmed the Government's right to fix the nature and extent of the limits to be placed on the right to strike in the public services so as to protect public order. However, the Conseil d'État had the power to decide on the legal acceptability of the substance of the minister's decision. It was with part of the content of the minister's decision, taken with the co-operation of the ORTF management, that the Conseil d'État disagreed in 1966.
to be produced in the usual manner. The other programmes were to consist of pre-recorded material. The président directeur général of the ORTF was empowered to choose the staff who were indispensable to the fulfilment of the ministerial instructions. 79

This interpretation of the 1972 ORTF statute which effectively required the transmission of a normal news service during a strike, hit the journalists of the ORTF particularly hard. While in theory the journalists still possessed the right to strike, in practice any strike action on their part would have little effect on the ORTF's news broadcasting. The SNJ was particularly incensed at the ministerial ruling on the application of article 11 of the 1972 ORTF statute. 80 Along with the SNRT-CGT the SNJ made a formal protest to the Conseil d'Etat in a bid to have the ruling declared ultra vires. However, in a judgement made public in January 1975, after the break-up of the ORTF, the Conseil d'Etat found no fault with the minister's interpretation of the terms of the statute. 81 As a result, the 1972 ORTF statute successfully extended the obligations of the minimum service in times of strike to cover entertainment programmes as well as news bulletins. The effectiveness of the strike weapon was thus apparently weakened.

The provisions of the 1974 statute went even further, which considering the context of strike activity at the ORTF preceding the

79. ORTF 73, pp.50-51.

80. See the SNJ ORTF section, L'ORTF, le Pouvoir et les Journalistes: Livre blanc sur l'information à l'ORTF, Paris, 1974, pp.16-20. Also, Le Journaliste, no.147, April-May 1974.

drafting of the reform is not altogether surprising. The Chinaud report alone had devoted eight pages in an annex to a list of sectional and general strikes at the ORTF between 1972 and 1974. Article 26 of the 1974 statute was almost a verbatim copy of article 11 of the 1972 ORTF statute with some important differences. First, while the 1972 statute had spoke of "those elements of the broadcasting service essential to the fulfilment of the ORTF's tasks....", the 1974 law referred to "those elements of the broadcasting service necessary to the fulfilment of the tasks of the new companies...." This change of adjective seemed to extend the requirements of the minimum service in the event of strike action.

More importantly, the 1972 statute had been applied within the unitary structure of the ORTF. Consequently, it had been interpreted so that with the exception of the news bulletins a common programme schedule would be shown on all three television channels. Since the 1974 statute had broken up this unitary structure into separate companies, there was no obligation on the managements of the different programme companies to unite forces to screen a common set of programmes. In fact any such common programme schedule would have been in contradiction with the spirit of the reform.

In a letter sent in January 1975 to the heads of the four programme companies, Rossi laid down the Government's interpretation of the new legislation. Each television channel was to screen a distinct programme schedule. On Saturday, Sunday and public holidays

82. See chapter on the Origins of the 1974 reform.
the minimum service was to be extended to include the showing of a film in the afternoon as well as the evening programmes. TFI and A2 would not suffer financially from any strike action since they would be allowed to increase the length of their advertising breaks once normal service had been resumed to compensate for the loss in revenue suffered during the strike. The transmission company, TDF, was to be obliged to continue transmitting for lengthy periods of time during any strike by its workforce.84

As they had done in 1972 the broadcasting unions, in this case the SURT-CFDT, challenged the ministerial interpretation of the statute before the Conseil d'Etat. The judgement of the Conseil d'Etat was made public on November 12 1976.85 It decided that the obligations of the minimum service for each of the companies concerned should be determined in the light of the particular rules laid down in its cahier des charges.

With reference to TFI, and by implication to A2 since the latter's cahier des charges is almost an exact replica of the former's, the Conseil d'Etat decided that the production and screening of two news bulletins (one in the case of A2), of special news bulletins if required and of an evening programme schedule consisting of feature films or pre-recorded television programmes was within the minimum service requirements of the 1974 legislation. On the other hand, the

84. Le Monde, January 5-6 1975. The companies are bound by their cahiers des charges to respect the interpretation of the minister with responsibility for broadcasting as regards the provisions of the minimum service. See article 8 of their cahiers des charges in the case of TFI, A2, FR3 and Radio France, and articles 6 and 7 in the case of TDF.

Conseil d'État considered that the obligation on the staff to ensure the screening of an afternoon programme on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays exceeded the requirements of the statute and was therefore illegal.

With regard to the regional programme company, FR3, the Conseil d'État decided that the obligations imposed on it by the ministerial interpretation of the statute were within the law: a television programme in the evening, consisting of either a feature film or a pre-recorded programme, and the production and screening in each region of a regional radio news bulletin and a regional television news bulletin.

The Conseil d'État partially annulled Rossi's instructions regarding the minimum service on Radio-France. The production and transmission of three news bulletins (morning, midday and evening), of special news bulletins if necessary and of a programme schedule during normal hours of transmission consisting of records and pre-recorded programmes were all within the provisions of the statute. However, the Conseil decided that there was no legal obligation to broadcast two distinct programme schedules on the radio networks. One single schedule of programmes on all networks was quite sufficient.

Finally, the Conseil decided that the obligations imposed on TDF by Rossi were quite legal: to ensure the continuous functioning of the networks, the transmission of programmes scheduled by the programme companies and the maintenance, when the programme schedules of the programme companies were interrupted, of the service by the transmission of a test card or sound programme.
Thus in keeping with the spirit of the 1974 reform each of the three television companies shows a distinct minimum service from its competitors. Moreover, this applies only if all three television companies are on strike simultaneously, an eventuality made more unlikely by the distinctive characteristics of each company and the obstacles against common strike action by the staff on an inter-company basis. Obviously, if only one programme company is on strike, the other two programme companies screen their scheduled programmes as normal.

In practice, if the staff in the programme companies are on strike simultaneously, the three television companies show three separate films after their own news bulletins. Furthermore, in a rare example of harmonisation of programme schedules, the programme planners of the television companies ensure that the three films shown are of a different genre.86 As a result, far from showing discontent during a strike by broadcasting staff, the viewers benefit from a choice of three films, one of their favourite types of programme.87 The chairman of each company decides which categories of staff must remain at work.

The absence of any co-ordinating body in the new structure led to some curious situations during strikes by sections of the broadcasting staff. For example, if the technicians at TDF went on strike but the

86. Article 9 of the 1974 statute requires that the heads of the television companies meet periodically to ensure the harmonisation of programme schedules. Introduced by parliamentary amendment, this article is honoured more in the breach than in the observance. See chapter on Criticisms of the reform.

87. Le Monde, January 16 1975. Obviously, however, the minimum service may displease viewers in other ways by preventing the screening of certain programmes.
staff in the programme companies continued working normally, TDF was obliged to provide transmission services only up to 10:15 p.m. In one case during a discussion programme on TF1 the presenter was cut off in mid-sentence when the transmission facilities were withdrawn! 88 On the other hand, because of the decentralised system introduced in 1974, article 26 of the statute applies only to TDF and the four programme companies. Staff at the SFP and INA are not affected by the stringent minimum service requirements since they are not involved in the crucial transmitting or programming sectors.

There can be no doubt that the 1974 statute, like its predecessor of 1972, extended the provisions of the minimum service to the detriment of the staff's right to strike to an extent which could scarcely be justified by the necessity to maintain the continuity of the public service. 89 The efficacy of the unions' main weapon in staff-management negotiations, the threat of strike action, was thus reduced since its effects became much less apparent to the viewer. Furthermore, in 1979 this trend of weakening the unions' strike weapon was further extended when supplementary legislation was introduced to reinforce the minimum service provisions.

The provisions of the 1974 statute with regard to the service provided in the event of a strike by broadcasting staff were altered in the spring of 1979 following a series of damaging strikes in the broadcasting companies. The cause of these strikes was the decision by

88. *Le Quotidien de Paris*, December 4 1975. The victim of this withdrawal of transmission facilities was Michel Droit, whose documentary programme was interrupted twelve minutes before it was due to end.

89. For a juridical account of the extension of the minimum service provisions up to 1977 see J.Y. Plouvin, "La résistible ascension du service minimum dans le service public national de la radiodiffusion et de la télévision... et ailleurs", *Droit Social*, no.6, June 1977, pp.243-253
the new chairman of the SFP, Antoine de Clermont-Tonnerre, to make over 400 members of the production company's staff redundant in a bid to restore the company to a state of financial solvency. The staff of the SFP immediately came out on strike in protest against this decision and during their prolonged stoppage staff in the other broadcasting companies frequently came out in sympathy. 90

This involved the frequent application of the minimum programme with a reduced service on all three television channels and on the radio networks. Moreover, the broadcasting unions skilfully worked within the framework of the minimum service provisions to bring out small but important sections of the workforce at any one time, thus producing the maximum inconvenience permitted by the 1974 statute at minimum cost to their members. 91

This tactic was perceived by Lecat, the Minister of Culture and Communication, as an unwarranted abuse of the unions' constitutional right to strike, since it meant the automatic introduction of the minimum service even when only a small percentage of the workforce was actually out on strike. The action which finally forced the Government to review the minimum service provision was a one day stoppage on March 18 1979 by technical staff at TDF, TF1 and A2 called at the request of the SURT-CFDT in protest against the downgrading of three

90. See next section.

91. For example, on February 23 1979 at TDF only 152 out of a total of 2,368 staff came out on strike. The remaining staff were payed and, since all 152 were required to keep transmission facilities running, the strikers were also paid. Therefore, no member of TDF's staff lost out financially from the strike, even though only the minimum service was shown on television screens.

engineers who had come out in solidarity with the staff at the SFP at the end of February. Lecat immediately appeared on the television news of TF1 and A2 to deplore this action and called the chairman of the programme companies together to discuss means of ensuring the continuity of the public service.

At first the Government hoped to remedy this perceived abuse while still working within the framework of the current legislation. Thus, at the end of March Lecat wrote a letter to the chairman of the four programme companies in which he asked their boards of governors to take the necessary internal steps to stop. "... the actions of a minority of the staff interfering with the normal functioning of the company." 93

At the same time two private members' bills (propositions de loi) were laid down in the National Assembly in response to the strikes being held in the broadcasting companies. The first, put forward by Robert-André Vivien, chairman of the Assembly's finance committee, proposed quite simply that in the event of strike action by the broadcasting staff the functioning of the public service should be maintained as normal. As the deputy himself stated in the introduction to his bill:

"French television ensures an essential public service financed... by the licence....No interruption of this public service can be accepted." 94

The second private members' bill, put forward by Alain Madelin (UDF), sought to extend the provisions of the minimum service to include the following: mid-day as well as evening news bulletins;

an evening programme schedule from 7.20 p.m. to 10.05 p.m. on FR3, to 10.20 p.m. on TF1 and to 10.30 p.m. on A2; on Wednesdays Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays and school holidays the programme schedules should begin with the mid-day news bulletin and end at 10.20 p.m. on TF1 and 10.30 p.m. on A2; on Sundays and public holidays the religious programmes should be broadcast; and finally programmes resulting from agreements made between the companies on the one hand and sports bodies on the other (whether national, European or international) should be shown according to the agreed time-table. In short, Madelin's bill sought to enlarge and make specific the programming obligations of the different companies in the event of strike action, a task left in the past to the minister with responsibility for broadcasting.

In the end neither of these two private members' bills was debated in the Assembly. Instead a very different private members' bill was put forward jointly by Vivien and Madelin, which gained the support of the leaders of the two parliamentary groups of the majorité, Claude Labbé (Gaullist) and Roger Chinaud (UDF), and was signed by over 190 deputies of the majorité including Jacques Chirac and Joel Le Tac.

Though officially a private members' bill, it was clear that the new proposals were fully supported by the Government. First, the Government willingly found parliamentary time for debate on the


bill at the end of April 1979. Received at the Hotel Matignon, Vivien was assured by Barre that the Government would secure parliamentary time for such a debate. 97 Secondly, the bill itself was drafted by the Service Juridique et Technique de l'Information, part of the Prime Minister's office. 98 Thirdly, during the second reading of the bill in the Assembly Lecat supported the removal of several Senate amendments which had sought to qualify the rigour of the original bill, thus making it clear that the original bill was totally in line with the Government's thinking on the question. 99

Though certain minor changes were made in the Senate and by the Constitutional Council, the law as promulgated is very similar to the terms of the original bill. The provisions of the new law, are divided into three parts. The first part of the new legislation states that notice of an impending strike must be given to the chairmen of the broadcasting companies at least five clear days before the start of the strike. This notice must fix the place, date and time of the strike and whether it is due to run for a fixed or indefinite period of time. A new strike notice cannot be given by the same trade union organisation until the statutory time limit following the first strike notice has elapsed and, if need be, the strike following the first notice has ended. 100 The second part of the new law affirms that the creation and

98. Interview with M. Mougey, September 17 1979.
100. Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, Loi no. 79-631 du 26 juillet 1979 modifiant les dispositions de la loi no. 74-696 du 7 août 1974 relatives à la continuité du service public de la radio et de la télévision en cas de cessation concertée du travail.

Part I of the new law was included by an amendment in the Senate, amendment no. 21, proposed by Henri Caillavet on behalf of the cultural affairs committee. Though opposed by the Government in the Senate debate, the amendment was passed by the Senate and no attempt was made by the Government to have the amendment removed at the second reading stage of the bill. Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Sénat, June 22 1979, pp. 2085-2087.
transmission of broadcasting signals must be ensured by the staff of the programme companies and the transmission company who normally carry out this task. Certain categories of staff, decided by decree in the Council of State, will be "strictly indispensable" for this to be carried out and the chairmen of the programme companies and the transmission company will be able to demand that these staff remain at work. 101 Finally, part three of the new law states that when there is an insufficient number of staff at work in the television companies, the chairman of each company can "if the situation requires it" demand that certain categories of staff must remain at work to ensure the continuity of the public service. Moreover, staff on strike will have their salaries reduced.

In effect the new legislation had the following objectives. First, it was designed to prevent a union from giving a daily notice to strike and thereby throwing the different sets of broadcasting management into confusion. Now once a strike notice had been given, the statutory delay of five days has to be observed before another strike notice can be given by the same trade union. The abuse of the 1963 law on strikes in the public services would, it was hoped, be put to an end. Secondly, in the event of a strike taking place the new law ensures the maintenance of transmission facilities. This means that those members of staff in the programme companies who are responsible for producing the transmission signals and the quasi-totality of the staff in the transmission company are effectively deprived of their right to strike. Transmission facilities will always be available to the programme companies if they wish to use them. Thirdly, the

chairmen of the television companies, acting in the knowledge that transmission of programmes is now guaranteed, can, even if a strike is supported by a majority of staff in their particular company, put out almost a normal service. They can demand that certain categories of staff remain at work and, if necessary, use their pre-recorded stock of programmes to fill any gaps in their original programme schedules. Alternatively, they can screen some form of minimum service if they so wish or even decide to leave the screen blank. One might reasonably expect the television company chairmen to seek to screen a quasi-normal programme schedule in the event of strike action. However, the new legislation gives them a choice of responses to the threat of strike action in their company, thus ending the automatic application of the minimum service whenever a notice to strike was given by the broadcasting unions, whatever the number of strikers involved in the dispute.

The Socialist and Communist parties and all the broadcasting unions condemned the new legislation as an unjustifiable attack on the staff's constitutional right to strike. As usual one of the broadcasting unions, the SURT-CFDT has made an official complaint to the Conseil d'Etat to the effect that a ministerial circular specifying to the company chairmen what services must be guaranteed exceeds the provisions of the new legislation. The decision of the Conseil d'Etat on this question has, as yet, not been published. However, since the new law is itself more specific than its predecessor, and has not been declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Council, the unions'
room for manoeuvre in this respect is even more limited than formerly. The Conseil d'Etat cannot declare the new law unconstitutional, but can only decide whether the minister is acting ultra vires with regard to its application. It seems unlikely that the unions can realistically hope for much solace from this source.

While the new legislation does not mean that all the broadcasting staff have lost the right to strike, it does signify that another step has been taken to restrict the effect any strike action would have on programme schedules. Article 26 of the 1974 law was itself more restrictive than the equivalent clause of the 1972 ORTF statute. The legislation introduced in 1979 goes still further in diminishing the possibility of effective strike action in the state broadcasting companies. In short, the weakening of the unions' strike weapon which was evident before 1974 was consolidated by the 1974 statute and further accentuated by the 1979 legislation.

**Strike activity in the new companies**

We have argued in this chapter that the break-up of the unitary structure of the ORTF, the Government's determination that the collective staff agreements should be negotiated separately in each of the new companies and the extension of the anti-strike provisions first in 1974 and again in 1979 were all intended by the Government to weaken the power of the broadcasting unions.

It is opportune, therefore, to ask to what extent the Government has succeeded in making effective strike action a more difficult option for the unions. Since an insufficient period of time has elapsed since the passing of the new anti-strike legislation in 1979, we shall concentrate in this section on the period between the
establishment of the new companies in January 1975 and the series of strikes in early 1979 which led to the introduction of the new legislation. In particular, we shall concentrate on the most serious dispute in the new companies, which started in the SFP and soon spread to affect all the companies in the new system.

It is certainly true that many minor areas of dispute have since the reorganisation of the broadcasting services been contained within one particular company. The isolation of disputes in this way has helped minimise the disruption of programmes in line with the Government's undeclared objective of weakening the power of the broadcasting unions. Moreover, as the new companies establish their own corporate identities and as new staff are recruited who have no experience of working at the old ORTF, it is likely that the attachment of staff to the former unitary structure and to a common sense of identity will diminish. The different geographical locations of the separate companies are an integral part of this process. In addition, the different symbols of the programme companies, displayed not only on the television screen but also on a whole host of commercial products such as perfume, handbags and umbrellas, testify to the determination of the new companies to establish themselves as the main focus of loyalty for their staff. In time company man will replace ORTF man.

Yet it is apparent that this process has still not come to full fruition. The break-up of the ORTF posed the broadcasting unions difficult problems of organisation and co-operation, particularly in the

103. See table 7.iii.

104. Jean Favre, SURT-CFDT representative at A2, estimated that about half of A2's workforce, excluding journalists, had not worked at the ORTF.
months immediately following the implementation of the reform. Thus during 1975 relations between the two largest unions were strained, with tactical differences becoming evident during the negotiations of the collective agreements in the four programme companies and at the SFP. During this first year of the new companies' existence there was little co-ordinated action between the two main unions, as each concentrated on reforming its internal organisation and building up its membership. There was no attempt to resurrect the Intersyndicale of the ORTF. However, the federal structure adopted by the unions has resulted in the maintenance of a unified approach within each union on questions which transcend the particular problems of any one individual company.

In addition, co-operation among the major unions on fundamental issues, such as the defence of staff employment or the maintenance of broadcasting as a public service, has, despite tactical disagreements, demonstrated that the inter-union solidarity of the ORTF is not just a nostalgic souvenir. In spring 1977 a week of action was held by the SURT-CFDT, SNRT-CGT and SNJ, culminating in a general strike affecting all the companies on February 23 1977.

The best illustration of the capacity of the unions to overcome the isolation of disputes in one company can be seen from the opposition of the unions to the measures proposed at the beginning of 1979 by the new chairman of the SFP, Clermont-Tonnerre, in a desperate attempt to bring the production company back from the verge of bankruptcy. During the autumn of 1978, as the financial crisis

105. See section on collective agreements.
107. See chapter on Finance.
of the SFP became increasingly apparent, the unions represented in the production company decided to embark on strike action in protest against the intransigence of the Government and the chairman of the company, Edeline, in the face of union demands for the protection of the company from financial collapse. A series of one day strikes at the SFP were backed up by two one-day stoppages in all seven companies of the ex-ORTF in October and November. However, it was not until February 1979, when Clermont-Tonnerre announced his proposals for the restructuring of the company, that the main period of strike action began.

On February 7 1979 Clermont-Tonnerre made public his decision to make 421 staff compulsorily redundant either through early retirement or by means of transfer to one of the other broadcasting companies. In addition, 130 members of staff had agreed to accept voluntary redundancy. The reaction of the broadcasting unions to this announcement was immediate and predictable. The staff of the SFP came out on strike to be joined by staff in all four programme companies. By week two of the strike the unions concerned, the SNRT-CGT, SURT-CFDT and the SNJ, made a common declaration in which they denounced the measures proposed by Clermont-Tonnerre and put forward the following common objectives: the revision of the cahiers des charges of the programme companies to establish fixed links between them and the SFP; the drawing up of a national collective agreement on conditions of employment common to all the companies of the ex-ORTF; a guaranteed quota of broadcasting production; and, naturally, no redundancies at the SFP.108

Outside of the production company itself the strike was apparently supported by a minority of broadcasting staff. Nonetheless this support was sufficient to ensure that only the minimum service was broadcast over a period of about three weeks following Clermont-Tonnerre's initial announcement. Moreover, it was noticeable that the main unions involved remained united over the objectives to be attained by their concerted action. The strike in the programme companies stopped at the beginning of March, though further one day general stoppages did take place in the course of the month. Meanwhile at the SFP the strike continued until the middle of March.

A division over tactics between the two major unions involved in the conflict, the SURT-CFDT and the SNRT-CGT, was, however, becoming increasingly manifest. The SNRT-CGT, the strongest union at the SFP, wanted to adopt a more hardline attitude towards the strike action, epitomised by its call for a renewed general strike among all the companies of the ex-ORTF. The SURT-CFDT, on the other hand, wanted to continue negotiations and to seek to back up their negotiating stance with different forms of action, including lightning strikes in different companies. This difference of opinion over tactics, which brought to mind a similar division during the period of the liquidation of the Office in the autumn of 1974, came to a head at the end of March when the SFP management reduced the total of staff to be made redundant from the original figure of 424 to 138.

The SURT-CFDT supported the SNRT-CGT in renewing the strike in the production company itself, but refused to support the extension of the stoppage to the other broadcasting companies. This difference of opinion hardened a split between the two unions which had been
building up over the previous ten days. The reaction of the SURT-CFDT to the new proposals made by the SFP management were summed up by the union's general secretary:

"It is useless to go on strike merely to defend the principle of the strike; there has been a development, inadequate certainly, but nonetheless a development; negotiations which it is now important to expand on." 109

As far as the SNRT-CGT were concerned, the best means of influencing these negotiations was by a general strike in all the broadcasting companies. However, since the SURT-CFDT was the majority union in all three television companies and in the transmission company, this demand by the SNRT-CGT for a general strike was not heeded. The SURT-CFDT, very much in the minority at the SFP, though willing to support the SNRT-CGT in its fight to protect the production company staff from redundancy, did not share the SNRT-CGT's view as to the best means of achieving this objective.

The SURT-CFDT was more willing to soft pedal and proposed an immediate return to work at the SFP for a month on the understanding that if the negotiations did not progress satisfactorily recourse to the strike weapon would then follow. The SNRT-CGT, on the other hand, favoured at least recourse to lightning strikes twice a week in order to ensure maximum disruption at the least possible cost. A further strike did take place at the SFP in May, supported by both the main unions, once the negotiations had been completed, but the other companies remained unaffected by this dispute.

The strike in the broadcasting companies at the beginning of 1979 demonstrated that when affected by a fundamental problem, such as redundancies, the broadcasting unions can overcome their inter-union rivalry and inter-company isolation to mobilise staff in all the broadcasting companies around a common objective. The 1974 reform, therefore, did not succeed in emasculating the powers of the broadcasting unions, as is evident from the fact that the Government was obliged in 1979 to alter its own statute by means of a private members' bill to reinforce the anti-strike provision of its original legislation. The disorganisation of the broadcasting unions evident in 1975 and 1976 would appear to have been overcome. 110

On the other hand, the break-up of the ORTF has had and will continue to have important consequences for the broadcasting unions. While the problem of inter-company co-operation within each union, for example between the different sections of the SURT-CFDT, has not proved insuperable, inter-union co-operation has been made more difficult by the 1974 reform. This is because the two main unions have their power bases in different companies suffering from different problems: the SURT-CFDT is strong in the programme companies and in the transmission company, while the SNRT-CGT is powerful in the production company. As the turn-over of broadcasting staff continues, those with experience of working at the ORTF will become fewer and any common sense of identity will become harder to foster. Moreover, while the introduction of new anti-strike legislation may reflect the power of the unions to disrupt the

110. See table 7.iii. Note especially the steady increase between 1975 and 1979 in the number of days lost through strike action.
service, it now means that the unions have a new factor to take into account in the future. The new legislation will not increase the unions' power in their negotiations with the different sets of management. For all these reasons, effective strike action by the broadcasting unions across all the companies is more difficult than at the ORTF and seems likely to become even harder in the future.

**Conclusion**

It would be a mistake to assume that the broadcasting staff have derived no advantage from the 1974 reform. Apart from the improvement in social benefits, interpersonal contacts among staff have been made easier by the creation of smaller organisational units. This is especially the case at TF1 and A2, each of which employs around 1,000 staff. Divisions among professional categories, very strong at the ORTF, have been increasingly broken down within the two major television companies, facilitating dialogue between, for example, technical and administrative staff. However, this improvement in human relations within the smaller companies scarcely compensates for the adverse consequences of the 1974 reform for the staff and particularly for the broadcasting unions.

The break-up of the ORTF necessitated a wholesale reorganisation of the broadcasting unions to cope with the changed environment of a decentralised structure. The autonomous unions, which, though not affiliated to one of the large confederations, had been very powerful at the ORTF, were particularly hard hit by the reform. The FSU, including the important technicians' union, was particularly hard hit by the reform.

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111. Prior to 1957 all the broadcasting unions were affiliated to one of the main confederations (FO, CGT or CFTC). It was only after 1957 that the autonomous house unions were created. It would appear that the wheel has now turned full circle. See C. Debbasch, *op. cit.*, p.132.
the SUT, finally decided to affiliate to the CFDT, a step it had been considering for some time, by joining forces with the small SIRT to form a large new union, the SURT-CFDT. The SNJ, the autonomous journalists' union, refused to affiliate to any of the large confederations. It has, however, emerged severely weakened from the break-up of the ORTF. The SNJ lost many members not reallocated to one of the new companies in 1974, has been some of its members switch to the CFDT journalists' union and has been unable to attract sufficient new journalists employed in the state broadcasting services to compensate for these losses. 112

Unions affiliated to one of the large confederations were also affected by the 1974 reform, though in general they were better able to recover. While FO suffered badly from the reform, losing many of its members through the transfer of the licence collection staff to the Ministry of Finance and through the compulsory premature retirement clause, the newly created SURT-CFDT and the SNRT-CGT have succeeded in maintaining power bases in the new companies. The SNRT-CGT's power bases are confined to the production company and the archive and research institute. The SURT-CFDT, on the other hand, is strong in all the programme companies and in the transmission company. It seems clear in short, that the union which has best survived the 1974 reorganisation is the SURT-CFDT, the natural successor of the FSU at the ORTF.

112: The SNJ, the principal journalists' union in France, is losing ground in the press as well as in broadcasting. In 1976 it gained over 37% of the vote in the elections to the commission de la carte, the body which distributes the journalists' professional card. In 1979 the SNJ's share of the poll had dropped to just over 31%. In 1976 the CFDT gained 23% of the vote, while in 1979 this figure rose to over 26%. The decline of the SNJ in the broadcasting companies, therefore, would appear to be part of a wider trend. Presse Actualité, no.144, March 1980, pp.18-28.
The collective agreements which replaced the ORTF staff statute in the four programme companies and at the SFP were also a disappointment to the broadcasting unions. The major demands of the unions were steadfastly refused by the different sets of management co-ordinated by Rossi. In the negotiations of both 1975 and 1977 the unions failed to secure any major concessions on matters such as the establishment of bipartite committees and the abandonment of the system of polyvalence. As far as the broadcasting journalists were concerned, the SNJ's demand for the application of the national collective agreement for press journalists was refused both times.

Finally, the anti-strike provisions adopted in 1974 and strengthened in 1979 were designed to make effective industrial action by the unions more difficult. There can be little doubt, in short, that the 1974 reform reflected the Government's desire to weaken the broadcasting unions as a form of opposition within the new companies.
CHAPTER 8

Parliamentary control

It has become almost commonplace for commentators on French politics to write about the decline of Parliament during the Fifth Republic. The weak position of Parliament, it is generally argued, can be attributed to certain provisions of the 1958 Constitution and to the existence since 1959 of a pro-governmental majority in the National Assembly. In this chapter we concentrate our attention on the role played by Parliament in the policy field of broadcasting, with particular emphasis on the period since the 1974 reform. Our object is to examine the powers available to Parliament and Parliament's use of these powers to see whether taken together they enable Parliament to act as an effective check on the political executive and make it accountable to the legislature. The conventional picture of parliamentary weakness in the Fifth Republic will thus be studied in the light of evidence from one specific policy area.

This chapter devotes a section to each of the means possessed by Parliament to influence the formulation and execution of broadcasting

1. See, for example, P.M. Williams, The French Parliament 1958-1967, London, Allen and Unwin, 1968, especially p.21; "Under the new regime the Parliament of France, once among the most powerful in the world, became one of the weakest."


policy. These may be listed as follows:

a) the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting;
b) the parliamentary standing committees;
c) the annual budget debate on broadcasting;
d) special \textit{ad hoc} committees;
e) parliamentary representation on the boards of governors of the broadcasting companies;
f) debates and legislation.

The reform would appear to have strengthened the powers of Parliament when compared to the 1964 and 1972 ORTF statutes. Moreover, the lack of a Giscardian parliamentary majority in the National Assembly might reasonably have been expected to reinforce the role of the legislature vis-à-vis the executive. Nonetheless, overall it would seem that Parliament is ill-equipped to act as an effective check on the executive in the policy field of broadcasting. Its powers remain limited when compared with those of the executive and Parliament is often unwilling or unable to use effectively even those powers which it does possess.

The parliamentary delegation for broadcasting

The parliamentary delegation for broadcasting was first set up in 1964, though it was given this title only in 1972. Under the terms of the 1964 statute

"The minister in charge of information is obliged to call a meeting, at least once every quarter, of a body representing Parliament, made up of the \textit{rapporteurs généraux} of the finance committees of the two chambers, four deputies and two senators, among whom must figure at least one representative of each of the committees responsible for the cultural affairs in the National Assembly and in the Senate......" \textsuperscript{3}

\textsuperscript{2} See chapter on the Origins of the 1974 reform.
\textsuperscript{3} 1964 ORTF statute, article 8.
As the 1968 Diligent report commented, the powers of this body were vague and inadequate. The responsible minister was obliged to call a meeting only once every three months and even this minimal frequency was not adhered to. Moreover, as the minister was in charge of the agenda of the meetings, the body could not discuss matters unless they were raised by the minister. 4

The 1972 ORTF statute expanded on the relevant provisions of its 1964 predecessor. The consultative parliamentary delegation, as it was now called, was still to meet at least once every three months. It was to give its opinion (avis) on any reform of the state broadcasting monopoly including exceptions to the monopoly legislation (dérégations) permitted by the Government. It was also to be consulted on the creation of decentralised units within the unitary structure of the ORTF, on agreements signed by the ORTF and outside bodies concerning the production, reproduction and transmission of programmes and on any other questions on which the Government or the Office wished to consult it. 5 However, by the terms of the 1972 statute the consultative parliamentary delegation could still not discuss broadcasting policy matters on its own initiative. 6

The original intention of the Government in 1974 was to maintain the parliamentary delegation in existence with the same powers as it had been granted in the 1972 ORTF statute. Thus, the Government’s 1974 broadcasting bill altered neither the composition nor the functions of the delegation. 7 However, two almost identical amendments were presented

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5. 1972 ORTF statute, article 13.
7. The composition of the delegation had been increased in 1972 from 8 to 10 parliamentarians.
in the Senate by the cultural affairs committee and the finance committee with the former being passed despite government opposition. This amendment was accepted by the commission mixte paritaire and included in the 1974 statute as article 4.

The composition of the parliamentary delegation was extended by the 1974 statute from ten members to fourteen. Its membership was now to consist of the rapporteurs généraux of the finance committees, the rapporteurs responsible for broadcasting in the two cultural affairs committees, five deputies and three senators. The eight parliamentarians who are not ex officio members of the delegation are chosen by their parliamentary groups and together they have to reflect the balance of political forces in the two chambers.

The functions of the parliamentary delegation were also spelled out in article 4 of the 1974 statute. The delegation is to be consulted as of right on any proposed exceptions to the state broadcasting monopoly and on any agreements signed by the broadcasting companies concerning the production, reproduction and transmission of programmes. The delegation thus monitors among other things the application of the companies' cahiers des charges. Moreover, in contrast to its limited powers under the 1972 statute, the delegation may not only be consulted on any matter concerned with the 1974 statute, but may also give its opinion on its own initiative. In other words, the delegation can discuss a matter of broadcasting policy without having to wait for

8. Journäl Officiel, Débäts Parlementaires Sénat, July 27 1974, pp.956-957; amendments no.34 (cultural affairs committee) and No. 79 (finance committee). See section on parliamentary debates and legislation for more details of the significance of these amendments.
9. See tables 8.i and 8.ii for the composition of the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting.
10. In May 1978, however, the delegation complained that it had not been consulted on the Government’s decree of March 20 1978 regarding permitted exceptions to the monopoly. Le Monde, May 20 1978.
the Government or the companies to ask it to do so.

Yet though the delegation's composition and powers have been increased by the 1974 statute, the question still remains as to how effective this parliamentary body is in influencing the formulation and implementation of broadcasting policy. Certainly since 1974 the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting has met more frequently than did its predecessor at the time of the ORTF. Thus, in 1974-75 the delegation met seventeen times, in 1975-76 five times, in 1976-77 thirteen times and in 1977-78, during the busy electoral period, six times. Moreover, the delegation has discussed a wide variety of topics concerned with broadcasting policy including the negotiation of the collective staff agreements at the end of 1975, the problem of creativity on television, exceptions to the broadcasting monopoly legislation, local radio and television-cinema relations.

However, opinions as to the effectiveness of the delegation differ. For example, at the end of chapter two of its second annual report the delegation notes:

"In short, one can state that in paying great attention to the conditions in which all the new broadcasting companies can operate properly, the parliamentary delegation has fulfilled the role accorded it by the statute. It has thus been able to reinforce its authority vis-à-vis the heads of the companies and the responsible minister."}


One of the delegation's chairmen, Jean Boinvilliers, a Gaullist deputy, commented that

"...while it is not the delegation's job to become involved in the running of the companies or to interfere in their management, the delegation is nonetheless the guardian of the 1974 statute." 13

On the other hand, not all the members of the delegation subscribe to this rather rosy appreciation of its efficacy. For example, Joel Le Tac argued that

"...the parliamentary delegation is still really only a consultative body. Its powers are largely formal. The delegation has a critical role which it does not fulfil, though this does not mean that it is always ineffective." 14

Georges Fillioud, Socialist deputy and member of the delegation, went even further in his criticism of the delegation.

"When one knows what goes on in the radio and television companies, one wonders what use our delegation is. It was created to ensure the respect of the statute and to exercise in Parliament's name a control over the broadcasting companies. Yet freedom and independence of these companies are ignored daily through the overt or covert interventions of the authorities." 15

Jack Ralite, Communist deputy and also a member of the delegation, echoed Fillioud's criticisms.

"The parliamentary delegation works very badly and I do not believe much in its usefulness. I have asked the chairman of the delegation to call a meeting on several matters such as the crisis at the SFP, the actors' strike, satellite broadcasting, creativity on television and news programmes. But the chairman, always a member of the majorité, does not want the delegation to discuss these questions."

"For example, while the delegation has held two meetings on the problem of satellite broadcasting, one with Lecat and the other with Giraud (the Minister of Industry) there has been no meeting with the technicians. Nor was the delegation shown the Cannac report on satellite broadcasting.

The meetings of the delegation generally last between one and two hours, which is indicative of their lack of importance. The delegation is a chambre d'enregistrement which is of little value. Its weakness reflects the weak role of Parliament in the Fifth Republic." 16

Similar comments were given by Jean Cluzel, rapporteur spécial of the Senate finance committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting and a member of the delegation, who argued that though the parliamentarians had fought in 1974 to increase the powers of the delegation, they have not subsequently used these powers to the full. 17 One explanation of this reluctance to exploit its powers was put forward by Antoine de Tarlé, an administrateur at the National Assembly concerned with broadcasting policy:

"The parliamentary delegation is not very active because outside the parliamentary sessions there is nobody here, while during the sessions all the parliamentarians are concerned with other things as well. Moreover, the delegation has no permanent secretariat and I have to work for it when I have the time. It is difficult to arrange a convenient time during the parliamentary sessions when both senators and deputies can meet. Finally, neither Boinvilliers nor Pado (up until now the two rotating chairmen of the delegation) is particularly dynamic." 18

In opposing the Senate amendments which sought to extend the powers of the delegation, Rossi had asserted that Parliament must not create a kind of permanent committee of inquiry into the running of the new broadcasting companies as this would be to prejudice their autonomy. 19

17. Interview with Jean Cluzel, September 11 1979.
18. Interview with Antoine de Tarlé, September 8 1979.
Chevallier appears to have accepted this argument at face value since he regards the new role of the delegation as inimical to the maintenance of the public service. In reality, however, the fears expressed by Rossi and Chevallier have not been realised, since the parliamentary delegation lacks both the capacity and the will to be a permanent committee of inquiry. Moreover, far from being unfavourable to the maintenance of the public service, the delegation has in the main been in the forefront of its defence.

The parliamentary delegation for broadcasting, in short, would seem to be a rather toothless body. It meets relatively infrequently for short periods of time. The majority of its members come from the ranks of the majorité. It lacks a permanent secretariat and research staff. Finally, its recommendations are not binding on either the Government or the broadcasting companies.

The parliamentary standing committees

A second instrument of parliamentary control are the standing committees concerned with broadcasting policy, which comprise the finance committee and the cultural affairs committee of both the National Assembly and the Senate. Membership of these four committees, like that of the other standing committees in both chambers, is based on proportional representation of all members in the Senate and of official party groups in the Assembly. In theory these standing committees have a very large membership. The National


21. See P. M. Williams, op. cit., pp. 62-63, for more general information on the composition and functions of the standing committees.
Assembly finance committee has over 60 members, the National Assembly cultural affairs committee has over 120, the Senate finance committee has 36 members and the cultural affairs committee of the upper chamber has 44 members.

In practice, however, committee members attend meetings only in those policy areas which are of particular interest to them. Consequently, attendance at the meetings of the standing committees when broadcasting policy is under discussion numbers around a dozen. Those members who do attend, usually the party spokesmen on broadcasting policy on the floor of the relevant chamber, constitute in a sense four small unofficial sub-committees on broadcasting policy.

The main task of these standing committees is to produce an annual report which is presented to Parliament by the rapporteur spécial of each of the four committees at the beginning of the budget debate on broadcasting. In these reports the standing committees judge the financial management of the broadcasting companies during the previous and current financial years and evaluate the financial position of the companies for the following financial year. The standing committees also evaluate the programming of the radio and television companies. More generally, the reports provide a body of evidence on the functioning of the broadcasting companies and on their relations with the Government. Finally, each report contains a recommendation to Parliament as to whether the authorisation to the Government to collect the licence fee should or should not be given at the end of the budget debate.

The 1974 statute maintained the investigative powers of the
rapporteurs spéciaux. In practice these powers have even been increased since the rapporteurs spéciaux may now contact the chairmen of the broadcasting companies directly without having to pass through the intermediary of the minister responsible for broadcasting. The annual reports are written by the administrateurs under the guidance of the rapporteur spécial and are then submitted to the committee for official approval. The administrateur responsible for drafting the annual report of the National Assembly finance committee on broadcasting commented:

"The annual budgetary report is the only real means of parliamentary control."

"I write Le Tac's reports for him. The reports are Le Tac's and mine and are then approved by the finance committee."

"The annual report is my major preoccupation. Le Tac has me to do the spadework for him. Consequently, because there is a permanent staff, there is an effective control. Le Tac, Cluzel and Caillavet are all active rapporteurs spéciaux, while de Préaumont is much less active."

While Cluzel reiterated the official view that the reports are those of the committee as a whole, Le Tac was much more forthright.

"The report of the finance committee is my own personal report. An administrateur does the figures and then I write the conclusions. This conclusion is my own personal contribution. All the criticisms in the report come from myself."

The influence of the parliamentary standing committees in shaping broadcasting policy depends on the willingness of the Government to implement their recommendations. Certainly the annual

22. Since 1974 the four rapporteurs spéciaux for broadcasting have been Joel Le Tac (National Assembly finance committee), Jean de Préaumont (National Assembly cultural affairs committee), Jean Cluzel (Senate finance committee) and Henri Caillavet (Senate cultural affairs committee).

23. Interview with Antoine de Tarlé, September 8 1979.


25. Interview with Joel Le Tac, June 14 1979.
reports give the *rapporteurs spéciaux* an important platform for the exposition of their views on current broadcasting policy. In fact, the publication of the reports is given nationwide coverage in the press, thus giving the *rapporteurs spéciaux* excellent publicity for their views.\(^{26}\) This allows the *rapporteur spécial* to give the official stamp of the committee to his criticisms and recommendations. Nonetheless, if a recommendation does not meet with ministerial approval, the standing committee has no effective power to have its proposal implemented. Thus, an annual recommendation of the National Assembly finance committee that a federating body be established to co-ordinate the running of the separate broadcasting companies has consequently fallen on deaf ministerial ears since it calls into question one of the fundamental premises of the 1974 reform. In the fact of ministerial intransigence the role of the standing committees is thus reduced to that of diffusing information to Parliament, the press, the public and interested researchers.\(^{27}\)

**The annual budget debate on broadcasting**

By the terms of article 19 of the 1974 broadcasting statute:

> "Each year, on the occasion of the voting of the finance act, Parliament, following the report of a member of each of the finance committees of the National Assembly and the Senate in the capacity of *rapporteur spécial*, authorises the collection of the licence fee."\(^{28}\)

The annual parliamentary debate on broadcasting is the principal

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26. For example, the publication of the National Assembly finance committee's report on broadcasting in October 1978 was given wide press coverage at a time when the SFP crisis was also hitting the headlines.

27. The reports are frequently over 50 pages and sometimes over 100 pages in length and often contain useful annexes.

regular financial check available to Parliament. The Government fixes the cost of the licence and then submits its decision to Parliament, which at the end of the budget debate votes either for or against the authorisation to collect the licence revenue for the following financial year. As the decision to fix the cost of the licence is not within the legislative domain but is of a regulatory character, Parliament does not have the power to alter the proposed amount of the licence fee. 29 Parliament's role is the more limited one of granting or withholding its consent to collect the licence revenue. In this respect the power available to Parliament is the same as it possessed at the time of the ORTF. 30

In addition, the 1974 statute extended Parliament's responsibility over the financial arrangements of the broadcasting companies by making the division of the licence revenue among the four programme companies subject to parliamentary approval. 31 This new power given to Parliament by the statute was not included in the Government's original bill. In fact the Government had opposed the parliamentary amendments which sought to give Parliament a greater say in the allocation of the licence revenue. 32 However with the inclusion of this clause in the 1974 statute the financial powers of Parliament in the broadcasting field are slightly more extensive than at the time of the ORTF, since previously Parliament had no control over the allocation of resources within the unitary structure of the Office. 33


30. Paragraph 1 of article 19 of the 1974 broadcasting statute, paragraph 1 of article 14 of the 1972 ORTF statute and paragraph 1 of article 9 of the 1964 ORTF statute are all identical.

31. 1974 broadcasting statute, article 19 paragraph 2.

32. See section on parliamentary debates and legislation for more details on the significance of these amendments.

33. See chapter on Finance.
Finally, Parliament successfully attempted in 1974 to ensure that it would be better informed when it came to making its decision on the broadcasting budget. The Government's bill in 1974 was amended so as to increase the documentation available to Parliament. Thus, while the original bill referred to the financial results of the previous year, the provisional accounts for the current year and the provisional budget for the following year, the 1974 statute also includes the financial accounts of the production company, the current year's cahiers des charges and the Government's report on each company's adherence to the provisions of its cahier des charges.

Thus Parliament's power to exercise a financial control over broadcasting was marginally strengthened by the 1974 statute. However, this extension of the power of Parliament in this respect should be viewed within the context of the far more important powers possessed by the Government. It is the Government which fixes the cost of the licence and so decides the total amount of resources to be allocated to the state broadcasting services. Chevallier's conclusion that "Parliament, benefiting from essential sources of information, has the means of an effective financial control." 34 grossly underestimates the extent to which the powers of Parliament are still severely circumscribed by the 1958 Constitution, the 1974 broadcasting statute, governmental stability and a lack of both parliamentary time and detailed information. The following analysis of the parliamentary debate at the end of 1975 on the broadcasting

34. J. Chevallier, op.cit., p.264.
companies' 1976 budget well illustrates the strengths and weaknesses of Parliament's financial control in the broadcasting field.

During 1975, their first year in operation, the broadcasting companies survived a series of financial crises through frequent recourse to the programme stocks inherited from the ORTF and by dint of substantial cutbacks on original expenditure provision. By the end of 1975 the companies, with the notable exception of the SFP, had established themselves on a reasonably sound financial footing, though not without sacrifices in the length of viewing time and the quality of their programme output. To help ease their financial position, the Government announced in June 1975 its intention to increase the cost of the licence in January 1976 from 140 to 160 francs for black and white and from 210 to 240 francs for colour sets. Designed to help the broadcasting companies balance their budgets in 1976, the proposed increase was debated in Parliament at the end of 1975 during the annual budget debate on broadcasting.

As is usual prior to the budget debates, the finance committees and cultural affairs committees of both the National Assembly and the Senate published their annual reports on the performance of the broadcasting companies during 1975 and outlined their hopes and fears for 1976. Of these four standing committees only one, the Senate finance committee, recommended that Parliament should refuse the authorisation to collect the licence fee. The other three all

35. See chapter on the Liquidation of the ORTF.
36. See chapter on Criticisms of the reform.
recommended that the authorisation be granted and that the proposed allocation of licence revenue among the broadcasting companies should proceed as announced by the Government.\textsuperscript{39} Thus, while all four parliamentary standing committees made numerous criticisms of the working of the 1974 reform, only one went so far as to recommend that Parliament should not authorise the collection of the licence fee.

The debate in the National Assembly, the first since the new companies began broadcasting, was a heated affair.\textsuperscript{40} The companies were criticised by representatives of all the parliamentary groups, including those of the governing coalition which had voted for the reform just over a year previously. While it was to be expected that the Socialists and Communists would denounce once again the Giscardian broadcasting reform and vote against the broadcasting budget on principle, the opposition of the deputies of the majorité to certain aspects of the reform was surprisingly intense, recalling the opposition of large sections of the Gaullist party to the Chaban-Delmas reform of the ORTF between 1969 and 1972.\textsuperscript{41}


\textsuperscript{40} Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, November 19 1975, pp.8581-8602.

\textsuperscript{41} See chapter on Politics and broadcasting in France before the 1974 reform.
At the end of the debate in the Assembly only five deputies voted for the authorisation to collect the licence fee. These included Le Tac, rapporteur spécial of the National Assembly finance committee on broadcasting, de Préaumont, rapporteur of the National Assembly cultural affairs committee on broadcasting, Pierre Gaussin, parliamentary representative on-the board of governors of TF1, and two others. The Gaullist party and the Centrists abstained, while the Giscardians joined the Socialists and Communists in voting against.

How can this large hostile vote on the part of the deputies of the majorité be explained? Chinaud, the leader of the Giscardian parliamentary group, explained its opposition on the grounds that the new broadcasting companies had perpetuated many of the operational defects of the ORTF. However, it was clear that this was only a pretext and that one main source of concern was the news coverage of the programme companies, particularly A2. In general, the deputies of the majorité regarded the news programmes of A2 as too favourable to the parties of the left. Moreover, each particular component of the majorité (Gaullist, Giscardian and Centrist) considered that it was suffering from unsympathetic coverage. For example, two months prior to the debate Maurice Papon, a Gaullist deputy and rapporteur général of the National Assembly finance committee, had condemned "the scandal of A2's television news which operates to the detriment of the majorité."

42. Mme. Aliette Crepin and M. Hamel.

43 The result of the vote at the end of the debate was 5 deputies in favour of authorising the Government to collect the licence fee, 269 against and over 200 abstentions.


More generally A2 had been the least stable of the programme companies set up by the 1974 reform. Barely a week before the budget debate another minor storm had affected A2 when a programme on the problems of the army, due to be shown on November 11 in the *Dossiers de l'écran* series, had had to be cancelled when at the last moment the Minister of Defence, Yvon Bourges, withdrew his promised participation. Jullian's reaction in publicly condemning the minister's change of heart was scarcely designed to commend him to politicians of the governing coalition. In short, from the very beginning A2 was the company which was most politically suspect in the eyes of the right-wing deputies and Jullian himself was held responsible by them for the instability which had been associated with the company since its establishment.

Both during the debate itself and, even more clearly, in the corridors before the debate the anger of the deputies of the *majorité* was apparent. For example, Georges Donnez (*réformateur*) condemned the lack of coverage given to his party by the programme companies.

"We, *réformateurs*, . . . complained prior to the statute of August 7, 1974, of a closed broadcasting structure. . . . which ignored us totally. We observe that we are no better provided for now, whether one considers news programmes or party political broadcasts. . . ."

Emmanuel Aubert (Gaullist) complained that the principle of a balanced news coverage was not always adhered to. Another Gaullist, Alain Terrenoire, remarked that ". . . news coverage is hostile to the

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47. See chapter on Appointments.


majorité." Michel Debré (Gaullist) commented that:

"We do not say that there is not enough coverage given to the UDR; we say that there is not enough coverage given to what in our eyes is essential for France." 51

though the distinction he was trying to make was not immediately apparent.

Roland Boudet (réformateur) was even more forthright in his remarks:

"Certainly the channels can play the opposition's game. But I am not so much of a masochist as to vote for a television licence which allows them to criticise me." 52

The most outspoken deputy was Jacques Soustelle (réformateur) who expressed his opinion in the following succinct manner:

"We're fed up with the hold of the lefties (la mainmise gauchiste) at Antenne 2." 53

Thus news coverage by the programme companies and particularly by A2 was an important factor in arousing the wrath of the deputies of the governing coalition. 54

The negative vote at the end of the debate

54. During the debate Robert-André Vivien, parliamentary representative on the board of governors at A2, produced the following breakdown of the time allocated to political parties, interest groups and the Government between January 6 and August 31 1975 on A2.

Socialist party 4 hours 10 minutes 44 seconds
Communist party 2 " 40 " 7 "
Left-wing radicals 13 " 22 "
Gaullists 1 " 39 " 5 "
JCSS Radicals 1 " 10 " 17 "
Giscardians 23 " 7 "
Régulateurs 16 " 17 "
Other centrists 5 " 13 "
President of the Republic 5 " 22 " 38 "
Prime Minister 2 " 18 " 53 "
Ministers 8 " 4 " 25 "
CGT 48 " 47 "
CFDT 20 " 39 "
FO 14 " 26 "
CNPF 24 " 8 "
was a warning shot aimed at both the Government and the chairmen of the companies, especially Jullian, to impress upon them the concern felt by the deputies of the majorité. 55 How deep-seated this concern was may be judged from the fact that several of the deputies who voted against the authorisation to collect the licence at the end of the debate in the Assembly had voted in favour of its collection in the relevant debates in the finance committee and the cultural affairs committee.

In any case whatever the reasons for the negative vote in the Assembly, the Government was compelled to take note of it. The proposed increase in the cost of the licence was reduced by 5 francs from 160 to 155 francs for black and white and from 240 to 235 francs for colour sets. The Senate finance committee, which had rejected the initial proposed increase, supported the amendment introduced by Rossi to this effect in the Senate on the grounds that the more limited increase was more in keeping with the anti-inflation policy of the Government and that a negative vote would pose a delicate constitutional problem. 56 The Government's own amendment was supported, albeit reluctantly, by the Gaullists, Giscardians and Centrists in the Senate without a formal vote being taken.

Because of this reduced increase in the cost of the licence the projected income of the broadcasting companies from licence revenue and advertising receipts for 1976 fell by over 100 million francs. 57

55. In interviews Jack Ralite (July 10 1979) and Jean de Préaumont (September 21 1979) explained the negative vote as reflecting the deputies' desire to have more control over the cost of the licence and its allocation among the companies.


As a result the broadcasting companies had to postpone indefinitely various planned projects. For example, A2 was forced to shelve plans to introduce television programmes in the morning and to extend its afternoon programme schedules. Its project to build a new headquarters at Neuilly was also postponed indefinitely. Nonetheless, despite a lower level of income than had been planned for, both TF1 and A2 made substantial profits totalling around 100 million francs during the 1976 financial year.

The rather atypical course of events at the end of 1975 which led to the Government's decision to reduce the proposed increase in the cost of the licence highlights both the strengths and weaknesses of Parliament's control over broadcasting finance. By means of a negative vote in the National Assembly the deputies of the majorité persuaded the Government to reduce the proposed increase by 5 francs. This allowed the Senate to vote the authorisation to collect the licence without loss of face, since, having made their point in the Assembly, the Gaullists, Giscardians and assorted Centrists could support in the Senate the smaller increase in the licence without appearing to go back on the criticisms made by their colleagues in the Assembly.

On the other hand, Parliament has no power to propose a change in the cost of the licence on its own initiative. It can only approve

58. Minutes of the comité d'entreprise of A2, February 4 1976, p.11.
60. The proposed licence fees for 1977, 1978, 1979 and 1980 were all passed in the National Assembly.
or reject the financial proposals made by the Government. This means that the financial sanction available to Parliament is a crude weapon which has to cover a wide variety of criticisms directed against the broadcasting companies, the Government or both. Thus, Parliament may as in 1975 use its power to refuse to authorise the collection of the licence on grounds other than the financial management of the companies, because this financial sanction, hedged as it is with limitations, is one of the few means available to Parliament to show its disapproval of the Government and/or the broadcasting companies. Moreover, the rejection of the authorisation to collect the licence is a difficult weapon because it requires a high level of widespread dissatisfaction among parliamentarians if it is to be successful.

This over-dependence on the annual budget debate as a vehicle for criticism of governmental broadcasting policy reflects the changed role of Parliament with regard to the budget in general.

"...the annual budget has lost... its decisive importance for policy-making. It remains the crucial instrument for investigating and criticising the way the Government uses its powers...." 61

The parliamentary debate on the broadcasting budget is no different from the budgetary debates in other policy fields in that it affords Parliament the opportunity to voice criticism and to ask questions of the responsible minister. In return it affords the minister the opportunity to defend government policy and to announce new initiatives.

61 P. M. Williams, op.cit., p.83.
In short, the annual budget debate on broadcasting scarcely provides Parliament with "the means of an effective financial control" to which Chevallier refers. This is not to say that Parliament has no powers to influence the financial allocations of the broadcasting companies. However, the Government undoubtedly retains the initiative with regard to the control of the financial resources allocated to the state broadcasting services, while Parliament can act effectively only at the margins.

Special ad hoc parliamentary committees

Special ad hoc committees represent an additional instrument of parliamentary control in the field of broadcasting. Since the 1974 reform two committees of inquiry (commission d'enquête) on aspects of broadcasting policy have been set up, one by the Senate and the other by the National Assembly. The Senate report published by Jean Cluzel in the summer of 1979, examined the financial conditions in which the programmes of the television companies were produced. The National Assembly report, presented by Claude Martin also in the summer of 1979, inquired into the conditions of public information in France. In addition

62. For example, in 1976 the Senate passed an amendment which had been introduced by the Government in the face of pressure from the Senate finance committee. This amendment reduced A2's income from licence revenue by 5 million francs destined to help finance its new headquarters and allocated it instead to Radio France to assist its external services broadcasts. Journal Officiel, Documents Sénat, 1976-1977, no.65, Rapport général fait au nom de la commission des finances sur le projet de loi de finances pour 1977, Tome III, Annexe no.46, Radiodiffusion et télévision, rapporteur spécial: Jean Cluzel, annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 23 novembre 1976, p.128, and Journal Officiel Débats Parlementaires Sénat, December 11 1976, pp.4236-4237.


a lengthy Senate information report (rapport d'information) on programme quality and creativity in French broadcasting was presented by Henri Caillavet in the spring of 1978. During the ORTF's ten year existence four special parliamentary committees were set up to examine various aspects of broadcasting policy. Thus, since 1964 there have been two committees of inquiry, three committees of


66. In chronological order the reports of these committees were:


This list excludes the independent report commissioned by the Government in October 1969 under the chairmanship of Lucien Paye. The Paye report was published in June 1970.
control (commission de contrôle) and two information reports, all examining different facets of broadcasting. The following analysis of the role of these committees sheds light on their importance as a means of parliamentary control and also on their inherent limitations.

The powers of these special committees were not affected by the 1974 broadcasting statute, which made no reference to them. Their powers for the most part remain those as set out in an ordinance of November 1958 and can be summarised as follows. 67 Committees of inquiry are established to collect information on established facts (faits déterminés), while the committees of control are formed to examine the administrative, financial or technical management of public services or national enterprises. 68 These committees can be set up by either chamber of Parliament and their members are appointed by majority vote in the chamber concerned. They are temporary bodies and are automatically disbanded once they have produced their reports or at the latest six months after the adoption in Parliament of the enabling resolution. Another committee cannot be established with the same terms of reference until twelve months have elapsed since the end of the work of the previous committee. The investigations of the committees are carried out in secret and members of the committees and witnesses are sworn to secrecy. The relevant chamber alone has the power to decide on the publication of all or part of any report which is produced by the committees. Finally, any breach of these regulations is punishable in law. 69

68. Ibid, article 6, paragraphs 1, 2 and 3.
69. Ibid, article 6, paragraphs 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.
There exist, however, various constraints which can be employed, particularly by the Government, to prevent a committee of inquiry or control from functioning effectively. These constraints have been very well summarised by Ruth Thomas.

"... these commissions have the disadvantage of being the products of crises, and they have no coercive power. ... The Fifth Republic reduced the powers of parliamentary special commissions, limiting their duration to four months and excluding from their scope any question which is sub judice..... For a commission of inquiry, not only must facts be "established" and not sub judice, but they must not form part of the "reserved domain" of the executive branch. Other possibilities of pressure exist: from government control of the parliamentary timetable....; from the limited time allotted to the work ....; and from the various forms of official secrecy which can be invoked - judicial, national security, and administrative - .... Indeed, the commission's powers are effectively limited to those the subjects of the inquiry allow them; no one is obliged to appear, and ministers can refuse to let their civil servants testify. The final report of a commission may exclude the observations of the opposition members, and the Assembly may refuse to allow publication altogether. Finally, the commission's report has only the force of suggestion or proposal; the government and the broadcasting company can thus choose to ignore its conclusions." 70

Yet in spite of these limitations the special parliamentary committees which have been set up since 1964 to investigate the state broadcasting services have attracted a lot of publicity. Moreover, several of them would appear to have influenced the Government's broadcasting policy. In important ways. For example, the 1968 Diligent report was highly critical of the way in which the 1964 ORTF statute had been, or more accurately had not been, implemented. In particular, the report condemned the Government's interference in the financial, managerial and editorial operations of the Office, recommending that the role of the Government should be minimised so as to reinforce the autonomy of the ORTF. Just over one year after the publication of the

70. R. Thomas, op. cit., pp. 96-97.
report, the spirit of many of the committee's recommendations was observed by the introduction of various reform measures by Chaban-Delmas in 1969.71

The two parliamentary reports published in 1972, one by each chamber, were also critical of certain features in the running of the ORTF. The 1972 Diligent report made public the scandal of covert advertising at the ORTF, while the Le Tac report contained a more general condemnation of the Office's slack management.72 Three months after the publication of these two reports the ORTF was given a new statute and a new président directeur général. Moreover, the last special committee to investigate the administration of the ORTF, the Chinaud committee, published its report in June 1974, barely a month before the Government introduced its bill to abolish the ORTF and reorganise the state broadcasting services.73 It would appear, therefore, that the publication of these parliamentary reports was swiftly followed by important policy decisions on the part of the Government, usually involving new legislation.

However, such a simple casual link between recommendations by the legislature and action by the executive would be an over estimation of the significance of these parliamentary reports. Thus, the Chaban-Delmas reforms of 1969 cannot be attributed solely or even principally to the 1968 Diligent report. The long strike at the ORTF in May 1968 at the time of "the events" and the accession to the premiership of a socially liberal Gaullist in June 1969 are much more

71. See chapter on Politics and broadcasting in France before the 1974 reform.

72. Ibid.

73. See chapter on the Origins of the 1974 reform.
important factors to be taken into account in any explanation of
the 1969 reforms.

Likewise, it is improbable that the decision to reform the
ORTF in 1972 can be attributed principally to the publication of
the Diligent and Le Tac reports. Rather these served as a pretext for
the reorganisation of the Office. The 1972 reform was more the result
of Pompidou's growing disillusionment with the 1969 ORTF reforms of
Chaban-Delmas. 74 Chaban-Delmas' fall from grace was confirmed
by his enforced resignation from the premiership at the same time as
his broadcasting reforms were being overturned by a new ORTF statute.
Neither report specifically recommended the type of reform which was
subsequently undertaken by the Government and neither rapporteur
considered his report as an attack on the Chaban-Delmas reforms of
three years previously. André Diligent commented:

"The report was not out to get Chaban. The protests
against the Desgraupes experiment pre-dated the setting up
of the committee. Moreover, these protests were about the
handling of news at the ORTF, not about the secret
advertising scandal. My report was not a pretext for the
sacking of Chaban. Juillet (one of Pompidou's personal
advisers) was already after Chaban, wanting to get rid
of him." 75

Joel Le Tac's comments were of a similar nature:

"In 1972 there was a bad climate surrounding Chaban.
There was a malaise at the ORTF with de Bresson (the director
general) incapable of running the organisation. Nobody was
in charge. Chaban came out worst in the affair. Pompidou's
personal advisers, Juillet, Garaud and Guillaud, were all
anti-Chaban. Also Poniatowski and Giscard were behind
the publication of Chaban's tax returns. I tried to defend
Chaban who was much criticised at the time because of the
Desgraupes experiment which, though positive in my opinion,
was seen as negative by a large section of the Gaullist party.
But Chaban and his entourage delayed too long. Sanctions

74. See chapter on Politics and broadcasting in France before the
1974 reform.

75. Interview with André Diligent, June 21 1979.
should have been taken within the ORTF before the whole affair was made public. It was an error on Chaban's part to assume responsibility for what was happening at the ORTF. This ought to have been de Bresson's job. I was pro-Chaban and that was why I took control of the committee. The report was not a sanction of Chaban.  

Chaban-Delmas' dismissal from the premiership and the new ORTF statute were, in short, the result of opposition to his policy by the President of the Republic, the presidential staff and a large, vociferous section of the Gaullist parliamentary group. The two parliamentary reports may have afforded the opportunity to introduce a reform of the ORTF, but the origins of the 1972 reform are to be found elsewhere.

Similarly, in 1974 the findings of the Chinaud report constituted only one among a host of reasons for the reorganisation of the state broadcasting services and the abolition of the ORTF. As we have already argued, political considerations following Giscard d'Estaing's election to the presidency were more important in deciding the shape of the reorganisation. If Pompidou had lived there can be little doubt that the more modest Long reforms would have been adopted instead and the unitary structure of the ORTF would have survived. The Chinaud report itself did not recommend the abolition of the ORTF. Moreover, even if there had been no parliamentary report published at this time, some sort of reform of the ORTF would undoubtedly have taken place.

The Caillavet report published in early 1978 was concerned with programme quality and creativity on French radio and television.

76. Interview with Joel Le Tac, June 14 1979.
77. See chapter on the Origins of the 1974 reform.
Among the report's seventeen recommendations to improve programme quality were proposals to establish a structural co-ordination of the programme schedules of the three television companies and to set up a creativity fund of 200 million francs. In addition, the report, without going so far as to recommend an overall structural reform of the broadcasting services, did suggest that the plan put forward by Long in 1974 should be used as the basis of discussion in any future plans to reorganise the public service.

"This project, the product of a great deal of thought by a first class expert, was a compromise of all the advantages and disadvantages of centralisation and decentralisation." 79

Thus, the report called into question one of the basic principles of the 1974 reform, the absence of a central co-ordinating body in the new broadcasting structure.

However, none of the main recommendations of the Caillavet report has been implemented by the Government. The establishment of a structural co-ordination of programme schedules and the institution of a central co-ordinating body would have involved a fundamental reversal of the policy of separate companies with full responsibility for their operations which formed the keystone of the 1974 reform. The television companies have not been allowed to purchase half of the capital of the production company. Moreover, while a creativity fund has been set up, in its first year of operation the sum involved totalled 5 million francs rather than the 200 million francs.

78. Caillavet report, 1978, pp. 252 and 259. (For full reference of the report see footnote 65)


80. Ibid, p. 256.
recommended in the Caillavet report. \(^{81}\) In fact the failure of the Caillavet report to have a major impact on broadcasting policy may be judged from the fact that less than a year after its publication the Senate established a committee of inquiry to examine much the same evidence as had been considered by the Caillavet report.

The report of this committee of inquiry, the Cluzel report, was published in June 1979. Set up to examine the financial conditions in which the programmes of the television companies were produced, the committee devoted a large part of the report to the financial crisis of the SFP and its relationship with the television companies. Thirty recommendations of varying significance were made at the end of the report, among the most important of which was the proposal to establish a central public corporation with the general task of co-ordinating the management of the different companies. The central public corporation would be responsible for allocating the revenue from the licence and from commercial advertising among the companies, for co-ordinating programme schedules and for planning investment, particularly in new audio-visual technology. \(^{82}\) Another recommendation of the Cluzel report was that the television companies TF1 and A2 should become the main shareholders in the SFP. \(^{83}\) The report also recommended that a quality fund should be set up to encourage creativity in French television production. \(^{84}\)


\(^{82}\) Cluzel report, 1979, pp.155-157. (For full reference of the report see footnote 63.)

\(^{83}\) Ibid, p.153.

\(^{84}\) Ibid, p.171.
Some of the proposals of the Cluzel report were, therefore, very similar to those made a year earlier by Senator Caillavet. However, the Cluzel report has been no more successful than its predecessor in influencing the main guidelines of the Government's broadcasting policy. It would require a fundamental change in this policy for the Government to set up a central public corporation along the lines recommended by the Cluzel report. Such an innovation is, to say the least, highly unlikely in the foreseeable future.

The third parliamentary report which has considered aspects of the Government's broadcasting policy since 1976 is the Martin report which was published in September 1979. The objective of this National Assembly committee of inquiry was to examine the conditions of public information in France, i.e. the way in which news was collected, produced and disseminated through the press and the broadcasting media. Since the work of this committee ended in a political fiasco, the report as published contains no recommendations to the Government. Indeed there is no report as such, but merely an introductory statement which condemns the lack of independence and pluralism in the news media, followed by comments from the four main political groups in the Assembly: the Gaullists, the Giscardians, the Socialists and the Communists. It is safe to say that the influence of this report on news presentation in the state broadcasting companies will be nil. In the absence of common recommendations it cannot be otherwise.

The circumstances in which the report was drafted and finally published, however, do reveal a lot about the role of special parliamentary committees and particularly about their efficacy as an instrument of control over governmental policy. In fact the
Martin report is an excellent case study of the limitations of this method of parliamentary control.

The committee of inquiry was set up in March 1979 on the initiative of the Gaullist parliamentary group. After the committee had sat for six months and heard the testimony of ninety-six witnesses, a report was drafted by the committee's rapporteur, Jacques Douffiagues, a Giscardian deputy. This very long draft report was then rejected by the Socialist, Communist and, most importantly, Gaullist members of the committee. According to the Gaullist broadsheet, La lettre de la nation, the Gaullist deputies:

"... were particularly surprised to find the document presented by M. Douffiagues, far from highlighting the original evidence presented by the committee of inquiry, had sought to suppress this evidence in order to prove that as far as the information of the public was concerned everything was fine in France."

Since the original draft report was rejected by a majority of the committee members, the committee had only two courses of action open to it if it wanted any report on its investigations to be published: either to ask Douffiagues to draft another report or to elect another rapporteur. A compromise solution to satisfy both Giscardian and Gaullist members of the committee was found to be impossible, with the result that Douffiagues and the other Giscardian members of the committee resigned on September 13. A Gaullist


The Gaullists had previously called for the establishment of a committee of inquiry into alleged government pressures on broadcasting journalists during the municipal elections of March 1977. See *Le Monde*, February 17 1977.


rapporteur, Claude Martin, was then elected to draft another report, the Socialist and Communist members of the committee abstaining in the vote to choose a new rapporteur. Douffiagues explained his resignation from the committee in the following terms:

"The committee of inquiry into public information carried out its work normally until this afternoon. Certain people wished to present as a reality what was only a reflection of their undoubtedly partisan passions. It was therefore impossible for me to carry out my functions as rapporteur in an objective manner.

Under these conditions the UDF members of the committee have decided not to participate any longer in the work of what was up until today a committee of inquiry." 88

With less than two days in which to draft a new report Martin sought to have the testimony of the different witnesses published in an annex to his report. However, not all the witnesses could be contacted in the time available and of those who were several were opposed to the publication of their testimony which had been given on the understanding that it would remain secret. Thus, the final report, as drafted by Martin, contains a statement of only sixteen lines followed by comments from the four main parliamentary groups. As such it is a very unsatisfactory product of six months' investigation by a special parliamentary committee. 89

Yet if the report itself is disappointingly vague, the problems surrounding the first draft of the report and indeed the work of the committee in general shed much light on the role of special parliamentary committees. The first point to stress is the crucial importance of the rapporteur. Though the report of a special


89. For the full reference of the report see footnote 64.
parliamentary committee is officially the work of the committee as a whole, the rapporteur has a large measure of independence when he comes to write the committee's report. The committee may, as in this case, choose to reject the report as drafted by the rapporteur, but given the limitations of time if a report is to be published, a negative vote is a move of the last resort. If the Gaullists, when they asked for a committee of inquiry to be established, had intended to use this device to criticise the Giscardian regime for its control of the news media, they made a major tactical error in allowing a Giscardian deputy to be the committee's rapporteur. A Gaullist member of the committee himself admitted this after the event:

"Two committees of inquiry were being set up almost simultaneously, one on public information and the other on employment. We decided that the committee on employment was more important and so filled the post of rapporteur on this committee. Therefore, the UDF had the post of rapporteur on the committee on public information. I was opposed to this choice and wanted the RPR to take the post of rapporteur on the committee on public information. We made a mistake." 90

The second point to emerge from this analysis of the work of the 1979 National Assembly committee of inquiry into the conditions of public information is that the committee has no power to compel witnesses to appear before it. Thus, in this case Giscard d'Estaing did not allow his spokesman, Pierre Hunt, to appear before the committee.91 Nor was this the first time that a special parliamentary committee into broadcasting policy had been frustrated in this way. The 1968 Diligent committee had suffered from similar problems.

"Ministers did not reply to the committee's invitations to appear before it; Dupont (the director general of the ORTF) was present at all the meetings when we were interviewing civil servants, obviously to find out what they would say to us." 92

90. Interview with Jean de Préaumont, September 21 1979.
"Far from facilitating the work of the committee, the Government and management of the ORTF protected themselves each time they could behind the letter of the texts... in order to confide to the committee only what they were compelled to." 93

With the above points in mind, it is legitimate to ask what functions the special parliamentary committees on broadcasting have fulfilled. As already stated, it is difficult to calculate their influence in shaping broadcasting policy. While the reports published in 1968, 1972 (twice) and 1974 all preceded important reforms of the ORTF, other factors were also involved. In any case the reports published in 1978 and 1979 (twice) did not give rise to any major reform of the state broadcasting services. What is likely is that the Government may make use of a special parliamentary report to its own advantage. A special parliamentary committee on broadcasting can perform a useful substantive role in influencing policy only if the Government agrees with the findings of the committee. Otherwise the report will be ignored, though minor recommendations may be acted upon. As a thesis on the work of special parliamentary committees commented, the success of these committees depends essentially on the goodwill of the executive. 94

Apart from seeking to influence policy, the reports of the special parliamentary committees have other functions. One of these is to publicise matters of public interest. In this respect the special parliamentary committees on broadcasting have been very

93. Diligent report, 1968, p.16. See also pp.14-21. (For full reference of this report see footnote 66a)

successful. Wright's contention that:

"Ad hoc commissions of enquiry or control are rarely established if the subject proposed is likely to prove politically embarrassing to the Government" 95

certainly does not apply to the policy area of broadcasting. Almost without exception all seven reports on broadcasting policy which have been published since 1964 have been critical of current government policy at the time. Moreover, because of the importance of broadcasting the reports have been given widespread coverage in the French press. In addition, the reports provide an unrivalled source of information on broadcasting policy. Not least, they give a large amount of publicity to the rapporteur himself. The report is named after him in the press, résumés of the report appear in the newspapers and the rapporteur may even appear on television to defend his report. Both Caillavet and Cluzel produced books based almost verbatim on their parliamentary reports, though unsuspecting members of the public had to pay well over the price of the report for the dubious benefit of a glossy cover. 96

Parliamentary representation on the boards of governors of the broadcasting companies.

Parliament possesses another means for exercising control over broadcasting through its representatives on the boards of governors of the broadcasting companies. There are two parliamentarians, one

95. V Wright, op.cit., p.118.

deputy and one senator, among the sixteen governors at TDF and one parliamentary representative on each of the six member boards of the four programme companies. However, there is no parliamentary representative on the governing boards of either INA or the SFP.

At the time of the ORTF Parliament did not have its own representative on the Office's board of governors. At first sight, therefore, the 1974 statute marked in this respect a break with the past. However, the Government's original bill revealed the true extent of this innovation, since in the initial text the parliamentary representative was to sit on the governing boards as a representative of public opinion (un parlementaire au titre de l'opinion publique.)

At the ORTF public opinion had been represented by a member of the board appointed by the Government from a list drawn up by viewers' associations deemed to be representative. If effect this meant that a Gaullist sympathiser was always chosen. The 1972 statute increased the representation of the viewers to two members of the ORTF's board of governors, who were now to be appointed by Parliament. However, it was not until the 1974 statute that parliamentarians themselves became members of the boards of governors of the broadcasting companies.

Among the six parliamentarians on the different governing boards a balance is preserved between the National Assembly and the

97. 1974 broadcasting statute, articles 5 and 11.
100. See section on parliamentary debates and legislation for the discussion on the number of parliamentary representatives to sit on the companies' boards of governors.
Senate and between the majorité and the left-wing opposition, though the parliamentarians of the majorité have the advantage of sitting on the boards of the three television companies.101

The two parliamentarians on the board of governors at TDF are chosen by the cultural affairs committees of the National Assembly and Senate respectively, while the parliamentary representatives in each of the four programme companies is chosen by the same two committees sitting jointly. In practice, however, there is a tacit agreement among the political parties about the allocation of these posts and so there is no need for a formal election.102 Gérard Longuet, parliamentary representative on TF1's board of governors, described how he was "elected" to the post:

"I replaced Gaussin as parliamentary representative on TF1's board of governors after the 1978 elections. In theory I was elected by the National Assembly cultural affairs committee, but in practice the majorité divide up channels one, two and three (sic) among them.

Chinaud asked me to represent the UDF and the National Assembly at TF1. I had, and still have, no particular competence in broadcasting matters. In a sense this explains my choice. Deputies like Madelin and d'Aubert (other UDF deputies) were too committed to a certain viewpoint. I wasn't. There were about 10 UDF deputies interested in the post, largely because they over-estimated its importance.

Chinaud did not want a troublemaker at TF1, another Vivien. (The Gaullist parliamentary representative at A2). Vivien thinks he is the boss of A2 and has assumed responsabilités far in excess of his function."103

While in theory the role of the parliamentarians on the boards

101. See chapter on Appointments.
103. Interview with Gérard Longuet, September 6 1979.
of governors is to represent the viewers within the broadcasting companies, in practice there has been a marked tendency for the parliamentary governors to represent their companies before Parliament. For example, Gérard Longuet commented:

"My job is to represent the viewers on the board of governors, but the view that the parliamentary governor represents his company in Parliament is not totally false. There is a certain solidarity between the head of the company and the board of governors. In a sense the board represents the company and this goes for me as well. I am not a parliamentary ambassador but a representative of the company." 105

Joel Le Tac was, as usual, more forthright:

"It was an apparent victory of the Assembly to get parliamentarians on to the boards of governors of the companies. The Assembly thought that this would be a complementary instrument of parliamentary control. But in fact the opposite has happened. Instead of the parliamentary governors representing Parliament inside the companies, they tend to defend their company before Parliament. They present no reports to Parliament on the execution of their functions.

The system of parliamentary governors has been a total failure as far as parliamentary control is concerned." 106

Jacques Carat and Jean Cluzel both agreed with Le Tac:

"It is to be expected that parliamentary governors become spokesmen for their companies. We are not given any specific duties by Parliament and Parliament expects nothing of us. It waits for us to report back, to intervene if we wish.

But the fact that there is a parliamentarian on the boards of governors does give Parliament the possibility of being kept informed." 107

105. Interview with Gérard Longuet, September 6 1979.
106. Interview with Joel Le Tac, June 14 1979.
"The parliamentary governors do not report back to Parliament and there is no formal mechanism for them to report back. Vivien represents A2 in Parliament, and the others represent their companies slightly less." 108

The ambivalence of the role of the parliamentary representative on the boards of governors of the broadcasting companies was particularly highlighted during the 1975 budget debate when both Vivien and Gaussin gave speeches which amounted to impassioned pleas in defence of their companies.

"I wanted to give you these details to show you that the administration of TF1 is carried out seriously attentively, unceasingly, with respect for the public .... and without notion of censorship either from the Government or from any member of the board of governors. ....this company is prudently run by prudent people.

Participating closely in the life... of one of these companies I shall simply ask you one favour... Even if you have criticisms to make - and you have - even if you have the impression sometimes that this or that channel benefits your opponents too much and your friends not enough, let the companies live by giving them the necessary means..." 109

"...for the first time in thirteen years I come up to this tribune not as a prosecutor, but a little as defence counsel for one of the new television companies, A2, on whose board of governors Parliament has sent me to represent the viewers." 110

It would appear, then, that the innovation of the 1974 statute of having parliamentarians on the boards of governors of the broadcasting companies has not helped extend the scope of parliamentary control. There is little contact between the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting and the standing committees on the one hand and the parliamentary governors on the other. A

110. Ibid, p.8587.
project put forward by Le Tac to formalise links between the parliamentary delegation and the parliamentary representatives on the boards of governors has proved stillborn. Indeed, given the tendency for the parliamentary governors to act as defenders of their companies, the system of parliamentary control now contains the potential for much greater internal conflict than before.

Parliamentary debates and legislation

The final means available to Parliament to exercise a controlling influence on broadcasting policy is through legislation. In this respect Parliament's role is confined by the limitations placed on its legislative powers by the 1958 Constitution: the Government's control of the parliamentary timetable, the restricted legislative domain, the priority given to government bills, the use of the package vote (vote bloqué) and the complex procedure governing censure motions.

This does not mean that Parliament's legislative role has been totally emasculated. For example, in 1964 the Government had originally intended to reorganise the state broadcasting services by means of regulations rather than through the introduction of a bill in Parliament. However, as the Constitutional Council ruled that five of the seven main parts of the proposed measure fell within the domain of the law, the Government decided to bring the whole issue before Parliament. After a full debate the Government's original bill was


112. For a detailed discussion of the powers of Parliament in the Fifth Republic, see P.M. Williams, op.cit.
severely amended in both chambers and particularly in the Senate. However, by the use of the package vote and its power to introduce amendments to the bill as voted by the commission mixte paritaire, the Government with the support of the majorité in Parliament was able to cancel all the concessions made to the opposition. 113

Commenting on this debate in Parliament, Williams remarks that despite the fact that the Government in the end was able to impose its will,

"...it would be wrong to assume that the final outcome would have been the same if the broadcasting measure had been brought into force by regulations in the first place, as the Government had once wished. The minister would have drafted his measure differently, and no doubt more restrictively, if he had had to face no parliamentary scrutiny. Moreover, in the debates he gave assurances about the Government’s future use of its powers, and his statements could be quoted later as evidence of the intentions of the legislator: the administrative courts can thus apply, in cases arising out of regulations made under the act, criteria which are available only because Parliament had its say." 114

Nevertheless, the parliamentary debate on the 1974 broadcasting reform bill exemplifies many of the weaknesses of Parliament when faced with a powerful executive. For example, the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting was not consulted before the bill was presented in Parliament. The relevant standing committees, the cultural affairs committee in both the National Assembly and the Senate, had very little time in which to produce their reports on the Government’s bill. The bill was introduced in a special legislative session which can be called only to discuss a

113. This and the following paragraph are based on the section in P.M. Williams, op.cit., pp.91-93.
114. See P.M. Williams, op.cit., p.92.
specified agenda and may not last more than twelve days. 115 This particular special session lasted only six days, during which the Government's proposals were discussed first in the National Assembly, then in the Senate and finally by a commission mixte paritaire. The two chambers themselves had very little time in which to consider the Government's proposals, even though they held late night sessions on Saturday and sat on Sunday. Moreover, as the bill was declared urgent by the Government, there was only one reading in each chamber instead of the normal two. 116

Amendments to the bill in Parliament were frequently defeated if they met with governmental opposition. The final text as it emerged from the commission mixte paritaire was itself slightly amended by the Government before being passed in both chambers on a package vote whereby the parliamentarians had to vote on the whole text as proposed by the commission mixte paritaire and amended by the Government without the opportunity of introducing their own amendments or having a separate vote on any contentious clauses. 117

Finally, some amendments, like the creation of consultative regional broadcasting committees, even though passed in Parliament and retained in the 1974 statute, have not been implemented more than

115. Article 29 of the 1958 Constitution.
117. The 1974 broadcasting statute reproduced the text of the commission mixte paritaire, except for four amendments introduced by the Government. One of these amendments was purely formal, two reduced the number of parliamentarians who would sit on the boards of governors of TDF and the programme companies (see below) and the fourth amendment concerned the percentage of revenue the companies would be allowed to earn from commercial advertising. The National Assembly had adopted an amendment restricting advertising income to 33% of the licence revenue. In the Senate the Government proposed its own amendment to limit advertising revenue to 25% of the total income of the transmission company and the four programme companies. The Senate adopted this amendment. The commission mixte paritaire reinserted the National Assembly amendment, but the Government in turn reinserted its own amendment in the final text which was passed in the package vote in both chambers.
five years after the passing of the bill. ¹¹⁸

Moreover, despite the fact that the 1974 broadcasting statute was much longer than either of its predecessors, it still contained only the broad outlines of the reform. ¹¹⁹ The details of the reorganisation, frequently of crucial importance, were decided unilaterally by the Government and published in the form of decrees and ministerial ordinances. Thus, by November 1975 46 decrees and 74 arrêtés had been promulgated by the Government on a variety of matters concerned with the reform. The topics covered included the reallocation of staff, the distribution of ORTF equipment and programme stocks among the new companies, the appointment of the chairmen of the new companies, the cahiers des charges and budgetary procedure. ¹²⁰

On the other hand, it would be foolish to maintain that Parliament had exercised no influence on the content of the 1974 statute. The Government's original bill was amended by Parliament in several important respects, frequently with the Government's support since it realised that its own bill was full of imperfections. Furthermore, some amendments were passed, particularly in the Senate, and retained in the statute, even though they were opposed by the Government.

Among those amendments introduced in Parliament, accepted by the Government, passed and included in the 1974 statute, the following are the most noteworthy: a series of amendments in both chambers to

¹¹⁸. See below.

¹¹⁹. The 1974 broadcasting statute contains 34 articles compared with only 9 articles in the 1964 ORTF statute and 18 in the 1972 ORTF statute.

¹²⁰. The numerical total of decrees and arrêtés was given by Rossi during the 1976 budget debate in November 1975. Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, November 19 1975, p.8584.
make the obligations of the cahiers des charges more specific;\textsuperscript{121} regulations governing the screening of party political broadcasts;\textsuperscript{122} an amendment to give the Régie Française de Publicité the task of supervising the application of the provisions concerned with television advertising;\textsuperscript{123} and various amendments concerned with the reallocation of ORTF staff.\textsuperscript{124}.

The most notable amendment introduced in Parliament and accepted by the Government was the inclusion of a new article at the very beginning of the text which set out the public service objectives of the new broadcasting companies. Introduced in the Senate by Michel Miroudot on behalf of the cultural affairs committee, this amendment reproduced the terms of article 1 of the 1972 ORTF statute by specifying the public service obligations of French broadcasting in the fields of information, culture, education, entertainment and civilisation. To these was added a new public service function of communication.\textsuperscript{125}

The most interesting amendments, however, were those which though opposed by the Government were nonetheless passed in

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{121} Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, July 25 1974, pp.3776-3781, amendments no.80, 168, 169, 104, 105 and 106.
\item Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Sénat, July 28 1974, pp.995-998, amendments no. 55, 56 and 93.
\item Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, July 25 1974, p.3793, amendment no.90.
\item Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, July 25 1974, pp.3800-3810, amendments no.14, 170, 17, 109, 18, 111, 97 and 98.
\item Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, July 28 1974, pp.1016-1027, amendments no.66 and 166.
\end{itemize}

In the Government's bill the 1972 article had been retained by default in the final clause of the text. The new amendment became article 1 of the 1974 statute, thus emphasising the public service nature of the new broadcasting companies.
Parliament and included in some form in the 1974 statute. Five subject areas in particular fell into this category: the creation of consultative regional broadcasting committees; the establishment of INA; the harmonisation of programme schedules among the television companies; the thorny question of parliamentary control; and the fate of the ORTF orchestras.

The creation of consultative regional broadcasting committees, one in each of the regional broadcasting centres, was the subject of two amendments in the National Assembly, one put forward by the Socialists and Left-wing Radicals and the other by the Centrists and réformateurs. The aim of these two amendments was to ensure that by encouraging the expression of regional culture in its programmes, FR3 (as it was to be called later) would be a proper regional company. The two amendments were rejected by the National Assembly cultural affairs committee and by the Government.

The rapporteur of the cultural affairs committee in the Assembly, de Préaumont, regarded the amendments:

"... as a move by the opposition to try to acquire control of broadcasting in the regions because they couldn't have control at the national level. They were helped by some provincial deputies of the majorité who also wanted to get control of the news output in their own region."127

Le Tac also explained the Government's defeat on this issue by


127. Interview with Jean de Préaumont, September 21 1979.
pointing out that the amendments were supported by many provincial
deputies across party lines. Rossi's counter proposal to create
a working party on the regions within the Haut Conseil de l'Audovisuel
failed to satisfy the deputies, with the result that the amendments
were passed without a public vote being taken. While in the Senate
the composition of the committees was the subject of a lengthy
technical debate, the principle of setting up the consultative
regional broadcasting committees was not called into question. Thus, paragraph 2 of article 10 of the 1974 broadcasting statute
states:

"A consultative regional broadcasting committee
is established in each regional broadcasting centre. It
is composed of representatives of the principal opinions
and bodies which make up the economic, social and cultural
life of the region. The composition of these committees
is fixed by decree following the opinion of the relevant
regional council or councils. They include one third of
local elected representatives chosen by the departmental
councils amongst the mayors and departmental councillors."

Yet five years later these consultative regional broadcasting
committees had still not been set up. Having been defeated in the
National Assembly, the Government was now flouting the law by
delaying the draft of the enabling decree. The administrateur
at the National Assembly most intimately concerned with broadcasting
matters, de Tarlé, explained the Government's reticence as being due
to the different political opinions of the regional councils, the
strong opposition of FR3 to the proposed committees and Giscard d'Estaing's
opposition to the regional dimension in the French political system.

130. Interview with Antoine de Tarlé, September 8 1979.
In September 1978 a spokesman for the Ministry of Culture and Communication affirmed that no decree was being prepared on the subject and that the measure adopted by Parliament had been done "in the heat of the discussion" without the difficulties of its implementation being weighed up.\footnote{Le Monde, September 17-18 1978.}

The inclusion in the 1974 statute of an article setting up the \textit{Institut National de l'Audiovisuel} was the result of a successful amendment introduced in the Senate.\footnote{1974 broadcasting statute, article 3.} In the Government's original bill the creation of such a body was mentioned only in the introduction (\textit{exposé des motifs}) and not in the main body of the text. Speaking in the Assembly, Rossi affirmed that the Institute would be set up by the Government in the autumn by means of a decree since the Government "had not yet had the time to establish its juridical status."\footnote{Journal Officiel, \textit{Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale}, July 25 1974, p.3746.}

An amendment introduced in the National Assembly by Le Tac to give the transmission company the tasks of promoting research, ensuring staff training and conserving the broadcasting archive material was opposed by the cultural affairs committee and by the Government and rejected in the Assembly without a public vote being taken.\footnote{Journal Officiel, \textit{Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale}, July 25 1974, pp.3745-3747, amendment no.148.} However, in the Senate Diligent proposed an amendment similar to Le Tac's, except that in this amendment the various tasks were to be given not to the transmission company but to a separate company...
especially set up for the purpose. This amendment was supported by the Senate cultural affairs committee but opposed by the Government. Nonetheless, despite the Government's opposition the amendment was passed without a public vote being taken.

The person behind the creation of INA was Pierre Schaeffer, the head of the ORTF research service. "I was responsible for the creation of INA. The Government's bill neglected the fate of the research services, the archives and staff training. As I was in charge of the ORTF research service I was obviously preoccupied by this omission. Therefore I grouped together in one body the functions ignored in the bill.

In so doing I was helped by deputies and senators in both the majorité and the opposition: for example, Le Tac, Chevenement, Ralite, Diligent and Cluzel. The Government did not want INA to be set up, but it was forced upon them by Parliament, or at least by the few people in Parliament who are interested in the problems of broadcasting.

Because I was behind the establishment of INA the Government did not appoint me as its first PDG, even though as head of the ORTF research service I was the obvious choice." It was apparent that the Government's opposition to the creation of INA by statute rather than by decree reflected a more general opposition to the establishment of any potential coordinating organism above the separate broadcasting companies. For the Government this would have been in direct contradiction with the decentralising objectives of the 1974 reform. Consequently, not only was the establishment of INA vigorously opposed, but so too were the attempts to introduce a degree of harmonisation among the programme schedules of the three television companies.


138. See, for example, Chirac's statement in the National Assembly: "I warn the Assembly against any attempt to return, in one way or another, to a coordinating body." Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, July 25 1974, p.3746.
A certain degree of harmonisation among the three television companies was nonetheless included in the 1974 statute as a result of an amendment successfully introduced by Diligent in the Senate. By the terms of this amendment the programme schedules of television companies one and two (TF1 and A2) were to be complementary so that apart from news bulletins programmes of the same type could not be screened on both channels simultaneously. This amendment was itself much weaker than a previous one which had sought to establish a coordinating body above the broadcasting companies and had been successfully resisted by the Government. Though also opposed by the Government, who defended the principle of competition among the television companies rather than complementarity, the Diligent amendment was passed in the Senate by 156 votes to 114.

This amendment was therefore included in the text sent to the joint committee of both chambers of Parliament (commission mixte paritaire) whose task it was to draw up a common text to be submitted for a final reading in both chambers. In this joint committee the Diligent amendment was watered down and was effectively replaced by a Senate cultural affairs committee amendment which had originally been withdrawn in the Senate after the acceptance of the Diligent amendment. It was the cultural affairs committee amendment, taken up by the commission mixte paritaire, which became article 9 of the statute:

"The chairmen of the television companies meet periodically to ensure the harmonisation of programme schedules."  

142. 1974 broadcasting statute, article 9.
Even in its watered down form the amendment on harmonisation was not in keeping with the competitive ethos of the Government's bill. Thus, its inclusion in the 1974 statute marked a small victory for those parliamentarians who favoured a certain coordination among the new broadcasting companies. On the other hand, article 9 of the statute is more honoured in the breach than in the observance with the result that its effect on programming has been minimal. Proposals put forward since 1974 to reform the reform have in the main all stressed the need for greater coordination among the television companies.\textsuperscript{143}

The fourth subject area of amendments opposed by the Government but passed in Parliament and included in some form in the 1974 broadcasting statute covered the question of parliamentary control. In particular the composition and functions of the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting were increased and equal time was accorded the majorité and opposition on radio and television. Other amendments were put forward on the question of parliamentary representation on the boards of governors of the new companies and on the subject of parliamentary control of the broadcasting budget.

As far as the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting was concerned the Government was content in its original bill to readopt the relevant provisions of the 1972 ORTF statute.\textsuperscript{144} However, an amendment was introduced in the Senate by Michel Miroudot on behalf of the cultural affairs committee which sought to extend the powers of the delegation and increase its composition.\textsuperscript{145} While the Government was not opposed

\textsuperscript{143} See chapter on Criticisms of the reform.

\textsuperscript{144} See preceding section on the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting.

\textsuperscript{145} \textit{Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Sénat}, July 27 1974, pp.956-957, amendment no.34.
to the enlarged membership of the delegation, it was not in favour of the proposed increase in its powers. As Rossi remarked,

"... I wish to draw the Senate's attention to the fact that it must not create a sort of permanent committee of inquiry ... into a system which on the contrary is supposed to be one of autonomy and responsibility. ..." 146

However, despite the Government's opposition the amendment was passed without a public vote being taken and became article 4 of the 1974 statute.

Similarly, an amendment was introduced by Jean Filippi and Henri Caillavet in the Senate to ensure that parliamentarians of the opposition be accorded half the air time given to the Government and the parliamentarians of the majorité. 147 Opposed by Rossi on the grounds that the resultant calculations would be extremely difficult to verify, the amendment was nonetheless passed. In the text of the commission mixte paritaire the substance of the amendment was altered, though the principle retained. Thus paragraph 4 of article 16 of the 1974 statute states that:

"Equal air time is given the parliamentary groups of the majorité and of the opposition."

The principle of parliamentary representation on the boards of governors of the new companies did not in itself give rise to any controversy during the broadcasting reform debate in Parliament. However, the number of parliamentary representatives on each board was the subject of a long running dispute between the Government and Parliament, which was only resolved when the Government forced through its own amendments to the text of the commission mixte paritaire by recourse to the device of the package vote. In the end Parliament succeeded


in increasing its representation on TDF's board, but failed to do so in the case of the boards of governors of the four programme companies.

With regard to the transmission company the Government's original bill specified one parliamentary representative. This figure was unchanged during the debate in the Assembly. In the Senate, however, an amendment proposed by Miroudot on behalf of the cultural affairs committee that parliamentary representation be increased to four members of the board, two deputies and two senators, was passed despite government opposition.\textsuperscript{148} The Government was then prepared to compromise with two parliamentary representatives, one deputy and one senator.\textsuperscript{149} The text of the \textit{commission mixte paritaire}, however, retained the provisions of the Senate amendment. The Government retaliated by introducing its own amendment during the final reading in both chambers to reduce the parliamentary representation on TDF's board to the compromise figure of one deputy and one senator.\textsuperscript{150}

The story was even more complex when it came to fixing the number of parliamentary representatives on the boards of governors of the four programme companies. In the Government's original bill there was to be one parliamentarian on each of the four six-member boards. Despite proposed amendments to this provision in the National Assembly, the original text remained unchanged. Once again in the Senate two amendments were proposed by the cultural affairs committee to increase the composition of the boards to seven members, including one deputy.


\textsuperscript{149} \textit{Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Sénat}, July 27 1974, p.962, amendment no.81.

\textsuperscript{150} 1974 broadcasting statute, article 5.
and one senator. Both amendments were adopted against the advice of the Government. The commission mixte paritaire retained the Senate amendment that there should be two representatives from Parliament, one from each chamber, while it also increased the total size of the boards to eight. However, in the final reading of the bill the Government introduced its own amendment which reduced the overall size of each board to six members and the parliamentary representation to one, the same figures as in its original bill.

The opposition of the Government to the proposed increase in the size of the boards of governors of the four programme companies, which was the inevitable result if the parliamentary representation were enlarged, was based on its desire to personalise responsibility within the boards themselves. The object of the Senate amendments was to ensure that the National Assembly would not dominate the choice of representatives to the detriment of the Senate. To allay this fear Chirac promised the Senate that the Government would do all in its power to ensure that a balance was preserved between the two chambers. As we have already seen, such a balance has indeed been maintained, with the result that the spirit of the Senate amendments, if not their substance, has been observed.

152. 1974 broadcasting statute, article 11.
155. See chapter on Appointments and the section in this chapter on parliamentary representation on the boards of governors of the broadcasting companies.
Under this heading of amendments designed to increase Parliament's powers over broadcasting one should also note the amendment passed in the National Assembly despite opposition from the Government to make the allocation of the licence revenue among the broadcasting companies subject to parliamentary approval. In the Government's original bill Parliament's role was confined to authorising the collection of the licence and approving the allocation to the transmission company. Joel Le Tac and Jacques Marette introduced an amendment to make the licence allocation to each programme company also subject to parliamentary approval and this proposal was included in the 1974 statute in a slightly amended form. 156

In short, during the debates on the Government's broadcasting bill in the summer of 1974 Parliament succeeded, frequently in the face of government opposition, to enlarge its powers in the policy area of broadcasting. In particular, the role of the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting was increased as were Parliament's powers of supervision over the broadcasting budget.

Finally, Parliament succeeded against government opposition in making Radio France responsible for the management and development of the ORTF orchestras. The Government would have preferred to resolve this problem by decree once the statute had been passed, but an amendment was introduced in the Senate by the cultural affairs committee which was passed without a public vote being taken. 157


Parliament succeeded, therefore, in making a series of amendments to the original text as presented before it by the Government. As several of these amendments received the support of the Government, their adoption by Parliament was scarcely surprising. However, the same cannot be said for those amendments which were adopted despite opposition from the Government. Two questions remain to be answered about the amendments passed in Parliament. First, how were those amendments which were opposed by the Government able to obtain the required parliamentary support? Secondly, to what extent did these and other amendments succeed in altering the provisions of the 1974 reform?

Given the domination of the work of the legislature by the executive, it is at first sight surprising that amendments to the Government's bill were passed in Parliament in the face of government opposition. Indeed one senator interviewed remarked that if amendments were passed even though the Government was formally opposed to them, this meant that in a sense the Government had accepted the amendments. However, this seems to be overstating the case. If one examines these amendments more closely, several points become clear.

First, amendments relating to the question of parliamentary control had a relatively high success rate. These included the Senate amendment on the composition and powers of the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting and the National Assembly amendment on parliamentary approval for the allocation of licence revenue among the companies. Not unnaturally parliamentarians of both the majorité and the opposition were not averse to increasing their own power vis-à-vis those of the executive in the policy field of broadcasting.

158. Interview with Jean Cluzel, September 11 1979.
Secondly, amendments opposed by the Government had a greater chance of success in the Senate than in the National Assembly. The two main amendments made in the Assembly despite government opposition concerned parliamentary approval for the allocation of the licence revenue among the companies and the creation of consultative regional broadcasting committees. The latter amendment would appear to have been successful because of the shared interest felt by many provincial deputies across party lines in seeking to acquire some control of broadcasting in their own regions.

It was in the Senate, however, that amendments opposed by the Government had more success. Thus, while amendments to establish INA (or its equivalent) and to provide for a coordination of the programme schedules of the three television companies failed to be passed in the Assembly, they were successfully adopted in the Senate. Partly this can be explained by the less importance attached to party labels in the Senate. In the immediate aftermath of the 1974 presidential election the Giscardian deputies in the Assembly had no desire to criticise the first major reform of the new President, while the Gaullists were in their turn reluctant not to follow the guidance of the Prime Minister, Chirac, who favoured the reform. Only Le Tac among the Gaullist deputies showed much interest in amending the Government's bill and even he voted for the bill in its final reading.

In the Senate, on the other hand, party discipline was less strict. This helps to explain the success of the two Diligent amendments on the creation of INA and the coordination of programme scheduling. One

159. Interview with Joel Le Tac, June 13 1979.

160. Ibid. Le Tac explained his vote in favour of the 1974 reform as follows: "I voted for the bill only after my amendments had been included in the statute. If not, I would not have voted for it."
senator commented that as Diligent was a well-known spokesman on broadcasting, the Government could not but accept its defeat gracefully on these two amendments. 161 Diligent's acknowledged expertise in the field meant that he could carry the Senate to support his amendments. Diligent himself commented:

"The Government agreed to my two amendments to calm me down. In 1974 I was fighting a rearguard action. Rossi was in the hands of Poniatowski, a sort of prefect for Poniatowski. Chirac came and told Rossi to accept the amendments. In exchange I agreed to remove a more fundamental amendment criticising the whole reform. It was tit for tat. Though I was chairman of the Christian Democrats I refused to vote for the 1974 reform, preferring to abstain." 162

Finally, those amendments passed in Parliament despite government opposition were either proposed by or received the support of influential parliamentarians of the majorité with a long-standing interest in broadcasting. Amendments proposed by Le Tac in the Assembly and Diligent in the Senate, both of whom were rapporteurs spéciaux on broadcasting for the finance committee of their respective chambers, were more likely to be adopted, particularly in the latter case. On subjects such as the establishment of INA and the coordination of programme schedules there was considerable agreement amongst interested parliamentarians on the desirability of these amendments. 163

The second question which must now be answered concerns the extent to which the amendments passed in Parliament altered the provisions of the 1974 reform. If one examines first those amendments passed in the

162. Interview with André Diligent, June 21 1979.
163. For example, Le Tac, Diligent, Miroudot, Caillavet and Cluzel were all in favour of some coordination of television programme schedules.
face of government opposition, it is clear that they have met with mixed success. INA has been established as a separate company and the composition and powers of the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting have indeed been increased. On the other hand, the consultative regional broadcasting committees have not been established and the harmonisation of television programme schedules is minimal to say the least. Amendments accepted by the Government have, not surprisingly, met with better fortune. Thus, Parliament played an important role in expanding on the provisions of the companies' cahiers des charges and in securing benefits for the ORTF staff, particularly those not reallocated to one of the new companies.

Yet if one compares the Government's bill as submitted to Parliament with the statute as promulgated, there can be no doubt that in many respects, including the most fundamental, the Government was able to have the main provisions of its reform accepted by Parliament. The ORTF was abolished; separate companies were established; there is no coordinating body in the new structure; the boards of governors of the programme companies are small, highly personalised bodies; and the number of staff employed in the state broadcasting services was reduced, in the short term at least. Thus, it is fair to say that the major guidelines of the 1971 reorganisation of state broadcasting were not significantly altered in Parliament.

The 1974 parliamentary debates were not, of course, the only occasion during the Giscardian presidency when Parliament has debated broadcasting policy. Apart from the annual budget debates, Parliament has twice since 1974 introduced new legislation on broadcasting. The first occasion was in 1978 when supplementary legislation was introduced to reinforce the state broadcasting monopoly against the growing challenge from pirate radio stations. Introduced by the Government, the 1978 bill was passed
in both chambers with only minor amendment. The second occasion was in 1979 when new legislation was passed altering the conditions in which the broadcasting staff could come out on strike. The 1979 bill was formally introduced as a private members' bill, though in fact it was very actively supported by the Government. Although amended in the Senate, the bill became law without any major changes in content. Thus, the additional legislation passed in 1978 and 1979 to supplement or replace certain articles of the 1974 statute reflected current government policy at the time. The bills were either introduced by the Government or received its overt support. Moreover, only minor changes to the content of the bills were made during the parliamentary debates.

On the other hand, bills proposed by parliamentarians have failed to become law or even to be discussed in Parliament if they do not conform to government policy. Thus, private members' bills introduced by Le Tac to reform the system whereby the licence revenue is allocated among the broadcasting companies and to cede half the SFP's capital to the three television companies have failed to secure the Government's support and hence parliamentary time. As with the recommendations of the

164. See chapter on the State Monopoly.

165. See chapter on the Broadcasting unions.


standing committees and special ad hoc committees, if the Government supports a particular bill its chances of becoming law are excellent. If not, it has virtually none.

Conclusion

The French Parliament has at its disposal a variety of means through which to exercise an influence on the formulation and implementation of broadcasting policy. In addition to those means of control which it already possessed at the time of the ORTF, such as standing committees, the annual budget debate, special ad hoc committees, debates and legislation, Parliament has increased its powers under the terms of the 1974 statute.

First, the composition and powers of the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting, set up as a purely consultative body by the 1972 ORTF statute, have been enlarged in an attempt to make the executive and the broadcasting companies more accountable to Parliament. Secondly, Parliament now has the power not only to authorise the collection of the licence revenue, but also to approve its division among the different broadcasting companies. Finally, an innovation of the 1974 statute, Parliament is now represented on the boards of governors of the broadcasting companies, with one representative in each of the four programme companies and two on the governing board of the transmission company.

Nonetheless, despite the increased powers given it by the 1974 broadcasting statute, Parliament is incapable of acting as a major check on the President and his government in the policy field of broadcasting. Parliament lacks time and information to make such a check possible. In many cases it also lacks the political will. Most
importantly, unless it is prepared to overthrow the Government by a vote of censure, Parliament also lacks the power. The provisions of the 1958 Constitution and the existence since 1959 of a relatively stable parliamentary majority, even taking into account the divisions within the majorité since 1976, have worked to the benefit of the President of the Republic and the executive in general.

In broadcasting, as in other policy fields, power lies overwhelmingly with the executive: the President and his staff at the Elysée, the Minister of Finance and the minister responsible for broadcasting. It is they who in practice if not always in theory make the appointments to the key managerial and editorial posts within the broadcasting companies, fix the cost of the licence and decide on its allocation among the separate companies, draft the decrees which supplement the statute, draft the companies' cahiers des charges and the annual modifications to them, and, not least, draw up and present legislative proposals to Parliament. In comparison with the powers of the executive those of Parliament are of minor importance. They certainly do not amount to an effective counter-balance, particularly as in many cases Parliament depends on the goodwill of the Government if its recommendations are to be heeded.

However, this is not to say that Parliament is completely powerless. Though by no means the major actor in either the formulation or implementation of broadcasting policy, Parliament can successfully apply pressure on the Government as it did in 1974 when it passed amendments to the reform bill against the Government's advice and in 1975 when the National Assembly refused to authorise the collection of the licence revenue. Moreover, Parliament also performs a useful
information function through the annual reports of the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting and the standing committees and via the reports of the special ad hoc committees of inquiry and control. Parliament's role, in short, is that of a semi-toothless watchdog, operating particularly at the margins of policy formulation and implementation and only occasionally imposing its will on the Government.
CHAPTER 9

Finance

It is evident that the way in which a broadcasting organisation is financed is closely linked with the question of its control. The less dependent a broadcasting institution is on the Government for its revenue, the less likelihood there would appear to be of successful interference on the part of the Government to influence programming. For example, the BBC's much-vaunted claim to independence from the Government depends in part on its being financed from licence revenue paid by the viewers.¹

There are three main ways in which a broadcasting organisation may be financed: in the form of a direct grant from the Government, through a licence-fee system or by commercial advertising. From the end of the second world war up until 1968 the French state broadcasting services were financed overwhelmingly from licence revenue. Between 1968 and its abolition in 1974 the ORTF received revenue from two principal sources, the licence-fee and commercial advertising. Since the break-up of the ORTF the licence-fee and commercial advertising have remained the two most important financial supports of the broadcasting companies viewed as a whole, though the situation varies from company to company.

¹. The BBC's claim to independence from the Government in this respect is, of course, offset by the fact that the Government, not the BBC, fixes the cost of the licence and hence the amount of revenue the BBC can hope to obtain from this source. It would appear that the BBC is now considering the possibility of fixing the cost of the licence itself. See The Guardian, July 9 1980.
In this chapter we intend to analyse the means of finance of the broadcasting companies established by the 1974 reorganisation. In particular, the object of this chapter is to examine in detail the financial links between the Government on the one hand and the companies on the other with regard to both the latter's income and expenditure. Comparisons will be drawn between the system which operated at the time of the ORTF and the present arrangements.

The chapter begins by examining the financial relationship between the ORTF and the Government. The second section concentrates on the financial provisions of the new broadcasting companies. A third section will attempt to evaluate the success of the 1974 reform with reference to the financial position of the broadcasting companies. Finally, in the concluding section the merits and demerits of the financial arrangements before and after the 1974 reform will be compared.

Two main conclusions emerge from this chapter. First, the new broadcasting companies are not nearly so financially independent of the Government as various ministerial spokesmen have implied. Indeed in certain respects the new companies are more tightly controlled than the ORTF. Secondly, while the four programme companies would seem to have established themselves on a fairly sound financial footing, the archive and research institute and, even more so, the production company were only a few years after the reform going through a severe financial crisis which seemed to threaten their very survival.

The financial provisions of the ORTF: 1964-1974

By the provisions of the 1964 ORTF statute the ORTF was subject to the economic and financial supervision of the State, carried out
under the twofold responsibility of the Ministries of Information and Finance. The internal financial management of the Office was the responsibility of the director general, while the newly created board of governors had a supervisory role with regard to the long-term financial position of the Office.

In theory the 1964 ORTF statute replaced with a system of a posteriori controls the a priori financial controls which had until then been the traditional means of governmental supervision over the budget of the state broadcasting services. In practice, however, the financial arrangements of the ORTF continued to be closely regulated by the Ministry of Finance through their permanent representative at the ORTF, the state controller (contrôleur d'État).

"The disappearance of the principle of a priori state control did not mean ... the total abolition of this control. ... a priori control was retained in the case of certain particularly important items of expenditure such as investment commitments, staff recruitment, promotions to the top posts and general measures relating to salaries. For this purpose a state controller is appointed at the ORTF. ...

More generally, the powers of the state controller are very wide. He has the general task of controlling the running of the corporation and supervises all operations which may have directly or indirectly an economic, political or financial repercussion. He has the task, moreover, of giving his advice (avis) to the director general in advance on particularly important financial decisions. The state controller also has the task of providing information to the Minister of Finance in the exercise of his power of tutelage."


Because of this system of a priori financial controls, in September 1961 at the time of an earthquake in Chile the RTF news team left fully eight days after the event had taken place.

In 1962 out of 6,505 items of expenditure only 1,904 escaped a priori control by the relevant ministry. Ibid, p.106.

In practice, therefore, up to 1969 the director general of the ORTF was severely constrained by the Ministry of Finance with regard to control of the Office's budget, while the board of governors, which had been established as a filter between the Government and the state broadcasting services, could take only irregular long-range glances at the financial arrangements it was supposed to be supervising.

Certainly one should not overstate the case about the financial constraints imposed on the ORTF by the Government in matters of expenditure. Thus, while the 1968 Diligent report condemned the excessive powers of the state controller in matters such as staff recruitment and promotions, it concluded that for much of the ORTF's operational budget there was no external a priori control.

"Within the limits on credit set out in the budget and the allocation made by the director general amongst the different directors, the latter are responsible for their expenditure without any intervention from the state controller. In particular, the Office has total liberty when it comes to drawing up estimates for programmes." 4

A limited amount of progress had been made, therefore, in reducing the control of the Ministry of Finance over broadcasting expenditure. Nonetheless, many key expenditure decisions still remained outside the authority of the Office's management and in the aftermath of the 1968 strike it was clear that the 1964 legislation did not provide the Office with the financial room for manoeuvre it required to function properly.

The limited reorganisation of the ORTF carried out in the autumn of 1969 under the personal responsibility of the Prime Minister, Chaban-

Delmas, was intended to give the Office a greater degree of financial autonomy than it had so far enjoyed. There was, for example, a marked relaxation in the use of certain *a priori* financial controls. Moreover, the news departments on channels one and two were each given their own budgets which remained separate from the general budgets of the respective channels. This financial separation was in keeping with the Prime Minister's desire to isolate the news departments within the channels, so that they would not be susceptible to pressure from the channel heads.

In 1971 Chaban-Delmas sought to move further in this direction of giving the ORTF greater responsibility over its budget through the signing of a planning agreement (*contrat de programme*) between the Government and the Office. The first planning agreement, which was due to run from 1972 to 1975, laid down certain objectives which the ORTF was to fulfil during the four year period. These included the completion of the transmitter network for channel two, the development of channel three and an increase in cultural and external services broadcasts.

"To meet these obligations, the Office agreed to increase productivity by 2.6% per annum, while the government agreed to allow up to 78% of expenditure on channel three to be financed by a loan. The licence-fee would be gradually increased at a rate of about 3-5% annually, while advertising revenue ... would also increase regularly." 7

The agreement meant that the Office would in the future be assured of a guaranteed level of income and would, therefore, be able to plan


6. See chapter on Politics and broadcasting in France before the 1974 reform.

its investments and operational expenditure on a longer time-scale than had previously been possible.

For various reasons, however, the planning agreement failed to make any dramatic impact on the relationship between the Government and the ORTF. Partly this was due to economic factors. With the onset of the economic recession in 1973 and concomitant increase in the rate of inflation, it quickly became apparent that the small annual increase in the licence-fee allowed for in the agreement was hopelessly inadequate. Moreover, with the saturation of the black and white television market and the slow changeover to colour sets, the Office's income was in grave danger of failing to keep pace with expenditure.

Political factors, however, were also important in contributing to the failure of the planning agreement. The introduction of the agreement was the personal initiative of Chaban-Delmas. Yet just over six months later Chaban-Delmas was dismissed from the premiership by Pompidou. Moreover, the new ORTF statute which was introduced at the same time as Chaban-Delmas' dismissal marked a rejection of the broadcasting reform measures introduced by him since 1969. Chevallier's view of the planning agreement as "... signifying the strengthening of the Government's hold over the Office and not the advent of the latter's financial emancipation, ..." fails to take sufficient account of the fact that with the sacking of Chaban-Delmas the Government's policy on broadcasting had changed at a stroke.

8. See chapter on Politics and broadcasting in France before the 1974 reform.

The ORTF had virtually no control over the size of its income. The Government fixed the cost of the licence, which was by far the main source of the Office's revenue. Moreover, since the amount of income which the ORTF was allowed to obtain from commercial advertising was limited to 25% of the total, the power to fix the cost of the licence-fee was in effect the power to determine the total amount of resources, both public and private, to be allocated to the state broadcasting services.  

Up until 1968 the ORTF was financed almost totally from licence revenue. The only form of advertising allowed on the state television channels before that date was of the type which encouraged viewers to buy more of a specific type of produce without reference to a particular brand name. This type of advertising (la publicité compensée) had been introduced as early as 1951 with the aim of boosting the consumption of agricultural produce in line with the Government's current economic policy. In 1968 commercial advertising on state television was introduced with the twin objectives of supplementing the ORTF's income and satisfying the demands for the establishment of a commercial television channel.

To understand the reasons behind the Government's decision to allow brand advertising on the ORTF's television channels, one must first examine briefly the role of the commercial television lobby in

10. For the role played by the Government in precipitating the financial crisis which affected the ORTF in the early 1970s, see the chapter on the Origins of the 1974 reform.
the late 1960s. A pressure group, la société d'études PRO-TV, had been set up in late 1966 with the aim of securing the creation of a third television channel to be financed wholly from advertising. Under the group's proposals the ORTF would retain the monopoly of transmission, while the commercial channel would make use of the Office's transmitters to broadcast its own programmes, paying the ORTF for this service. Headed by Michel Maurice-Bokanowski, a former Minister of Industry in Pompidou's government, the group received support most notably from major advertising agencies and from the electronics industry which was keen to boost the sale of colour television sets.

The lobbying in favour of the introduction of a commercial channel led to the laying down of a private members' bill in the National Assembly in June 1967. Proposed by Vivien, the bill was a restatement of the objectives of the PRO-TV group. Though the bill was never debated, it is reasonable to assume that the lobbying by this commercial television pressure group was an important factor in the Government's decision to introduce brand advertising on the state television channels less than a year later.

Prime Minister Pompidou was at pains to point out in April 1968 that the Government's decision was not merely a short-term response.


to the pressure exerted by the PRO-TV group. In fact, Pompidou argued that the decision had been taken on principle as early as 1964.\textsuperscript{15}

However, even if this were true, it seems certain that the Vivien bill spurred the Government to act in a bid to head off the commercial lobby, even if during the parliamentary debate Pompidou was understandably more inclined to point out the advantages to the ORTF of increasing its revenue without the Government's having to raise the cost of the licence.

Both during the debate in April 1968 and on numerous occasions afterwards, the Government pointed out the strict limits which it intended to place on the role of commercial advertising on state television. Conciliatory steps were taken to placate those who feared that their interests would be harmed by this innovation, particularly the press. It was decided, therefore, that advertisers would not be allowed to sponsor programmes or to interfere directly in programme content. Advertising time was to be limited so as not to dominate programme schedules. Programmes were not to be interrupted to make way for commercial breaks. Finally, a body was set up to enforce these and other regulations regarding television advertising. The creation of the \textit{Régie Française de Publicité}, independent of the ORTF, was designed to minimise the possibility of interference by advertising agencies in the running of the Office. From 1968 onwards, the proportion of the ORTF's total income which came from brand advertising steadily rose until by 1974 it was approaching the 25% ceiling fixed by the Government.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{15} Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, April 25 1968, pp.1305-1313.

\textsuperscript{16} See table 9.1.
In short, one can say that the financial arrangements of the ORTF up to 1974 were dominated by two factors. The first was the strong interventionist role played by the Ministry of Finance in the running of the Office. The ORTF had limited control over its expenditure and virtually none at all over its revenue. The second aspect of the ORTF's finances which has become clear in this section was the growing dependence of the Office during the early 1970s on commercial advertising as a major source of revenue.\(^\text{17}\)

The financial provisions of the broadcasting companies since 1974

The 1974 broadcasting reform, according to ministerial spokesmen, was intended to remove the state broadcasting services from under the close control of the Ministry of Finance.\(^\text{18}\) In keeping with the spirit of the reorganisation, the new companies were to benefit from an unprecedented degree of financial autonomy. For example, the expenditure decisions of the programme companies were no longer to be subject to ministerial approval. Provided that the companies remained within the constraints of their budgets, the Government would be content to allow them to function unhindered.

In addition, the Government hoped that the smaller size of the new companies would facilitate sound financial management, eliminate waste and encourage a more rational use of resources. It was thought


that the smaller, more efficient companies which would emerge from the reorganisation would present a stark contrast to the unenviable picture of the ORTF as portrayed in the Chinaud report.\textsuperscript{19}

In fact, the Government continues to play a primordial role in the financial arrangements of the new broadcasting companies. It is the Government which fixes the cost of the licence and thus determines the total amount of revenue which the companies as a whole (excluding the production company) can obtain. Parliament's role, as we have seen, is confined to authorising the collection of the licence and approving its distribution among the four programme companies and the transmission company. Parliament cannot alter the cost of the licence fixed by the Government.\textsuperscript{20}

With the exception of the SFP, the companies as a whole are financed primarily from licence revenue, which represents around 70\% of their total income. The amount of licence revenue to be divided up among the companies depends, first, on the cost of the individual licence and, secondly, on the number and type (black and white or colour) of television sets in use. During the 1960s, as the market for television sets steadily expanded, the ORTF was able to finance and even improve its services without recourse to large or frequent increases in the cost of the licence.\textsuperscript{21} However, by the early 1970s the market for black and

\textsuperscript{19} See chapter on the Origins of the 1974 reform.

\textsuperscript{20} See chapter on Parliamentary control.

The broadcasting receiving licence is not a tax but a special levy (\textit{taxe parafiscale}). As de Tarlé writes, 

"This distinction has important consequences. If the licence-fee were a tax, it would be up to Parliament, in application of article 34 of the Constitution, to fix both its basis and its rate. But as it is a special levy, Parliament only has the right, each year, to authorise its collection. The fixing of the rate is a government decision ..."


See article 19 of the 1974 broadcasting statute.

\textsuperscript{21} See table 9.ii.
white sets had apparently reached saturation point with the result that any increase in the Office's income from licence revenue depended on a changeover to colour sets by the viewers, the introduction of a separate higher licence-fee for colour and the willingness of the Government to make annual increases in the cost of the licence.

While a separate licence for colour was introduced in 1974, the changeover to colour sets is still going ahead less quickly than had been anticipated. As a result, any increase in the licence revenue of the broadcasting companies depends largely on the Government's raising the cost of the individual licence to the viewer. Unlike the British government, which has been unwilling to allow the BBC's income from the licence to keep pace with inflation, the French government has since 1975 made substantial increases in the cost of the licence, despite the existence of an anti-inflation plan covering prices in the public sector for the period 1976-1978. As a result, the total amount of income which the broadcasting companies receive from licence revenue has increased each year since 1975 at an annual rate of around 15%. Despite this, however, it should be remembered that the amount of revenue which the

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22. In 1977, for example, the total amount of licence revenue to be distributed among the companies was based on the forecast that the number of households with a colour television set would increase from 2.7 million to 3.9 million. Journal Officiel, Documents Sénat, 1976-1977, no. 65, Rapport général fait au nom de la commission des finances ... sur le projet de loi de finances pour 1977, Tome III, annexe no. 46, Radiodiffusion et télévision, rapporteur spécial: Jean Cluzel, annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 23 novembre 1976, p. 57.

By 1979 of 17,500,000 television sets in use, only just over 5,100,000 were colour. France in Figures, 1979, French Embassy Press and Information Service, London, July 1979.

23. Annual budgetary reports of the parliamentary standing committees.
companies as a whole obtain from the licence is outside their control. The Government remains as before the major actor in deciding the amount of licence revenue which the state broadcasting services can obtain.

The procedure for fixing the level of the licence-fee was variously described as follows:

"In March each programme company presents its budgetary demands to the Government. Each company, therefore, tends to put its demands as high as possible to get more money from the Government. In theory by July we know our budget for the following year. Theoretically there is no collaboration between the Government and the companies in fixing the cost of the licence. Nor is there any cooperation among the separate companies." 24

"The level of the licence-fee is fixed first by the Minister of the Budget and then approved by the Prime Minister. The Minister of Culture and Communication has no role to play in this respect.

There are no meetings with the companies regarding the level of the licence-fee. Their opinions are asked for by the ministry on the minimum they require to continue functioning. The rue de Rivoli takes an opposing stance to that of the companies, with the Prime Minister usually more in favour of the viewpoint of the rue de Rivoli." 25

"The role of the Service Juridique et Technique de l'Information is to prepare the broadcasting budget and calculate the level of the licence. We have two people working on this task. We then present our proposals to the Ministry of the Budget with final approval being given by the Prime Minister.

We hold informal discussions with the companies and try to achieve a compromise. Difficulties are finally resolved at Prime Ministerial level.

The budget for the following year is worked out in June or July and the companies are then told how much money each will receive." 26

It is clear from these descriptions that in the event of conflict between the companies and the Government over the desired level of the licence-fee, the Government invariably has the final say.


For a description of budgetary procedure at the time of the ORTF, see the Chirau report, 1974, annexe III, pp.34-36, and A. Conte, op. cit., pp.86-87.
Nor does the Government's role stop there. Not only does the Government determine the amount of licence revenue the companies as a whole will receive, but it also plays a strongly interventionist role in the complex procedure of distributing the licence revenue among the separate companies.

The sharing-out of the licence revenue is the responsibility of a special body, the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee (la commission de répartition de la redevance). However, before this body begins its work, the Government may allocate a proportion of the licence revenue in the form of direct grants (préciputs) to certain companies. These grants are in addition to the sum the companies receive through the Committee's allocation procedure and are usually awarded to finance specific projects which require a high level of capital investment. For example, in 1977 these grants totalled 143 million francs, compared with 55 million francs in 1976 and only 13 million in 1975. This sum of 143 million francs represented over 6% of the total licence revenue collected in that year.

Originally these grants were intended to aid the transmission company with its capital investment projects such as the extension of the transmission network. However, the system was then extended to include the programme companies and the archive and research institute. In 1977 83 million francs were given to the transmission company, while the three television companies received 60 million francs, primarily to encourage greater creativity in their programme output.


28. See chapter on Criticisms of the reform.
This system of direct grants has been the object of a number of criticisms. Le Tac, for example, has condemned the increasing importance of the grants as a proportion of the total licence revenue. In his opinion it is anomalous that with the new companies fully operational the system of grants should continue to assume such financial significance. Moreover, Le Tac has argued that the system of grants diminishes the value of the work of the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee, since the Government now pre-empts the findings of the Committee. In addition, the Government's decision in 1976 to give 15 million francs to each of the three television companies in an attempt to improve their programme quality was regarded by Le Tac as an implicit acceptance of the failure of the quality criterion used by the Committee in arriving at its decisions.

Le Tac's criticisms were echoed within the SJTI,

"The system of direct grants biases the procedure of licence revenue allocation. It falsifies everything. For example, if FR3 needs a new regional radio station it gets it through a direct grant. The system of direct grants is practically fraudulent."

Only after these grants have been awarded is the remainder of the licence revenue shared out among the four programme companies by the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee. Using the previous

29. In 1980 the companies were due to receive 246 million francs in direct grants, approximately 7% of the total licence revenue. Journal Officiel, Documents Assemblée Nationale, 1979-1980, no.1292, Rapport fait au nom de la commission des finances ... sur le projet de loi de finances pour 1980, annexe no.12, Culture et communication, Radiodiffusion et télévision, rapporteur spécial: Joel Le Tac, annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 2 octobre 1979, p.4.


32. For the composition of the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee (1976) see table 9.iii.
year's budget as its base, the Committee distributes the licence revenue taking into account each company's audience ratings and the quality of its programmes. The body responsible for the assessment of audience ratings is the Centre d'Etudes d'Opinion, which is the successor to the ORTF's audience research service. The CEO is organisationally independent of the programme companies, though it carries out audience research on their behalf as well as working directly for the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee. Once it has collected its statistical evidence by means of representative audience panels and questionnaires, the CEO passes on the results of its research to the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee.

Assessment of programme quality is a more complicated task. Two quite separate methods are employed, with the results being then combined to give the overall quality mark for each programme company. One mark is obtained by the CEO from its audience panels who are asked to give an assessment of programme quality in their questionnaire. The other mark for programme quality is awarded by the Quality Committee (la commission chargée d'apprécier la qualité des émissions de radiodiffusion et de télévision).

The Quality Committee is composed of twenty seven people from different walks of life, some, but by no means all, of whom have had

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33. The relevant legislation on the licence allocation procedure is as follows: article 20 of the 1974 broadcasting statute; decree no.77-88 of January 31 1977; arrêté of May 13 1975; and arrêté of July 21 1975. Note also two earlier decrees abrogated by the 1977 decree: decree no.74-1106 of December 26 1974 and decree no.75-477 of June 16 1975.

34. The organisation and functions of the CEO are described in a booklet entitled Centre d'Etudes d'Opinion: son organisation, sa mission, ses travaux, published by the CEO, Paris, 1976.

35. For the composition of the Quality Committee (1975) see table 9.iv.
personal experience in the field of broadcasting. They are appointed by the Prime Minister on the recommendation of the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel. The Quality Committee establishes its own criteria by which to evaluate the quality of the programme companies' output. For example, in its first year of operation, 1975-76, the committee concentrated on three specific aspects of programming: the overall balance of each company's programme schedule each evening, creative programmes and programmes for young people. 36

The role of the Quality Committee is not a very significant one. The committee meets for only two days three times a year, giving its marks for programme quality in June. Apart from the obvious methodological difficulties involved in evaluating programme quality, the committee is well aware that the marks it awards have little impact on the budgets of the separate companies. The committee, therefore, has sought to strengthen its position by publishing an annual report which sets out the main criticisms and recommendations of the committee on programming in particular and on the Government's broadcasting policy in general. However, it should be stressed that the decision to publish an annual report was opposed by the Government who wished to confine the committee's role to one of awarding the programme companies marks for quality once a year. 37


The Quality Committee has published an annual report every year since 1975-1976. However, though their main recommendations are frequently highlighted in certain sections of the press, these reports do not enjoy a wide circulation. For example, they are not available either at La documentation française or Journaux Officiels.

37. Interviews with Jean-Claude Perier, September 13 1979; Pierre Schaeffer, July 2 1979; and Jean-Pierre Dubois-Dumée, March 16 1977.
"The committee was not asked by the Government to publish a report. All the Government wanted from the committee was the annual mark for programme quality. To us this seemed futile. Therefore, on our own initiative we decided to publish an annual report. The committee had to push to get the report published because the Government wanted to publish as little as possible on the functioning of the television companies.

In this respect the first chairman of the committee, Jean-Claude Perier, was very courageous, very honest. On the other hand, the present chairman, Narbonne, is much more in the mould of a conseiller d'Etat.

The committee has made the same criticisms and recommendations three years in a row. But these recommendations were refused by the chairmen of the programme companies. When the programme companies replied to our reports, they just said: Merde!

The Quality Committee has no power. We are like ghosts which haunt the programme companies, but in reality we can do nothing." 38

The influence of the Quality Committee is very limited at best. The management of the programme companies are quick to quote their annual marks if these are favourable. However, the committee's financial sanction is feeble. Moreover, its reports have so far had little substantive effect in influencing programming. Nor is this surprising given the minor role attributed the committee by the enabling legislation, the committee's lack of resources and the fact that many of the committee's recommendations have been in contradiction with the ethos of the 1974 reform.

The Quality Committee's role has been further weakened by the fact that when added together the two marks for programme quality, the one given by the viewers and the other by the committee, can of course cancel each other out. For example, in 1975-76 the programme companies rated highly by the Quality Committee were FR3 and Radio France, while those most appreciated by the viewers were TF1 and A2. Not unnaturally some critics have suggested that this negates the value of

the whole process of trying to give the programme companies a mark for quality.

Government spokesmen, on the other hand, have defended the use of a quality mark for each programme company by pointing out its importance in the licence revenue allocation procedure. In the complicated equation which the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee employs to reach its decisions, the mark for programme quality is given three times more weight than the mark awarded for audience ratings. This weighting in favour of the quality mark is intended to discourage the companies from putting out programmes with the sole aim of maximising their audience.

However, the quality mark has obviously failed to fulfil its function in this respect since the Government has on more than one occasion been compelled to introduce supplementary measures to help improve programme quality. For example, of the 60 million francs given the three television companies in the form of direct grants in 1977, 45 million was to be devoted to the improvement of programme quality, a much larger sum than that resulting from the application of the quality mark in the licence revenue allocation procedure. In other words, the Government has been compelled to intervene because the original mechanism was manifestly failing to have the desired effect.

The reason for the failure of the quality/ratings formula to have a profound effect on the programme schedules of the companies, and this despite the in-built bias in favour of the quality mark, is that the

39. For the equation in its full splendour see appendix 9.v.
40. See chapter on Criticisms of the reform.
financial rewards at stake are minute. The programme companies are
guaranteed by far the largest proportion of their annual revenue from
the licence on the basis of the previous year's allocation. Consequently,
the quality/ratings formula affects only a very small percentage of the
total share of licence revenue each programme company receives.

In 1977, for example, on the basis of the 1976 figures A2
ought to have received 421 million francs in licence revenue. The
application of the quality/ratings formula by the Licence Revenue
Allocation Committee reduced this sum by 6.6 million francs to 414.4
million. This loss of 6.6 million francs looks even more insignificant
when compared with A2's total income from all sources in 1977
(licence revenue, commercial advertising, programme sales and so on)
which amounted to 835 million francs. Even though 6.6 million francs
represented the cost of a few productions, the financial incentive was
insufficiently strong for the programme company to strive to obtain
this extra revenue by improving programme quality. More-exactly, the
programme companies try to obtain the extra revenue by increasing
their audience ratings which are more susceptible to objective
assessment than an improvement in programme quality, even though the
latter is more heavily weighted in the budgetary equation.

In any case the application of the budgetary equation by the
Licence Revenue Allocation Committee is not definitive, since the
Government may once again intervene in the process to make adjustments
to the totals of each programme company arrived at by the Committee.
As with the system of direct grants, these adjustments are unilateral
decisions taken by the Government.
The following table may help to clarify the principal stages of the licence revenue allocation procedure. It shows the provisional results of the 1977 allocation of licence revenue among the four programme companies. 41

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(a)</th>
<th>(b)</th>
<th>(c)</th>
<th>(d)</th>
<th>(e)</th>
<th>(f)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TF1</td>
<td>254.8</td>
<td>283.2</td>
<td>+21</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>+20.2</td>
<td>322.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>378.7</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>+20</td>
<td>-6.6</td>
<td>-20.1</td>
<td>414.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR3</td>
<td>844.7</td>
<td>938.9</td>
<td>+19</td>
<td>+6.9</td>
<td>+5.4</td>
<td>970.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RF</td>
<td>523.2</td>
<td>581.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+1.2</td>
<td>-5.5</td>
<td>577.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Totals in millions of francs)

(a) represents the income from licence revenue in 1976;
(b) represents the income from licence revenue the companies could have hoped to expect in 1977 on the basis of the 1976 totals;
(c) represents the sum allocated to the programme companies by the Government in the form of direct grants (préciputs);
(d) represents the variation resulting from the application of the budgetary equation by the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee;
(e) represents the sum allocated to the companies by the Government as an adjustment to the Committee's budgetary allocations;
(f) represents the total amount of licence revenue the companies were to receive in 1977.

The total amount of licence revenue to be allocated to TF1 in 1977, therefore, was 322.9 million francs, a 26% increase on the 1976 total. A2 was to receive 414.3 million francs (+9.4%), FR3 970.2 million francs.

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francs (+14.8%) and Radio France 577.3 million francs (+10.3%).

The budgetary procedure set up by the Government to distribute the licence revenue among the programme companies is complex, relatively expensive and of dubious efficacy. The variations in the allocations to the companies resulting from the application of the quality/ratings formula amounted to only 13.4 million francs in 1979, only 0.4% of the total licence revenue. The financing of the procedure itself and of the various bodies involved in its application cost the programme companies 16.0 million francs in the same year. Thus, the cost of maintaining the system in operation was greater in 1979 than the variations in the companies' allocations resulting from the application of the budgetary equation.

42. In fact the companies received the following amounts from licence revenue in 1977: TF1 - 316.9 million francs; A2 - 409.3 million francs; FR3 - 970.2 million francs; and Radio France - 583.3 million francs.


43. In 1980 it was estimated that the amount of licence revenue allocated to the different companies as a result of the application of the budgetary equation by the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee totalled 51 million francs. While this was a large improvement on the 1979 figure, it was still far less than the amount of licence revenue distributed by the Government in the form of direct grants, which in 1980 was to total 216 million francs.

Furthermore, the variations in the licence revenue allocations to the programme companies between 1976 and 1977 were less the result of the application of the quality/ratings formula by the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee than the consequence of unilateral governmental decisions. This has also been the case every year since. Thus, the financial results of the application of the budgetary equation have been nullified, indeed far outweighed, by the budgetary transfers imposed by the Government. As Le Tac commented in his report on the 1977 broadcasting budget,

"... the variations are only in a very limited sense the result of the application of the allocation formula. Adjustments and direct grants, which are financial transfers decided by the Government on its authority, weigh much more heavily in the determination of the budgets (of the programme companies)." 45

Not surprisingly in these circumstances, one member of the SJTI's staff described the role of the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee as fictitious. 46 Another member of the SJTI, who was at that time responsible for the preparation of the broadcasting budget, admitted that the Committee played little part in determining the allocation of licence revenue to each company. 47 In fact, apart from giving part-time employment to five top civil servants, it is difficult to see what function the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee does perform, apart, of course, from allowing the Government through the SJTI to exercise power while the Committee is left holding nominal responsibility.


46. Interview with M. Mougey, September 17 1979.

47. Interview with Pierre Borvo, July 20 1979.
While licence revenue represents around 70% of the total income of the broadcasting companies as a whole, excluding the SFP, it is not the principal source of income for the two major television companies, TF1 and A2. In sharp contrast to the two BBC channels, two points might be noted in passing with regard to the licence revenue of the broadcasting companies.

First, the broadcasting companies have to pay VAT at 17.6% on the revenue from the licence, though some of this money can be claimed back. Imposed from 1970 onwards, VAT on the licence revenue cost the ORTF 235 million francs in 1973. (a) Despite the fact that the Chinaud report recommended that the VAT on licence revenue be abolished, it has remained at the high level of over 17% since the break-up of the ORTF. (b) In 1979 it was estimated that a reduction in the level of VAT on the licence revenue to 7% would save the companies around 300 million francs which could then be used to aid creativity in programming. (c)

Secondly, before the licence revenue is shared out among the companies, the cost of collection is deducted from the total. Following a recommendation of the Chinaud report, the task of collecting the licence revenue, which had previously been performed by the ORTF itself, was transferred after the 1974 reorganisation to the Ministry of Finance. (d) The Chinaud committee hoped that this transfer of responsibility would lead to a net saving in the cost of collection. In fact, however, the proportion of licence revenue which is spent on its collection has remained relatively constant at around 5-6% of the total. If, as the Chinaud committee suggested, the licence collection service of the ORTF was inefficient, it would seem that the Ministry of Finance is no better equipped to deal with the task of collecting approximately 17 million licence-fees.

(a) Chinaud report, 1974, p.164.

(b) Ibid, pp.52-54 and 163-165.

(c) Cluzel report, 1979, p.163.

The rate of VAT at 7%, not 17%, is the standard rate for products and services in the fields of culture and information. See Le Monde, January 30-31 1977.

(d) Chinaud report, 1974, pp.63-76 and 165-166.

Article 20 of the 1974 broadcasting statute.
TF1 and A2 both rely heavily on income from commercial advertising. The following table gives the percentage of their total income these two companies receive in commercial advertising revenue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>TF1</th>
<th>A2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the provisions of the 1974 broadcasting statute, income from commercial advertising may not exceed 25% of the total income of the four programme companies and the transmission company put together. However, since neither Radio France nor FR3 are allowed to benefit from commercial advertising revenue, the 25% maximum quota is in practice shared between TF1 and A2. Consequently, the proportion of their income which TF1 and A2 derive from commercial advertising revenue far exceeds 25%. The overall legally permitted maximum is respected, while at the same time TF1 and A2 are heavily dependent on advertising revenue.

49. Annual budgetary reports on broadcasting by the National Assembly finance committee, rapporteur spécial: Joel Le Tac.

50. Article 22 of the 1974 broadcasting statute. See also the cahiers des charges of the programme companies.

51. Radio France does not receive any income from commercial advertising because the Government wants any money spent by advertisers on radio advertising to be given to the peripheral radio stations in which the French government has important shareholdings. See chapter on the State Monopoly. FR3 does not benefit from commercial advertising because the Government is sensitive to the opposition of the influential regional press lobby on this question. This lobby has also been influential in opposing the establishment of local radio stations in France. See the chapter on the State Monopoly.
This dependence of TF1 and A2 on advertising revenue has been
the object of much criticism. One complaint is that while in theory
the 25% permitted maximum was intended by Parliament to be a ceiling
figure, in practice it has become a target figure for the two major
television companies to aim at.

"The Régie Française de Publicité-TF1 (the body responsible
for organising advertising on TF1) is given a revenue target
to achieve. If we don't achieve this figure, the channel will
have a hole in its budget. On the other hand, we can't go above
this figure either. We must try and hit the target figure dead
on, which is obviously very hard to do." 52

"A2 fixes a maximum figure of advertising revenue which we
aim to achieve. This figure has been decided on in negotiations
between the company and the Ministry of Finance. Unfortunately
the Régie Française de Publicité-A2 is not consulted on the figure
decided upon.

Our aim is to achieve a certain target figure over the year.
If we overshoot, the programme companies are in contradiction with
the 25% ceiling imposed by the law. If we undershoot, then A2
will have a hole in its budget for the year in question. Hitting
the figure exactly poses enormous problems.

When we had to cancel adverts at the end of 1976, the
advertisers could have gone to TF1 if TF1 had been below its own
target figure. But this was not the case and so the money was
lost to broadcasting. Nor did the money go to the press, since
the press was not suitable for the campaign envisaged. Therefore,
one of the media gained in the end.

We are the only commercial sector in the world which refuses
business." 53

If TF1 and A2 fail to achieve their respective target figures,
their income is that much reduced. Provided the demand for screen
time by advertising agencies outweighs the capacity of the television
companies to satisfy that demand, the two television channels concerned
have no difficulty in achieving their target figures. This was the case,
for example, in 1976 and 1977, with some requests for advertising time
by the advertising agencies having to be held over to the following year.

52. Interview with Xavier Orhand, April 27 1977.
53. Interview with Jean Mousset, May 2 1977.
If, as happened in 1975, the supply of advertising time on television exceeds the advertising agencies' demands, TF1 and A2 must bear the resulting loss of revenue, which in that year amounted to 10 million francs for TF1 and 30 million francs for A2.\textsuperscript{54}

The advertising services of the two main television companies, RFP-TF1 and RFP-A2, compete with each other to attract advertising to their respective channels, just as the channels themselves compete for audiences. It is the task of the Régie Française de Publicité, the equivalent of the British Advertising Standards Authority, to ensure that the competition between RFP-TF1 and RFP-A2 does not infringe the provisions of the cahiers des charges of the two television companies and that the overall 25% ceiling is respected.\textsuperscript{55}

Because of the existence of a statutory maximum on advertising revenue, the broadcasting companies as a whole have no control over the amount of advertising income they can receive. It is the Government which fixes the cost of the licence-fee and in practice it is on the amount the companies receive from licence revenue that their income from advertising depends. The Government, therefore, determines the overall income of the broadcasting companies, with the exception of the SFP, given that the companies make relatively little money from sources other than the licence and advertising.

\textsuperscript{54} Le Monde, March 14-15 1976.

\textsuperscript{55} Article 22 of the 1974 broadcasting statute.

For a concise outline of the role of the Régie Française de Publicité in supervising advertising on French television and radio, see the booklet published by the RFP entitled Règlement de la Publicité télévisée et radiophonique de la Régie Française de Publicité.
Moreover, not only does the Government determine the overall income of the broadcasting companies, but it is also the prime agent in deciding how the income will be distributed among the separate companies. Working through the SJTI and the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee, the Government is responsible for allocating the licence revenue and the income from advertising among the companies. Thus, the control the broadcasting companies have over their income is to all intents and purposes non-existent.

The companies are also severely constrained with regard to their expenditure. For example, the much-heralded freedom of the programme companies to spend their budgetary allocations as they would like is widely restricted by the provisions of their cahiers des charges. Apart from laying down certain public service obligations on the broadcasting companies, the cahiers des charges have a specific budgetary function. Imposed on the companies by the Government, the cahiers des charges specify the amount of money each programme company must hand over to the other three companies of the ex-ORTF in return for certain services.

Because of the lack of any central body in the new structure, relations among the separate companies are complex. Sometimes companies compete with one another, as is most notably the case with TF1 and A2. Sometimes they cooperate with one another, frequently under the coordination of the responsible government ministry. At other times a company may have a contractual bi-lateral relationship with another company.

56. See chapter on the Liquidation of the ORTF.
It is this contractual relationship which links each of the programme companies with each of the other three broadcasting companies in turn. However, it is a contractual relationship in which a third party, namely the Government, plays an important role. It is the Government, through the device of the cahiers des charges, which fixes the amount each programme company must pay to each of the other three companies.

"The obligatory expenditure of the programme companies to the other three companies is fixed by the Service Juridique et Technique de l'Information. There are meetings between the minister and the different companies where views are expressed, but in the end it is a ministerial decision." 57

Thus, each of the programme companies is obliged by the Government to pay an annual sum to the transmission company for the use of the transmission networks. It is the Government which fixes the sum to be paid. 58 Likewise, each programme company must pay an annual sum to the archive and research institute in return mainly for the use of the latter's staff training facilities. 59 In addition, the programme companies, particularly TF1 and A2, pay annual sums to the production company for the use of its equipment and in payment for programmes produced by the SFP. 60 Finally, the programme companies pay the audience research service (CEO) to cover the cost of surveys and audience research.

57. Interview with Jean-Loup Arnaud, July 13 1979.

58. TDF receives very little money directly from the licence revenue; in effect only what is awarded it through the system of direct grants. The bulk of the transmission company's income from the licence comes indirectly via payments from the programme companies.

59. INA receives revenue from the licence only through the system of direct grants. Most of its income comes indirectly through the mandatory payments made by the programme companies.

60. See section on the financial position of the broadcasting companies.
This system of mandatory expenditure, whereby the programme companies are obliged by the Government to pay annual sums to the other companies, accounts for a large share of each programme company's total expenditure. This is particularly true of TF1 and A2 who are more dependent on the services of the SFP than either FR3 or Radio France. For example, in 1976 A2's income amounted to 770 million francs. Out of this total, A2 was compelled to pay out 438 million francs, that is 57% of its total income from all sources, to the other companies. This figure included 195 million francs to TDF, 16.5 million to INA, 3 million to the CEO and 203 million to the SFP.

Once this expenditure has been accounted for, the two major television companies are left with under half of their respective

61. As the channel with special responsibility for the cinema, FR3 broadcasts many feature films. Moreover, FR3 has its own regional production centres.

Radio France is by its very nature relatively self-sufficient in programme production.

One should note, however, that even TF1 and A2 are producing more and more of their own programmes. In 1978 TF1 produced 55% of its own programmes, compared with under 53% in 1976. A2 produced over 48% compared with under 43% over the same period.

bureaux. Moreover, a large proportion of what remains goes to cover unavoidable expenses such as the payment of salaries, administration and equipment maintenance. Of the 332 million francs which A2 had left in 1976 after the payment of the company's mandatory expenses, over 300 million were required merely to maintain the company's output at its 1975 level. Comparatively little money was left over for programme development or for the extension of viewing time. When in July 1977 its provisional budget for 1978 was announced, A2 had to postpone its plans to introduce a midday news and magazine programme for lack of funds once other expenditure had been taken into account. 64

The financial position of the broadcasting companies

The break-up of the ORTF was supposed to give the broadcasting companies an unprecedented degree of financial autonomy from the Government. In this respect the reorganisation would appear not to have lived up to expectations. The Government's second objective, which followed on from the first, was that the dismantling of the Office

63. In his report on the 1980 broadcasting budget Le Tac excluded the sums paid to the SFP which he had included in his calculations up to and including the report on the 1978 budget. However, even excluding the SFP from the calculations he still estimates that in 1980 TF1 and A2 will each spend 27% of their budgets on mandatory expenditure. Journal Officiel, Documents Assemblée Nationale, 1979-1980, no.1292, Rapport fait au nom de la commission des finances ... sur le projet de loi de finances pour 1980, annexe no.12, Culture et communication: Radiotélévision, rapporteur spécial: Joel Le Tac, annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 2 octobre 1979, p.9.

would lead to sounder financial management within the state broadcasting services. It was hoped that the new smaller companies would be more efficient in the use of their resources than the ORTF was reputed to have been. In contrast to the rather one-sided picture of the ORTF as a top-heavy bureaucratic organisation full of structural defects, the new companies would be models of economic rationality. Small would not only be beautiful, it would be efficient as well.

To what extent has the 1974 reform succeeded in remedying the supposed defects in the financial management of the ORTF? Before attempting to answer this question, we must first bear in mind the fact that the Government's picture of the ORTF as a financially inept organisation does not survive close examination. Up until 1973 the ORTF had never been in deficit. It had financed long-term projects from its budget and from loans, including the establishment of a second television channel in the mid 1960s and a third channel in the early 70s.

In the early 1970s, however, the Office was adversely affected by a combination of circumstances which, as we have already seen, were not all within its control. The financial deficit of the Office in 1973, the forecast deficit for 1974 and the publication of the critical Chimaud report in June 1974 combined to produce a climate in which the picture of financial mismanagement of the ORTF was taken for granted.

This is not to say that the picture was totally inaccurate. The 1968 Diligent report, 1970 Paye report and 1972 Le Tac report had all criticised various aspects of the ORTF's financial management and made

a host of recommendations to improve financial control within the Office. However, there is evidence that the ORTF's financial record was much exaggerated in 1974 and that responsibility for the financial problems faced by the Office must be borne in part by the Government itself. In any case, none of the above reports went so far as to recommend the abolition of the ORTF and the establishment of separate companies.

The 1974 reform was intended to instil a sense of financial responsibility in the state broadcasting services. In return for gaining control of their budgets, the Government argued, the new companies were to ensure their financial equilibrium each year. However, the hopes of the Government in this respect have not been fully realised. Despite annual increases in the cost of the licence and a large rise in real terms in the total amount of public resources allocated to the broadcasting companies, some of the companies have still not managed to balance their books. In 1977, for example, while the television companies managed to balance their budgets and Radio France even made a small profit of 4.5 million francs, TDF made a loss of 9.4 million francs, INA was in the red to the tune of 14 million francs and the SFP had a massive deficit of 46 million francs.

66. Ibid.
67. The increase in income over the period 1975-1979 was around 79%. The rate of inflation over a comparable period, 1974-1978, was under 50%. Thus, in real terms the resources of the broadcasting companies from the licence, advertising and other sources have increased by around 30% over this period. Cluzel report, 1979, p.38.
In general, the four programme companies have been the most successful in managing to balance their books during the period since the reform. On the other hand, the companies with the gravest financial problems have been the archive and research institute and the production company.

INA has since 1975 been the Cinderella of the broadcasting companies. Not included in the Government's original bill, set up by parliamentary amendment against the Government's wishes, the archive and research institute does not benefit directly from licence revenue, excluding some direct grants, and receives no income from commercial advertising. Thus, INA is financially dependent on the programme companies, each of which is obliged by the Government to pay an annual sum for the use of INA's services as well as negotiating with INA a financial contract in return for the use of staff training facilities.

Though during the period 1975-1979 INA's budget doubled from just over 100 million francs in 1975 to just over 200 million in 1979, the precariousness of INA's financial position has recently become apparent. In 1978 the deficit of the company was again of the order of 14 million francs, largely because of a reduction in the proportion of its income INA was deriving from the obligatory expenditure of the programme companies. Thus, while in 1975 this mandatory expenditure accounted for 70% of INA's income, in 1979 it amounted to only 52%. The management of the company was forced to introduce an austerity

70. Ibid, pp.88-89.
budget and at the same time, in July 1978, ask the Government for an additional 70 million francs to cover the cost of the company's operations.\textsuperscript{71}

During 1979 various changes were made in key managerial posts in the company, with Pierre Emmanuel being replaced as company chairman by the well-known administrator, Gabriel de Broglie, who only recently had been made director general of Radio France under Baudrier.\textsuperscript{72} A new management team was established around de Broglie in a bid to restore the company's financial fortunes.\textsuperscript{73} Moreover, in the light of its financial difficulties, the obligatory payments to INA by the programme companies were increased in 1980 to 140 million francs compared with 106 million in 1979.\textsuperscript{74} However, by early 1980 it was still doubtful whether these measures would of themselves be sufficient to solve INA's budgetary problems, particularly following de Broglie's announcement that INA had made a loss of 42 million francs in 1979.\textsuperscript{75}

The financial crisis at INA during 1978-1979 pales into insignificance, however, when compared with the grave problems facing the SFP during the same period. Indeed, it is reasonable to say that the crisis at the production company posed the Government

\textsuperscript{71} Le Monde, July 23-24 1978.

\textsuperscript{72} See chapter on Appointments.

\textsuperscript{73} De Broglie was appointed chairman of INA in May 1979. Following his appointment, Jean-Noël Jeanneney became his programme adviser in June; Nicole Briot was appointed director general in July; and Pierre Borvo became general secretary in September. Le Monde, May 19, 30, June 20, July 14 and September 8 1979.

\textsuperscript{74} Journal Officiel, Documents Assemblée Nationale, 1979-1980, no.1292, Rapport fait au nom de la commission des finances ... sur le projet de loi de finances pour 1980, annexe no.12, Culture et communication: Radiotélévision, rapporteur spécial: Joel Le Tac, annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 2 octobre 1979, pp.8-9.

\textsuperscript{75} Le Monde, October 13 1979.
the most serious problem it had faced since the establishment of the new companies in January 1975. Over the three year period 1975-1977 the SFP had made a total deficit of over 120 million francs, while its deficit in 1978 alone came to over 113 million.  

The SFP, the former production services of the ORTF, had the most commercially oriented administrative status of the seven broadcasting companies. It receives no money from the licence or from advertising. Instead its income was supposed to come from diverse sources including the programme companies, particularly TF1 and A2, for whom it would produce programmes which the companies would then buy on a strictly commercial basis. By the terms of their cahiers des charges TF1 and A2 are forbidden to produce certain programmes themselves such as dramas and fiction series, with the result that the SFP appears to have a ready market for its productions. In addition, the first chairman of the SFP, Edeline, intended that the company should diversify its operations by becoming a major force in the adjacent fields of cinema film production and audiovisual technology development as well as in the traditional field of television production.


77. Article 13 of the 1974 broadcasting statute. See appendix 4.ii.

78. The television companies can produce programmes involving a minimum of technical equipment (la production légère).
This rosy view of the SFP's commercial future was not borne out by subsequent events. While the company was supposed to be run on a commercial, self-financing basis, the legacy of the ORTF could not be thrown off at once. Since the SFP's operational costs are higher than other independent production companies, including foreign ones, the French production company could not be expected to survive unaided in this highly competitive market, particularly in the period immediately after the reform. To protect the SFP from financial collapse, therefore, the Government decided to compel the television companies to pay the production company a certain sum annually in the form of production orders, thus guaranteeing the SFP a source of income. These sums, calculated as a percentage of the production orders made in 1974, were originally intended to be on an annual sliding scale: 75% in 1976, 60% in 1977, 45% in 1978, 30% in 1979 and disappearing totally in 1980.79

The Government's intention was that at the end of this five year breathing space the SFP would be in a position to compete in the open market without the need for guaranteed custom from the television companies. Until then, the television companies were to be compelled to pay the SFP for programme production and for the use of its equipment.80 This payment by the television companies to the SFP has provided one of the main sources of conflict among the broadcasting companies, since in effect the television companies, particularly TF1 and A2, were being required to underwrite the lack of competitiveness of an independent company.

79. The percentages were to be in real terms, taking into account the increase in the companies' resources.

80. For example, the use of video cameras at outside broadcasts.
Even with this guaranteed source of income, however, the SFP failed to establish itself on a sound financial footing. Edeline's attempt to diversify the company's operations did not succeed, with the result that the company's turnover remained overwhelmingly based on television programme production. The television companies, on the other hand, preferred to produce more of their programmes themselves with the aid of the new, light equipment or purchase programmes from the SFP's competitors, particularly cheap imports from the USA. Even when the television companies did make use of the SFP, they preferred to make their compulsory payments in return for the use of the production company's equipment rather than for the purchase of programmes. In short, the production company failed to establish itself as a viable competitor in the market place to which it had been condemned by the 1974 statute.

Partly this failure was the fault of the company management. The SFP's plight was exacerbated by the grandiose designs of Edeline, who overstretched the company's resources in certain dubious financial investments, including the purchase of the theatre l'Empire to be used as a television studio. Partly it was due to the fact that the programme companies, the customers of the SFP, were seeking to exploit advances in broadcasting technology by producing their own programmes. Partly it was the fault of the Government who failed to inject sufficient working capital into the company from the beginning. The basic problem, however, was the reform itself. In breaking up the ORTF into separate companies and giving the SFP a semi-commercial status in the new system, the Government had implicitly rejected the concept of a public service
By the autumn of 1978 it was clear that even with the guaranteed income from the television companies the SFP was in a very serious financial position. In October Edeline "temporarily" resigned as chairman of the company on the grounds of ill-health. He was replaced by a top civil servant and governor of the company, Bertrand Labrusse. As interim chairman of the company Labrusse proceeded to draw up a plan to restore the SFP to solvency. Labrusse formally rejected the need for any enforced redundancies at the company, preferring to base his plan on 450 voluntary redundancies spread over a period of three years. At first it seemed that Labrusse's plan met with the support of the minister responsible for broadcasting, Lecat. However, with the termination of Labrusse's appointment in January 1979 it became apparent that his moderate proposals had not received full governmental accord.


A conseiller référendaire à la cour des comptes, Labrusse had been a member of the SFP's board of governors since 1975.


84. Compare, for example, the conciliatory statements made by Lecat at the time of Labrusse's appointment with the much tougher line taken by Barre in March 1979. Le Monde, October 31 and November 12-13 1978 and March 13 1979.
Labrusse's successor was Clermont-Tonnerre, a leading member of Rossi's cabinet in 1974 and responsible for the implementation of the 1974 broadcasting statute. Edeline finally resigned from his post at the same time as Clermont-Tonnerre's appointment, thus leaving the way clear for the new incumbent to establish his authority on his own terms as full-time chairman of the company. Clermont-Tonnerre's plan for bringing the production company out of the red was a much stiffer one than that of his predecessor. Most controversially, a key element in the plan was a streamlining of the company which would necessitate 700 redundancies over the following three years.

For 1979 alone Clermont-Tonnerre called for 424 enforced redundancies and 130 voluntary resignations out of a total workforce of just under 3,000. Later in the year this total was reduced after protracted negotiations with the broadcasting unions and a lengthy strike at the production company and a series of strikes in the other broadcasting companies, with about 200 being offered jobs in the other companies. By mid-March 1979 the number for whom redundancy meant unemployment had been cut from 424 to 138. In addition, the Government promised

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85. See chapter on the Liquidation of the ORTF.


88. See chapter on the Broadcasting unions.

89. Le Monde, March 14 1979. In Le Monde, April 13 1979 the figure given is 175. Nonetheless, over 400 persons were no longer employed at the SFP in the same capacity as previously. The National Assembly finance committee report on the 1980 broadcasting budget gives the total of 143 redundancies, (p.12).
to give the SFP financial aid of 250 million francs on condition that the company put into effect Clermont-Tonnerre's plan. The programme companies also came to the aid of the SFP by promising to increase their orders in 1979 by 20% over the 1978 figure and by undertaking to guarantee programme orders over a longer time schedule than they had previously done.90

The forecast deficit for the SFP in 1979 was 127 million francs, slightly up on the 1978 figure.91 The short-term future of the production company seemed healthier in the light of the Government's financial aid. Nonetheless, the position of the company was by no means assured, for at the same time as the television companies are tending to produce more and more of their own programmes, the SFP is becoming more and more dependent on the television companies for income.

"Consequently, the programme companies have less and less need of the SFP, while it has more and more need of them. ... the break-up of the ORTF could not but have serious consequences for the heavy television production which was already in an extremely fragile position at the time of the ORTF. ... the 1974 reform has placed the SFP in competition with the programme companies themselves, but in conditions which have been most unfavourable for the former. The channels still have the choice of different sources of programme production and can opt for the most advantageous. The SFP is the prisoner of two customers and has extremely limited possibilities of finding others."92

The lynchpin of the new broadcasting system has become its lame duck.


Conclusion

It is illuminating to compare the present financial arrangements with those in use at the time of the ORTF. Despite various attempts at reform, particularly under Chaban-Delmas' premiership, the ORTF was never renowned for its financial independence from the Government. According to government spokesmen the 1974 reform was intended to put an end to the strong interventionist role of the Ministry of Finance in the financial operations of the state broadcasting services. The new companies were to be given full responsibility for the management of their finances.

This chapter has demonstrated, however, that though the daily intervention of the Ministry of Finance is no longer a feature of government-broadcasting relations, it would be a severe mistake to assume that the broadcasting companies are in a state of financial independence vis-à-vis the Government. It is the Government which fixes the cost of the licence and so determines the total amount of resources to be directed to the state broadcasting companies. Even the production company, which ought by now to be fully self-financing, depends on government aid for its survival. In addition, a significant proportion of the programme companies' expenditure is under the control of the Government through the device of the cahiers des charges.

The 1974 reform has, however, altered the financial relationship between the Government and the state broadcasting services in several

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94. We have no reason to doubt the denial by a member of the SJTI that it exercised any daily financial control over the companies. Interview with M. Mougey, September 17 1979.
important respects. First, since there is no central coordinating body in the new structure, it is the Government which provides the necessary arbitration in the allocation of resources among the companies. Organisational independence of each other, the seven broadcasting companies lack any common front in the budgetary process. In effect, the Government acts as the central body intentionally omitted in the reorganisation.

This change has been accompanied by a shift of emphasis away from intervention at the micro level of expenditure to control at the macro level of the company. The former dirigiste model of financial control has been largely replaced by one which stresses the importance of cash limits. Thus, while there may be no daily intervention on the part of the Government or the SJTI with regard to specific items of expenditure, the financial procedure described in this chapter ensures that a company's overall freedom of manoeuvre is severely restricted.

Secondly, at the ORTF revenue from commercial advertising went into one central fund before being reallocated among the ORTF channels, with the result that it had less effect on the programme output.

"At the ORTF there was one overall budget. There was none of the complex mechanisms which are now necessary to divide up the licence revenue.

I preferred the budgetary system which operated at the ORTF, particularly with regard to advertising revenue which was kept to the 25% maximum and did not influence our programming." 95

In the new system the dependence of the two major television companies on commercial advertising revenue makes them at least

95. Interview with Marcéau Long, July 10 1979.
potentially more vulnerable to external pressure. Indeed it has been argued by many critics of the reform, including Le Tac, Cluzel, Caillavet, the opposition parties, the broadcasting unions, the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel and the Quality Committee that the increased importance of advertising revenue for TF1 and A2 has resulted in an unwarranted emphasis being placed on audience ratings with the result that there has been a noticeable shift away from a public service broadcasting system to a commercially oriented one. 96

Finally, while the break-up of the ORTF has isolated certain financial problems, it has by no means solved them. In theory seven small budgets ought perhaps to be more easily managed than one large one. This has generally proved correct in the case of the programme companies. However, the splitting up of the ORTF into its constituent parts has dramatically highlighted the financial difficulties of some companies, particularly INA and the SFP. Whereas in the former unitary structure of the ORTF the deficiencies of the production services were readily tolerated and even regarded as virtues, in the new system the SFP has to defend its product on commercial grounds. Unfortunately, though quite predictably, instead of acting as a tonic for the SFP, competition had by 1980 brought the production company to the verge of collapse.

96. See chapter on Criticisms of the reform.
CHAPTER 10

News programmes

The most politically sensitive area of broadcasting in France has traditionally been that of news programming. In the last years of the Fourth Republic, when France was heavily involved in the war in Algeria, a practice of ministerial censorship of radio news programmes was established and justified by government ministers on the grounds of the gravity of the military situation.¹ This practice was carried on into the Fifth Republic and applied to the new medium, television, which, as we have seen, was only just starting to reach a mass audience in France.²

During the eleven years of de Gaulle's presidency (1958-69) the Minister of Information closely controlled the content of news programmes on radio and television. For the vast majority of the population whose major source of national news was the main evening bulletin of the (0)RTF, their news diet was regulated not by professional broadcasters but by ministerial officials or even the minister in person. The hierarchical chain of command went outside the (0)RTF to the Ministry of Information where the main editorial decisions were taken. Thus, control of key appointments was supplemented by a direct intervention in news programming to provide a double check on the material shown to the viewer.


2. See chapter on Politics and broadcasting in France before the 1974 reform.
The primordial role of the Minister of Information was described by Alain Peyrefitte who held this post for over two years in the early sixties and was the architect of the 1964 ORTF statute.

"...Christian de la Malène, whom I was succeeding in George Pompidou's first cabinet, showed me a range of buttons on the desk.

'That one is to summon the commissionaire, this other one is for your chef de cabinet, and those ones are for the head of the RTF, the director of radio and television news, the director of television programmes, the director of radio programmes.....'

Naive, I was surprised to be able to summon the heads of the RTF like a lady of old summoned her chamber maids.

'It's like this. Every day about 5 o'clock you will call them to set out the main headlines of the evening news bulletin on radio and television. You can also give them instructions at any moment by internal telephone. Do not leave your office before half past one and half past eight. After the television news your colleagues will call you to complain about anything which they have disliked.'" 3

Peyrefitte goes on to describe how, despite his personal antipathy to this practice, he was compelled by external events to assume responsibility for the content of news programmes up until the passing of the ORTF statute in 1964.4

Moreover, there is more than sufficient evidence that, contrary to Peyrefitte's protestations, the 1964 ORTF statute did not put an end to this practice of ministerial interference in news programming. The 1968 Diligent report, for example, contained a lengthy critical analysis of the procedure by which news content was decided at daily meetings between top ORTF management and the Minister of Information's cabinet. Commenting on an article by Jacques Thibau, former deputy head of television, in which he describes how every morning at about 11 o'clock a dozen civil servants met to decide what must and what must not be covered by the television news, the Diligent report stated that while

4. Ibid, pp.69-78.
it had hoped to be able to refute Thibau's allegation, in fact "the testimony of various witnesses.... gave us indisputable proof that these accusations were well founded."5

It is scarcely necessary to labour the point. Evidence from a variety of sources testifies to a close, direct ministerial control of news programming during de Gaulle's presidency. Some commentators have sought to qualify this general statement. For example, both Thomas and Thibau have argued that the ORTF's current affairs programmes, watched by comparatively few people, tended to be more critical of the Government and its policies, particularly after the 1965 presidential elections.6 Nonetheless, the general picture of direct ministerial control of news programmes up until 1969 can scarcely be questioned.7

The reforms introduced by Chaban-Delmas in September 1969 were a reaction to this practice of control via partisan appointments and direct intervention. The Ministry of Information was abolished and responsibility for news programming given to the ORTF news departments. Moreover, within the ORTF the two news departments, one for each channel, were granted a high degree of autonomy by being removed from under the authority of the channel heads. The two news


directors, Desgraupes on channel one and Baudrier on channel two, were made responsible for news content and, as an additional safeguard, they could be removed from their posts only in the event of serious professional misconduct. As a result, in the eyes of several commentators, from 1969 to 1972 news programmes were openly critical of government policy, much to the dislike of the President of the Republic and a large section of the Gaullist parliamentary party.\(^8\)

However, in mid 1972 Chaban-Delmas' dismissal from the premiership by Pompidou was accompanied by a volte face in the Government's relationship with the ORTF. The Ministry of Information was re-established and given to the ultra-conservative Malaud; the autonomous news departments were reintegrated within the organisational structure of their respective channels; and the director of news on channel one resigned, some of his team were sacked and the remainder were transferred to the much less widely viewed channel two. The 1972 ORTF statute reflected Pompidou's view of the ORTF as "the voice of France" which meant that because of the mass audience of television the broadcasting journalists had a special responsibility not to be excessively critical of government policy.\(^9\)

The 1974 broadcasting reform was intended to break with this view of the state broadcasting services as the official mouthpiece

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9. See chapter on Politics and broadcasting in France before the 1974 reform.
of the Government. Giscard d'Estaing's avowed ambition in breaking up the ORTF into separate companies was to normalise relations between the Government and broadcasting by giving the broadcasters responsibility for news programme content. The aim of this chapter is to examine to what extent this objective has been put into practice since the establishment of the new companies in January 1975.

It is important first of all to emphasise that we have already presented evidence in previous chapters which demonstrated that even before the new companies came into operation the Government had been responsible for establishing the framework within which decisions about news programming would be made. The appointment of key editorial staff, such as director of news and news editor, in the programme companies was supervised by the Minister of the Interior, Poniatowski.\textsuperscript{10} In addition, the reallocation of ORTF journalists to the new companies was open to political abuse by both ministers and broadcasting management.\textsuperscript{11} Thus, even before the new companies began their transmissions the dice were loaded against any concept of independent news programming, however defined.

However, it is obviously worth examining in more detail the political constraints and pressures on news programming in the four programme companies set up by the 1974 reorganisation.\textsuperscript{12} First, it is an area of extreme political sensitivity about which traditionally

\textsuperscript{10} See chapter on Appointments.

\textsuperscript{11} See chapter on the Reallocation of ORTF staff.

\textsuperscript{12} For our purposes news programming covers not only news bulletins but also current affairs programmes, party political broadcasts, election campaign broadcasts and political access programmes.
there has been much heated controversy. Secondly, it is an obvious field in which to judge the claims to independence of the companies from government intervention. Finally, the views of Giscard d'Estaing on the role of the journalists in the state broadcasting services differ explicitly from those of his predecessors at the Elysée.

One might reasonably expect, therefore, that the relationship between the Government and the broadcasting companies since 1975 would neither duplicate the overt interventionist model which characterised the period of de Gaulle's presidency, nor reflect Pompidou's view of the state broadcasting services as "the voice of France."

The subject matter of this chapter is, therefore, an analysis of the partisan political constraints and pressures, internal or external, overt or covert, which are habitually and successfully exercised to regulate communication performance in news programming. This statement itself requires clarification.

First, we are concerned in this chapter principally with partisan political constraints. There are, of course, other constraints which affect the content and quality of news programming: technical limitations, time restrictions, considerations of news value and other constraints imposed by the nature of the broadcasting medium itself. However, we are interested in these only if there is some evidence that they are employed for partisan political ends.13

Secondly, we are concerned with constraints and pressures which


We do not deny the existence of such constraints, but their study does not form part of this thesis.
originate from within the broadcasting organisations as well as those which come from external sources.

Thirdly, the pressures and constraints must be regular and enjoy a high rate of success. For example, ad hoc complaints from the Communist party about bias in news presentation, though a source of pressure on the news departments, do not appear to affect news content with any noticeable degree of success. They are, therefore, much less important than systematic pressures which do influence news content and presentation.

Finally, we have restricted our study to programmes which have an obvious political content: news bulletins, current affairs programmes, party political broadcasts and political access programmes. We are not here concerned with the possible ideological role of non-news programmes such as films, serials and drama programmes in a capitalist economic system, even though if these programmes do have an ideological content they are also obviously of political importance. Our task is the more limited one of examining partisan political constraints and pressures which systematically secure partisan political advantage on programmes with a self-evident political content.


Other writers have gone even further than Tracey in what they would regard as "political television". See, for example, J. Marceau, Class and status in France, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1977, pp.172-173 and particularly the following quotation: "Examination of both the content and the form of one of the major parts of this entertainment, the serial (feuilleton) shows some of the ideological biases involved."(p.172)

Marceau's views are largely based on an article by J.M. Piemme, "Le tissu idéologique dans le feuilleton télévisé", Politique Aujourd'hui, October - December 1974.
We begin by looking at the main provisions of the 1974 reform with regard to news programming. In the second section we go on to examine the concept of balance and its methodological shortcomings. The role of the news departments of the programme companies is then analysed with reference to four aspects: editorial control, recruitment of journalists, political pressures and corporate ethos. Next we look briefly at the functioning of the news departments during two politically sensitive periods: the 1977 municipal and 1978 legislative elections. Finally, a separate section is devoted to each of the following particular topics: party political broadcasts, the right of reply for opposition parties and the political access programme, Tribune libre.

The 1974 reform

Article 1 of the 1974 broadcasting statute assigns to the state broadcasting companies the task of "responding to the needs and aspirations of the population with regard to information....". This general prescription is expanded upon in the cahiers des charges of the programme companies.

"The company must fulfil the task of informing the public about French and international news in the most complete, balanced and objective manner. This task of information consists, on the one hand, of presenting news events and, on the other hand, of giving comments and providing debates about them. The company must ensure that there is no possible confusion in the minds of the public between news, comment and debate.

The company is obliged to ensure that, in the time available, all possible precautions are taken to check the accuracy of news stories and their presentation; that the choice of news stories is not guided by an ideological, political or doctrinal preference; that, in the presentation of facts, the journalists disregard their personal political opinions; that in any commentary on a same body of events, the principal viewpoints be equitably represented." 15

The programme companies, therefore, are under an explicit obligation to present news in an objective, balanced and fair manner.

Furthermore, in the pursuit of this task the programme companies are deemed to have been granted full responsibility for the formulation and presentation of news. The abolition of the Ministry of Information symbolised Giscard d'Estaing's rejection of the direct interventionist model, which was later confirmed in a letter sent to each programme company chairman.

"The authorities do not intend to run X (name of the company) through you. They delegate to you this role entirely until the end of your term of office. That is why they must establish their relationship with your company as they do with the other large independent press and information media, i.e. by discussing periodically with you, on their initiative or yours, the most important problems in the life of X, but without ever interfering in your managerial and editorial responsibilities. If you witness an infringement of this principle which I regard as fundamental, I ask you to communicate it to me personally." 16

The new model for government-broadcasting relations was thus clearly established. On the one hand, each programme company was to channel a plurality of political views, without favouring any one in particular. Each company was to present balanced and objective news. To safeguard this organisational pluralism each company would be independent of the Government and the political parties. Responsibility for news content was to be given to the companies themselves. The key normative concepts underpinning this relationship, therefore, were balance and objectivity on the one hand and responsibility and independence on the other. The theoretical relationship between government and broadcasting was based on the traditional "fourth estate" model, best exemplified by the broadcasting organisation traditionally most admired by the French, the BBC. 17

17. The question of whether this model accurately describes the relationship between the BBC and the State does not concern us here.
Balance: an unattainable goal?

There are several conceptual and methodological difficulties involved in the study of how this ideal-type model actually functions in practice. Like beauty, objectivity tends to lie in the eye of the beholder. It is certainly not clear what objectivity in news presentation entails or whether it is an attainable goal. Nor is the concept of balance any more straightforward: balance among whom? over what time period (within each programme or over a series of programmes)? How is balance to be measured?

Within the context of French politics these questions cannot remain at the purely abstract, philosophical level. For example, if one seeks to measure balance in terms of time allocation one is faced with a problem of classification. When Giscard d'Estaing appears on radio and television is he doing so in his role as Head of State above party politics or in the more partisan role of de facto leader of the majorité? Are the two roles separable? The ambiguity of the role of the President of the Republic was highlighted by Giscard d'Estaing's television speech during the 1978 elections after the end of the official campaign before the first ballot. Of course, this problem can be overcome, though not resolved, by simply lumping together all appearances by the President of the Republic and treating them as

18. See section on the 1978 legislative elections.
partisan political appearances. 19

A second problem regarding the notion of balance results from the nature of the French party system. Since France does not possess a two-party system, balance ought to be preserved not only between the governing parties and the parties of the opposition but also within each of these heterogeneous blocs. At present one can discern four major tendencies in the French party system, two in the majorité (UDF and Gaullist) and two in the ranks of the opposition (Socialist and Communist). However, not only does this four tendency classification exclude minor parties such as the ecologists, it also conceals frequent splits within each of these tendencies. For example, during 1980 the Socialist party was divided on the choice of a suitable candidate for the 1981 presidential elections between supporters of Mitterrand and supporters of Rocard. Under these conditions it becomes very difficult to apply the concept of balance to the satisfaction of all political groups.

19. Presidential appearances on the state broadcasting services have included programmes on his book Démocratie française in late 1976 (Le Monde, October 2 and 16, November 3 1976, and April 30 1977; L'Humanité, October 26 1976; and Le Canard Enchaîné, October 27 1976); an appearance on Dossiers de l'écran in February 1977 (Le Monde, January 21 and February 6-7 1977) and in the magazine programme l'événement at the end of January 1977 (Le Monde, January 23-24 1977), both only a few weeks before the 1977 municipal elections; a discussion with twentyfive school children in the programme Question de temps in June 1977 (Le Monde, May 26 and June 8 1977); and the series of one hour interviews every two months in the programme Une heure avec le Président de la République which began in April 1979, The President of the Republic is also featured live during presidential press conferences and Giscard d'Estaing has also made various short appearances at peak viewing time to defend aspects of government policy. See, for example, his speech of June 15 1977 on TF1 and A2 at 8.00 p.m. concerning measures taken in favour of the elderly in France and his speech on June 30 1977 on TF1 and A2 at 8.00 p.m. regarding direct elections to the European Assembly.
A third difficulty lies in assessing what constitutes a reasonable balance between the different political actors. It does not seem unreasonable that the President of the Republic and the Government should receive more coverage than the opposition leaders precisely because the former are the elected leaders of the nation. While the President and the Government have to make authoritative decisions about the allocation of scarce resources, the role of the opposition is largely confined to criticism which, no matter how constructive, cannot by its very nature assume such political significance. Yet if one accepts this distinction then one is again faced with the problem of what constitutes balance in news presentation and political coverage.

A final point to bear in mind regarding the applicability of the concept of balance, when measured in terms of time allocation, is that any meaningful assessment must take account not only of the actual length of time allowed during a particular programme but also of the potential and actual audience of the programme. It is obvious that two minutes' time allocation in a party political broadcast is not equivalent to two minutes during the main evening news bulletin at 8.00 p.m.

The broadcasting companies themselves, who keep records of time allocation among the major political actors, are aware of some of these problems. As can be seen from the following table, which gives the allocation of time among different political actors for 1977 in all programmes (news bulletins, current affairs programmes, etc.), the notion of balance is not interpreted in terms of strict equality
of broadcasting time. 20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Actual time</th>
<th>Time/audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President of the Republic</td>
<td>24' 32&quot;</td>
<td>24' 44&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>58' 25&quot;</td>
<td>52' 16&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majorité parties</td>
<td>45' 40&quot;</td>
<td>38' 33&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposition parties</td>
<td>65' 11&quot;</td>
<td>57' 54&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade unions</td>
<td>35' 37&quot;</td>
<td>25' 14&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During 1977 the opposition parties had about half as much time again as the parties of the governing coalition. However, they had only half the time allocated to the President of the Republic, the Government and the parties of the majorité added together. The above categories are not as precise as one might wish since they do not allow one to differentiate, for example, between the amounts of time allocated to the Socialist and Communist parties respectively. However, taken at face value, the figures do not appear to reflect a distortion in time allocation of any major significance. This was even admitted by the Socialist party spokesman, Laurent Fabius, who affirmed that "the problem is no longer one of the equitable division of time between the parties, which has been resolved except for the case of the President of the Republic." 21

The greatest problem in attempting to measure balance in terms of time allocation alone, however, is that such a method fails to take account of the context and quality of the coverage given the political actors involved. Extensive coverage by the broadcasting media does not necessarily correlate with political advantage, nor does it necessarily have the securing of political advantage as its objective. For example, the break-up of the Union of the Left in

20. Source: Pierre Borvo, SJTI.
September 1977, only six months prior to the crucial 1978 legislative elections, was given saturation coverage by the state programme companies. However, while in terms of time allocation the parties of the left benefited greatly, it can hardly be maintained that this coverage was to their political benefit or designed to be so, unless one makes the unwarranted assumption that any publicity is good publicity. 22

Moreover, as the official time allocation figures take account only of appearances by the actors themselves, the comments made by newscasters and correspondents are naturally not included. Yet remarks made by a journalist on the screen or over the air may, more or less subtly, favour one political option or group rather than another. This type of bias will not be demonstrated by an emphasis on the quantitative criterion of time allocation among the actors themselves. Nor, of course, will bias in terms of the non-coverage of news items show up in such a narrowly conceived methodological framework.

A stopwatch approach to the concept of balance is, therefore, not only difficult to apply. More importantly, it is deficient because it fails to take account of qualitative as well as quantitative distortions in political coverage. At best it can give only an indication of the presence of bias in the system, unless the bias is

22. "On the break-up of the Union of the Left see J. R. Frears and J.L. Parodi, War will not take place, London, Hurst and Co.,1979, pp.18-23
Francoise Giroud, La comédie du pouvoir, Paris,Fayard, 1977, commented:
"In September 1977, when the polemics between Francois Mitterrand and Georges Marchais were growing and invading the small screen, from which they never ceased to be present, the intellectuals of the opposition reproached the Government for having 'attracted the left on to the ambushed ground of the television!' (Regis Débray in Le Monde) Which, one will agree, is exceedingly ironic."(p.173)
self-evident as was the case in the early 1960s when opposition politicians were quite blatantly refused access to the state broadcasting media in France. However, it certainly cannot be maintained that political coverage by the present state programme companies is biased in such a crude manner.

This has not, however, prevented attempts by interested parties and others to measure the presence or absence of balance in terms of quantitative criteria. For example, in June 1975 the three parties of the Union of the Left (Communists, Socialists and Left-wing Radicals) set up a committee to monitor political coverage in selected news bulletins of the state programme companies and the peripheral radio stations. Le comité pour le respect du droit à l'information radio-télévisée published its first and only report at the end of June 1976.23 A short document of only a few pages, the report predictably condemned the low quality of information provided to the electorate by the broadcasting media in all areas of the social, economic and political life of the country. Furthermore, in an appendix covering the first four months of 1976 the report found that the majorité (President of the Republic, government ministers and Gaullist, Giscardian, CDS, Radical and Social Democratic spokesmen) had appeared three times as often as the opposition (Communist, Socialist and Left-wing Radical spokesmen). Interestingly, if one excluded February 1976, during which the Communist party held its 22nd party congress, the Socialists and Left-wing Radicals appeared more than twice as often as the Communist party during the period studied.

However, the report made no claims to scientific accuracy and the source of the report has to be borne in mind in weighing up the validity of its findings. In any case the work of the committee exemplified many of the difficulties of the type of approach outlined above. It was even rumoured that the committee was disbanded in 1977 because it was found that by merely counting appearances of representatives of the majorité and the opposition, the latter appeared to be benefiting from greater coverage.

Other attempts of limited scope have been made to quantify the concept of balance. In the Senate cultural affairs committee report on the broadcasting budget for 1977, for example, the rapporteur, Henri Caillavet, outlined the following time allocation covering the first fortnight of October 1967 (sic) on the four state programme companies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President of the Republic</th>
<th>Actual time</th>
<th>Time/audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3' 5&quot;</td>
<td>2' 9&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>5' 20&quot;</td>
<td>3' 37&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majorité</td>
<td>4' 22&quot;</td>
<td>2' 18&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposition</td>
<td>5' 24&quot;</td>
<td>2' 28&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24. The committee examined the news broadcasts of Europe 1 (1 pm. and 7 pm.), RTL (1 pm and 6.30 pm), France Inter (1 pm and 7 pm), TF1 (1 pm and 8 pm), and A2 (8 pm). Neither the early morning radio news nor the FR3 regional news broadcasts were included.

25. This was denied by the spokesman of the Socialist party responsible for the project. His reasons for abandoning the work were, first, that it was both scrappy and expensive and, secondly, that there was a growing difference of opinion between the Socialist party and Communist party over the role of the mass media. Interview with Gerard Colé, September 7 1979.

As Caillavet pointed out, the balance between opposition and majorité spokesmen was adequately preserved, though there was an obvious imbalance when one included the coverage given the President and government ministers alongside that given the majorité. Nonetheless, though Caillavet recommended that this distortion be remedied by the heads of the programme companies, in general he concluded that political coverage on the different channels "was now approaching a satisfactory balance." 27

A more detailed, though equally limited, attempt to quantify political balance has been made by Michel Jouet in a study of A2's coverage of the conflict in the steel industry at Thionville during the period April 5-20 1977. 28 From his analysis Jouet concluded that "the equality of time allocation among the various protagonists is manifestly not respected." 29 Moreover, the quantitative imbalance is exacerbated by a more pronounced qualitative distortion.

"On no single occasion throughout the conflict did the trade unions or the opposition parties have the opportunity of presenting their case in depth and their proposals." 30

On the contrary, only the convergent views of the Government and the management were systematically presented. Moreover, Jouet

27. Ibid, p.21.
   Jouet concentrated on the spoken (not visual)aspects of A2's presentation.
perceived a 'worrying similarity between the statements of
the television journalists and those of the Government and the
management. As a result, Jouet concluded that:

"All the information provided by Antenne 2 was
placed within the framework of the inevitability of the
crisis, the gravity of its consequences and the necessity
for reciprocal efforts to mitigate its effects." 32

Unfortunately, however, there has been no attempt in France
to replicate the work of the Glasgow University media group in
Great Britain with their comprehensive study of news content in all
news bulletins on all three television channels over a protracted
period of time, five months in the case of their first research
project. 33 As a result of this lamentable gap in French media research
the following evaluation of political coverage by the state programme
companies lays no claim to scientific rigour.

However, as wide a variety as possible of evidence and sources
has been utilised in arriving at our conclusions, including both
published material and interviews which reflect the views of the
political parties, company management, journalists, broadcasting
unions, the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel and the viewers themselves.
In this way an assessment of the political coverage of the state
programme companies in news bulletins and related programmes will be
attempted and the claims to independence and balance evaluated.

32. Ibid, p.965.
33. Glasgow University média group, op. cit.
INA would appear to be well qualified to carry out just such
a research project.
The news departments: editorial control

The lack of research on the content of news programmes in France is accompanied by a dearth of academic material on the functioning of the news departments. Observation studies on the process by which news is produced in the state programme companies are not nearly as common in France as in Great Britain. Partly this may be due to a reluctance on the part of French academics to adopt this type of approach to media studies, partly to the reserve of the companies themselves to welcome outsiders as witnesses to a complex ritual. Two French observers who did produce a short observation study of the workings of the news departments of the two main television channels were allowed to spend only three days at TF1, though they were given a full month at A2. Yet in an examination of the way in which news is processed and presented by the programme companies, it is necessary to have some knowledge of the structure and functioning of the news departments.

Each programme company has its own separate news department, while FR3 is also responsible for managing 23 regional television news centres in metropolitan France. Together they employ over a thousand journalists, with over 500 working at FR3 alone. The

34. For a recent observation study of the BBC see P. Schlesinger, op.cit. The news department on channel one of the ORTF was the object of an observation study by R. Cayrol during the 1973 legislative elections. See R. Cayrol, L'ORTF face aux élections de mars 1973, paper presented at the European Consortium for Political Research congress in Strasbourg, 1974.


36. In 1978 TF1 employed 202 journalists, A2 - 175, FR3 - 531 and Radio France - 208.

process by which the news bulletins are composed is collective in the sense that the finished product depends on the participation of a wide variety of journalists. However, evidence suggests that the internal organisation of the different news departments is of a strongly hierarchical nature, with any controversial decisions being made at the top. 37

"In the final analysis it is the news editor (rédacteur en chef) who decides what will and what will not be shown on the screen during the news bulletin." 38

"At A2 it is the news editor, Louis Bériot, who decides what is put into the news broadcasts. At first, after Elkabach's appointment as director of news, he himself made the decisions regarding the content of news broadcasts and even took upon himself the role of news-caster for a couple of months. Elkabach is no longer responsible for presenting the news, but he is responsible for the current affairs output and for the general guidelines of the news broadcasts.

At TF1 the news editor, Christian Bernadac, and the newscaster, Roger Gicquel, work together to select topics for the news bulletins. Gicquel has acquired this status because of his popularity with the public and his authority built up over the two and a half years he has been presenting the news at TF1." 39

"Control within the news department is very hierarchical. Bernadac constructs the news bulletin, while Gicquel and Mourousi write their own texts. Power is concentrated at the top." 40

"The director of news and news editor play a determinant role in deciding the content of the news bulletins. Everybody can speak during the daily news department conference, but in the end Elkabach and Bériot have the last word." 41

40. Interview with René Caron, July 18 1979.
The work of the news department is perhaps less hierarchical than many outside observers imagine. There is a daily conference of the news department. However, Elkabbach and Bériot keep the decision-making power and if there is disagreement it is they who make the final decision. (qui tranchent)." 42

This decision-making procedure is not confined to TF1 and A2. A survey of journalists belonging to the SNJ at Radio France produced the following responses.

"The organisation is hierarchical, vertical and closed in military fashion, functioning in one direction only from the top towards the bottom." 43

"An idea which does not come from the head of a desk (un chef) has little chance of being accepted." 44

The survey report concluded that:

" all the replies...denounce structures in which decisions belong to one man alone or his representative .... an organisation which is authoritarian and hierarchical, and which never looks for the least consensus among the news team since it is based on a dominant-dominated relationship." 45

At FR3 the SNJ, by far the most representative union of broadcasting journalists in the regions, condemned a similar pyramidal decision-making procedure whereby the 24 news editors in the regional stations referred controversial decisions upwards to the director of the regions in Paris, Claude Lemoine. 46

Roland Cayrol, on the other hand, argued that as regards the

42. Interview with Noel Copin, July 23 1979.
44. Ibid, p.4.
45. Ibid, pp.5-6.
daily news bulletin in each region the regional directors and their news editors were largely independent of central control from Paris. However, he did not deny that within each regional news centre decision-making is functionally centralised.\textsuperscript{47}

There would appear to be general agreement, therefore, about the hierarchical distribution of power within the different regional and national news departments. The daily conferences within the news departments at which the structure of the bulletins is discussed do not reflect a democratic decision-making procedure since on any matter of controversy policy is decided at the top.\textsuperscript{48} The key decision-making posts are those of director of news and news editor, appointments to both of which are, as we have seen, subject to close political scrutiny.

\textbf{The news departments: recruitment}

It would be misleading to assume that all or even a majority of the journalists working in the state programme companies necessarily support the Government or the parties of the majorité. Certainly they do not represent a sociological cross-section of French society. On the basis of a sample survey of broadcasting journalists employed in the state programme companies and the peripheral radio stations, Cayrol asserts that they are predominantly male, youngish, Parisian

\textsuperscript{47} R. Cayrol, "Le cas de la France: en attendant la décentralisation", paper presented to a conference on "Télévision et décentralisation", September 1978, p.10.

\textsuperscript{48} Syndicat National des Journalistes section Radio France, \textit{op.cit.}, p.3.

The daily conferences at A2 would seem to be the liveliest among the four programme companies. See A. Baron and I. Veyrat-Masson, \textit{op.cit.}, in \textit{Le Monde}, May 7-8 1978.
and middle-class. Moreover, trade union membership among broadcasting journalists is higher than the national average, since 58% of those interviewed belong to a trade union, usually either the SNJ or the CFDT.

The political opinions of those interviewed covered the whole of the political spectrum. Asked to place themselves on a left-right continuum, the journalists replied as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Position</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refusal to classify themselves</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme-left</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme-right</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

53% of the journalists interviewed at Radio France saw themselves as favouring the Left, while at TF1 only 18% gave this reply with 24% favouring the Right. Generally the balance was distinctly tilted towards the Left, thus contradicting any simplistic thesis which would argue that the French government via the broadcasting management controls political output on the state programme companies through a discriminatory recruitment of broadcasting journalists.

The political opinions of the broadcasting journalists were further elucidated by a question in which they were asked to give their voting intention in the case of legislative elections. The

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In this survey 120 journalists from the four state programme companies and three peripheral radio stations (Europe 1, RTL and Radio Monte-Carlo) were interviewed.


88% of the journalists at A2 belonged to a trade union.

replies were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refusal to reply</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSU/Extreme left</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist party</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist party/ MRG</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left/Union of the Left</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(no specific party mentioned)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radical party/CDS</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Republican</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaullist</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majorité (no specific party mentioned)</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above replies it is clear that supporters of the governing coalition are relatively few in number and those of the Communist party almost non-existent. The Socialist party, on the other hand, emerges as by far the most popular party among the journalists interviewed.

In short, the composition of the news departments does not reflect a simple political bias in favour of the majorité, far less the Giscardian component of the majorité. However, there would appear to be an objective bias against journalists who support the views of the Communist party. The political dividing line therefore, passes not, as one might expect, between the majorité and the opposition, but rather between the majorité and the non-Communist left on the one hand and the Communist left on the other.

The relative absence of Communist journalists in broadcasting raises various questions. First, can balance, however defined,
in political coverage be achieved if there are almost no journalists supporting the views of a political party which regularly commands the support of around 20% of the French electorate? Secondly, ought the imbalance to be redressed by the imposition of political quotas on the employment of journalists in the programme companies? Finally, is there any evidence of a deliberate policy to exclude journalists with Communist sympathies from the news departments of the state broadcasting companies?

We have been able to obtain little evidence of any deliberate policy on the part of the management of the programme companies to exclude Communist journalists from the news departments, with the possible exception of the case of Patrick Duval whose contract with FR3-Alsace was not renewed in early 1977 after a decision taken by the national management in Paris. Duval was later taken back on by the company, but was not employed in an important journalistic capacity. On the other hand, it is very unlikely that the objective bias against Communist journalists in the state programme companies is purely fortuitous.

Certainly the Communist party itself does not believe this to be the case. On several occasions the virtual absence of Communist journalists in the state programme companies has been condemned by the party itself. When the matter was raised at a presidential press conference, Giscard d'Estaing was at first content to absolve himself from all responsibility.

"I tell you frankly that I know nothing about it. I do not know the political views of the television or radio journalists; I do not exclude the possibility that some of them vote for the Communist party, as I do not exclude the possibility that some of them vote for me ......

"In any case the television companies have their own boards of management, boards of governors and chairmen."

"I do not think that any text exists concerning political party membership and television journalists." 54

"...I do not know if such and such a television journalist belongs to such and such a political party... I do not know and I do not think it is desirable for the journalistic profession that one can give each journalist a political label. Therefore, if there are rules of this nature (to exclude Communist journalists from the state programme companies) they do not originate from me." 55

However, in June 1978 Giscard d'Estaing implicitly admitted that there were in fact few, if any, Communist journalists employed in the state programme companies and declared himself preoccupied with this state of affairs.

"I have had the opportunity to discuss this problem with the heads of news programming. I consider that in fact there is no reason why there should not be journalists who belong to the Communist party in the important news media. Of course, the journalists do not go into the mass media with their party card saying 'I am a communist' ...... but I consider, that if one knows that someone belongs to the Communist party, this does not constitute an a priori motive for keeping him away from the important news media, and I have asked that, in the different recruitments in the future, it is ensured that this does not constitute an obstacle in principle. I have asked the heads of news that this problem be resolved." 56

Giscard d'Estaing's position on the question of the recruitment of Communist journalists to the state programme companies has thus evolved quite dramatically. While his initial reaction in early 1976 was that he was unaware that this problem existed and that if indeed it did exist, then it was an internal matter for the companies themselves to resolve, by mid-1978 the President was admitting that a problem did exist and was even asking the companies to do something towards solving it.

However, at the time of writing the problem is far from being resolved. Candidacies put forward by Communist journalists, with the backing of the Communist party, have been turned down by the programme companies on grounds of lack of merit. While there was no political obstacle to the employment of Communist journalists, the companies argued, neither were they going to benefit from any positive discrimination in their favour. Indeed the programme companies would seem to be in a dilemma. Without Communist journalists how can the concept of political balance be meaningfully defended? On the other hand, how can one expect ideologically committed journalists to subscribe to the doctrines of objectivity and impartiality? A political quota on recruitment might help guarantee a pluralistic broadcasting organisation, but a conflict between political views and professional merit might well arise in the choice of candidates. In any case, it is presumably in the interests of Giscard d'Estaing and the Government to defend the official thesis of a pluralist broadcasting organisation without having to reap the disadvantage of employing Communist journalists in the state programme companies.

57. L'Humanité, April 15 1979.
Giscard d'Estaing's altered line on the recruitment of Communist journalists in the state programme companies is at first sight surprising. It would seem that his original view that he did not know the political views of the journalists and that there was no official bar to the employment of Communist journalists was the President's best option in the circumstances. To admit that the problem did exist and ought to be resolved laid Giscard d'Estaing open to the charge that in the past there had been a policy of discrimination against the employment of Communists in the news departments. Moreover, to admit the existence of the problem meant inevitably that a solution had to be found.

On the surface, therefore, the Communist party would appear to have made some progress on this matter, since Giscard d'Estaing has been forced to admit to a deficiency in the news broadcasting system. However, it may well be the case that the President has merely introduced a useful safety valve into the system. If the programme companies were to employ some Communist journalists in relatively unimportant posts, the Communist party would have to modify its criticisms of the companies' recruitment policy. At the same time, by marginalising the Communist journalists within news departments, the companies can ensure that the status quo is to all intents and purposes preserved. It is as yet not clear whether Giscard d'Estaing's tactical retreat signifies a notable achievement for the Communist party or a pyrrhic victory.
It is tempting to imagine the work of the news departments being directly controlled by the responsible minister and his personal staff with directives being passed on to the journalists as to what can and what cannot be shown during the various news bulletins of the state programme companies. However, there is no doubt that this direct interventionist model is no longer a fitting description of the relationship between the Government and the state broadcasting services in the field of news programming: Direct, overt censorship on the part of government ministers is virtually non-existent.

This is not to say, however, that the news departments of the state programme companies are isolated from political pressures. Given the nature of their work, the broadcasting journalists cannot work in a political vacuum cut off from a major source of information. They depend on politicians for news, while the politicians depend on the journalists for publicity. Both depend on each other for the satisfactory fulfilment of their functions in a developed political system.

In such a relationship there is the constant risk of the politician seeking to exert pressure on the broadcasting journalists in the pursuit of his own self-interested objectives. If this happens, the journalists' ability and willingness to resist these pressures become crucial if the mutually dependent relationship is not to degenerate into one where one side constantly succumbs to an exercise of power by the other. Moreover, if the journalists
are unable and/or unwilling to resist political pressures and constraints exerted systematically, then one can legitimately argue that partisan political constraints are being habitually and successfully exerted to regulate news content.

There is no consensus among members of the news departments regarding the existence of such pressures.

"I have always been able to do what I want, I have been subjected to no pressure, nor to any sort of external interference, even attempted." 58

"I consider myself perfectly free to decide the content of the news bulletin." 59

"...... Perfectly free. I would even say that in a national television or radio company one feels at present much freer than in the private companies." 60

"I was subject to no pressures during my stay at A2. When in January 1976 a member of the Elysée staff asked me to give him a list of those ministries which had applied pressure, there was not one I could name, not even over the Claustre affair." 61

"Our papers are not censored. I have no personal examples of censorship. There is no systematic a priori checking of papers which are then shown in the news bulletin." 62

"Have you ever been subjected to pressure from the authorities? Never." 63

For other journalists there was no doubt that pressures from politicians do exist.

"I have never been controlled by anybody. There is no external control, no censorship of news content. Of course, there are pressures from outside, but we ignore them completely, even though this is not always easy." 64

59. Roger Gicquel, Presse Actualité, no.105, December 1975, p.34.
60. Jean-Marie Cavada, Presse Actualité, no.110, May 1976, pp.24-25.
63. Jean-Pierre Allesandri, Presse Actualité, no.124, January 1978, p.46.
64. Interview with René Caron, July 18 1979.
"Personally I feel free in my work. I have not personally experienced any direct interventions on the part of the Government. Only the directors of news receive phone calls and they come from all sides of the political spectrum. The pressures come from all sides and the real question is to decide what pressures to resist." 65

"There are (pressures) first of all from the authorities or, more exactly, the political machine which has always considered that television belonged to it. The letter sent in January 1975 by the President of the Republic to the company heads telling them in essence 'You are free, you are not the voice of France.' Well, this letter has been ineffectual. The whole political machine has retained the habits and traditions of the ex-ORTF." 66

"After my appointment in 1975 Chirac wanted me out because of the stance I took vis-à-vis his requests. For example, when Chirac went on tour he wanted the same group of journalists to go with him all the time. I refused this request. Chirac retaliated by putting pressure on Leroy to get me to send a journalist Chirac liked. But I always managed to find a reason for refusing Leroy's demands.

Pressure is also exerted to ignore certain topics, especially in the industrial field, such as strikes and unemployment figures. This pressure rarely takes the form of an overt act of censorship, but other means are easily found to justify the decision." 67

"Pressure does not always take the form of a restriction. It could be an invitation to lunch, a suggestion made to show a certain minister on television or to drop a certain topic. It is very hard to pin down and prove that such pressures are exercised. Pressures come from various sources; management, the Government, parliamentarians, ....But government pressure is the hardest to resist." 68

"Before 1968 the relations between television and the authorities were very close. Now it is much more subtle. Often people do not even recognise that pressure is being exerted.

Personally I have never been directly censored. I do

68. Interview with Christian Dutoit, April 25 1977.
two or three commentaries per week in the news bulletin. Usually Elkabbach and Bériot do not read my paper before I give it on the air. At La Croix in contrast my articles were always read by the editor before being included in the newspaper.

Let me give you an example of how things work. Recently I presented a paper about the Socialist party's pirate radio station. I gave it in the midday news bulletin and then more or less the same piece in the main evening news. My comments were critical of the Government's over-reaction to the Socialist party's pirate station. Afterwards, Elkabbach told me that my paper had been too hard on the Government. I did not agree and neither did Bériot. Afterwards I was on the phone twice with Alexandre at Matignon, but he did not mention the matter at all. He scrupulously avoided mentioning it. On the other hand, I found out through the grapevine that the Government was not at all pleased with my comments.

Pressure also comes from the opposition, but it is more direct." 69

Support for the view that pressures are indeed exerted on the news departments comes from Cayrol's sample survey. Questioned about the existence of external pressures, the journalists mentioned in order of importance pressures from the following: 70

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pressure Source</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The business world</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government ministers</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political parties</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade unions</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The administration</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidency of the Republic</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambassadors</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

69. Interview with Noel Copin, July 23 1979.
70. R Cayrol, op. cit., p.110
The journalists of A2 interviewed by Cayrol were more inclined than the others to mention all the categories of pressure, 82% of them specifically mentioning pressures from Government ministers. Moreover, 21% of all the journalists interviewed spoke of *a priori* controls exercised within the news department by their superiors (50% in the case of Radio France) and 81% referred to criticisms being made after the material had been broadcast, though from the survey one does not know whether these criticisms were directed at the content or the style of the reports.\(^71\)

At this stage of the analysis several points are worthy of note. First, direct overt censorship by the President of the Republic, government ministers or their personal staffs does not appear to exist to any marked extent. On the other hand, there is more than adequate evidence of pressures being exerted from sources outside the news departments. These external sources include not only the Government but the opposition parties and the trade unions. Secondly, external pressures tend to be exerted at the level of news director and news editor rather than on the journalists themselves. This would help explain why several journalists interviewed were able to deny that they personally had ever been subject to pressure from outside, while at the same time assert confidently that such pressure did indeed exist. Thirdly, the directors of news and the news editors tend to deny that any such external pressures do in fact exist.

The role of the directors of news and the news editors is obviously crucial in this respect. We have already shown that


See also F. Giroud, *op.cit.*, p.166 regarding pressures exercised by Matignon on the programme companies during Chirac's premiership.
appointments to these posts are subject to close political scrutiny by the Government.\textsuperscript{72} It is not unreasonable to expect that, since their careers are so dependent on the goodwill of the Government, the holders of these key posts will be unlikely to admit to external pressure from this source if and when it exists. In addition, they will be even less likely to regard it as pressure themselves. Furthermore, even if they admit to themselves that they are subject to external pressure from ministerial sources, they would still be unlikely to admit to the existence of such pressures before their peers or outsiders for fear of lessening their own professional authority and of weakening their career ambitions. Thus, the concept of balanced and objective political coverage has to be maintained in public by the directors of news and news editors if they are not to lose the esteem of the public and of their colleagues and at the same time prejudice their own career ambitions which depend, in large part, on keeping their political noses clean.

The need for external pressure from government ministers is also much reduced.\textsuperscript{73} The political sympathies and, perhaps more

\textsuperscript{72} See chapter on Appointments.

\textsuperscript{73} Note however, Barre's intervention in November 1978 reminding the chairmen of the programme companies "to be vigilant about their presentation of history" on radio and television. This intervention, following the publication of an anti-Semitic article in \textit{l'Express}, was designed to warn the programme companies against favourable treatment of Nazism in programmes about the second world war. However laudable its intentions, Barre's letter nonetheless explicitly infringed the principle of non-intervention set out in Giscard d'Estaing's letter to the chairmen of the programme companies on January 16 1975.

importantly, career ambitions of the holders of the key posts in the news departments will usually prevent them from engaging in conflict with the Government in any case. External pressure becomes less necessary because the key news staff are only too well aware of the political constraints on their freedom of manoeuvre. This is not to say that the key news posts are all held by supporters of the Giscardian regime (though in fact many of them are). It is enough that the holders of these posts are conscious of who has the power to hire and fire, to make or break their professional careers. Thus, part of the present role of the directors of news and news editors is to act as honest brokers between the Government and the news departments, turning political pressures into professional directives. 74

The news departments: corporate ethos

With the internalisation of controls within the news departments, political decisions come to be defended on professional grounds.

"If the director of news does not want anything to go on the air, then professional reasons are always given, not political ones: 'It is too long, not interesting enough....' It is unthinkable for Elkabbach or Bériot to censor journalists overtly for political reasons." 75

74. This does not mean that external pressures no longer exist. As we have shown, many journalists are still subject to pressures from outside the news departments. For particular examples, see Syndicat National des Journalistes section syndicale de FR3, op. cit.

Note also F. Giroud, op. cit., pp.172-173, "The interventions of the Elysée - rare - or from Matignon - more frequent - with the channel heads almost always take place a posteriori to deplore the 'irresponsible' character of such and such a programme or untimely programme scheduling.

75. Interview with Noel Copin, July 23 1979.
"Professional objections are always raised to prevent journalists from covering a topic such as the crisis in the steel industry: lack of time, too specialised, rather boring." 76

"Although the news heads are appointed by the authorities they want to be seen applying professional criteria. They obviously don't want to look as if they are merely 'yes' men. Therefore, any pressure must be justified on professional grounds if the head of news is to keep face." 77

The mass of journalists in the news departments is unable to resist these internal constraints, even if it wished to do so. As we have already seen, the hierarchical structure of decision-making within the news departments does not facilitate resistance by the journalists. Other factors also combine to make opposition within the news departments a hazardous course of action.

The high level of unemployment among journalists generally does not create a climate in which opposition can flourish. With the Government as a major employer in the broadcasting field, indeed the sole employer for television, there is an understandable reluctance on the part of some journalists to compromise their position. Moreover, the memory of the redundancies and sackings which took place in 1968, 1972 and 1974 reinforces the relatively fragile position of the broadcasting journalists. 79 Finally divided trade union loyalties and the existence of separate companies further increase the difficulties of successful opposition within the news departments. 80


77. Interview with Christian Guy, May 5 1977.

78. The broadcasting journalists benefit from a certain degree of employment protection, but of course they can easily be marginalised within the news departments even if they retain their posts.

79. See Le Monde, August 3, 5, 6, 7 and 14 1968, and the chapters in this thesis on Politics and broadcasting in France before the 1974 reform and the Reallocation of ORTF staff.

80. See chapter on the Broadcasting unions.
This is not to say that professional directives from the directors of news and news editors always disguise decisions made on political grounds; nor that dissension is never expressed by the main body of journalists; nor that the journalists themselves are always agreed as to whether a decision from the top reflects professional judgement or political bias. 81

However, there is evidence of systematic imbalance in political coverage which can scarcely be justified on professional or news value grounds. For example, the formation of the UDF was considered by TF1 to be "the most important political event in ten years," 82 which is at the very least a highly contentious evaluation. Another example was provided by the head of the politics desk at A2.

"The four main lists all held one major meeting during the campaign (for the 1979 elections to the European Assembly). The RPR meeting at Bagatelle on June 2 was their major meeting. I thought that this should be the main story that evening. But Bériot asked us 'to balance' it with coverage of a small UDF meeting in the provinces. Bériot was very conscious of the need to publicise the Veil list." 83

In a situation where control within the news departments is exercised from the top and where the demands of professional responsibility and political acceptability frequently conflict, it is scarcely surprising that rather than face the problems engendered by such a conflict many journalists prefer to maintain a low profile. In reply to a question on self-censorship posed in Cayrol's survey, 38% of the sample admitted to practising self-censorship either

81. See article entitled "Naissance et mort d'un sujet" by A. Baron and I. Veyrat-Masson in Le Monde, May 21-22 1978.
82. Ibid.
83. Interview with Noel Copin, July 23 1979.
For many other examples see Syndicat National des Journalistes section syndicale de FR3, op.cit.
The latter document reveals that during the period April 15 - May 15 1979 the majorité received four times the coverage of the opposition parties, while within the majorité the Giscardians and their allies received four times the coverage of the Chiracian Gaullists. (p.13)
"frequently" or "very frequently". Only 16% of those interviewed said that they "never" or "almost never" had recourse to such a practice.

"Censorship has become unnecessary.... Everybody knows what he must do or accept to keep his post." 86

"I censor myself, otherwise my subject is not accepted." 87

"I am afraid to make trouble as I don't want to find myself out of a job." 88

The knowledge that broadcasting has always been a political weapon in France also helps to create an atmosphere which does not encourage non-conformity or investigative reporting.

"An important majority of journalists who are today holding responsible posts at FR3 have only known a television conceived by and for the authorities. When, for more than twenty years, watchful scrutiny has accustomed the news departments to a regime of very constricted liberty, a lot of habits are picked up ... Not a few journalists are now accustomed to the idea that the authorities cannot but be interested in what is shown on television." 89

In this atmosphere there is the obvious risk that journalists will quickly become socialised into an awareness of the limits of their role.

84. R. Cayrol, op.cit., p.111.
85. Ibid. Journalists of all political views, not just those sympathetic to the opposition, admitted to censoring their reports themselves.
87. Ibid.
88. Ibid.
89. Syndicat National des Journalistes section syndicale de FR3, op.cit., p.68.
"I interviewed Giscard along with Patrice Duhamel of TF1. I pushed Giscard hard and asked him embarrassing questions. The other A2 journalists congratulated me on my interview, but they also recognised that I had gone as far as I could go. In other words, we are conscious of the constraints on our capacity for criticism and of the need to be circumspect in this area." 90

The news departments: conclusion

The news departments of the four state programme companies have in common the following features. The key decision-making posts are subject to close political supervision with regard to appointments. The work of the news departments is so structured that decisions are made at the top if there is any risk of political controversy. For both professional and political reasons the holders of the key posts are unlikely to want to embarrass the President of the Republic or the Government. Though the mass of journalists in the news departments is not necessarily favourable to the Government or the majorité it has very limited possibilities of making its voice heard. The decision-making structure, the level of unemployment in the profession, the experience of journalists sacked or marginalised on previous occasions and the historical weight of political interference in broadcasting all tend to reduce the likelihood of journalists contesting the decisions of their superiors or, a fortiori, of opposing them successfully.

90. Interview with Noel Copin, July 23 1979.
These general remarks are illustrated in the following two sections which examine the coverage by the state programme companies of the 1977 municipal elections campaign and the 1978 legislative elections campaign respectively. These two periods have been chosen because it is at these times that the broadcasting services are most acutely posed the problems of balance and objectivity in their political coverage. This is especially true of the 1978 campaign when the parties of the left were widely tipped as favourites to win the election and form the first left-wing government of the Fifth Republic.

The 1977 municipal elections

The municipal elections held in March 1977 were important for a variety of reasons. Municipal councils all over France were being elected for the first time since 1971, before the signing of the common programme of government by the parties of the left. Apart from the 1976 cantonal elections, these elections were the first major test for the Giscardian regime since Giscard d'Estaing's election to the presidency three years earlier. Moreover, as legislative elections were due to be held in a year's time, the results of the 1977 elections were regarded as a pointer to the governing coalition's hopes of retaining power in 1978. In addition, it was noticeable that while the left was reasonably united in presenting a common list of candidates in most towns, an important division within the right had come to the fore in Paris where Chirac decided to challenge Giscard d'Estaing's candidate for the mayorship, Michel d'Ornano, by placing himself at the head of a
list of RPR candidates in competition with the d'Ornano list.

"The Gaullist leader's decision to reject the President's nominee for the mayor of Paris in the elections of March-1977 and his defiant gesture in presenting himself as a candidate for the post was only the most spectacular manifestation of the discord which reigned between the Gaullists and the President of the Republic."

While before legislative and presidential elections there is an official campaign on the state broadcasting services governed by specific regulations, this is not the case with municipal elections. According to Guillaud, director general of TFI at the time, there was no official television campaign because of the sheer number of communes and the local interest of many campaign issues. However, the elections were obviously a major political, and therefore media, event and the campaign was given wide coverage in news bulletins.

The first public indication of the governmental pressure being exerted on the news departments was provided by Yves Guéna, one of Chirac's leading supporters in the RPR, who condemned:

"...the incredible pressures being directed against the journalists of the press, radio and television to highlight the minority of the majorité."

As such this condemnation could be regarded as merely an integral part of electoral debate. However, the issue assumed greater importance when the RPR parliamentary group named Poniatowski and Lecanuet as the ministers responsible for seeking to manipulate


the news departments with the aim of discrediting the RPR. The usual sleight of hand, from which the parties of the left had suffered throughout most of the Fifth Republic, was now being condemned by the single most important parliamentary group in the governing coalition.

While Poniatowski predictably denied the charges made against him, the president of the Giscardian parliamentary group, Chinaud, implicitly admitted the veracity of the complaints by remarking that they resembled those of a thief whose house has just been robbed. 94 In other words, instead of attempting to refute the allegations, Chinaud contented himself by implying that control of broadcasting was an accepted governmental weapon which the Gaullists themselves had used at the time of the ORTF.

Gaullist criticisms were echoed by Francois Mitterrand, leader of the Socialist party, who affirmed that:

"...one has rarely witnessed such a domination of the media by the authorities.... there exists in France a ministry of propaganda. Scarcely visible but very audible......At the other end of the telephone line is most often the minister of the Interior. Everywhere he can exert pressure, i.e. almost everywhere, either he gives his orders directly to the men in whom he has confidence and whom he has judiciously placed in the key posts, or indirectly....." 95

Indeed the surrounding controversy rose to such a pitch that Guillaud appeared during the main evening news bulletin in early March to defend his company's treatment of the campaign against the criticisms of the RPR and the parties of the left regarding the

95. L'Unité, no. 240, March 4-10 1977.
Cartoon from *le Canard enchaîné*, February 2 1977.

(Poniatowski: "Half against the left, half against Chirac.")
partiality of certain news items. Despite Guillaud's protestations, however, the dispute between the parties of the governing coalition marked a public acknowledgement of the fact that during the campaign the news departments of the state programme companies had been subjected to considerable pressure to play down the campaign of the left and more especially to give only minimal coverage to Chirac's candidacy for the mayorship of Paris.

The 1978 legislative elections

The 1978 legislative elections have undoubtedly been the most important of Giscard d'Estaing's presidency so far. Following the victory of the Union of the Left in the municipal elections the previous year, the Socialist-Communist alliance was widely tipped to form the first left-wing government of the Fifth Republic. Even the much publicised breakdown in the talks to bring the 1972 common programme up to date, which were abandoned with much acrimony on all sides in September 1977, did not appear to damage the left's hopes of victory in the eyes of the electorate. Not surprisingly the campaign for the 1978 legislative elections was a lengthy one, dating at least from the cantonal elections held in March 1976. The question which dominated the run-up to the elections centred on the capacity of the political system to resolve the inevitable conflict which would arise between a left-wing dominated Assembly and a conservative President, both claiming legitimacy through election by universal suffrage: the problem of l'alternance.

96. For text of interview see Le Quotidien de Paris, March 7 1977.

97. For specific examples of internal and external pressures in the regional stations see Syndicat National des Journalistes, section syndicale de FR3, op.cit. ; Le Monde, March 20-21 and 27-28 1977; and Le Journaliste, no.159, March-April 1977.
There is no doubt that the broadcasting media, especially television, constituted a primordial source of information for the electorate in the 1978 campaign. 47% of those interviewed in an opinion poll regarded television as one of the most important aids in helping them decide how to vote. The official campaign broadcasts were watched by an average of 13 million people, while the face to face confrontations between politicians and interviews with broadcasting journalists attracted an average of around 5 million viewers. Moreover, while newspapers tend to appeal mostly to partisan voters, television, according to Cayrol:

"...because it presents a real political 'spectacle' constitutes the best means of reaching not only one's partisan supporters, but also potential supporters of the other side." 100

In examining the role of the state broadcasting services in the 1978 campaign, we shall look first at the official campaign, which started two weeks before the first ballot and included the week between the two ballots, and then at the unofficial campaign, that is to say political coverage outside the official campaign broadcasts.

(a) The official campaign

The regulations governing the official campaign broadcasts


100. R. Cayrol, op.cit., p.33.
are laid down in the code électoral and accompanying legislation. These regulations may be summarised as follows with reference to the 1978 election. Campaign broadcasts were to take place during the fortnight before the first ballot and the week between the two ballots. The programmes were to be shown simultaneously on TF1, A2 and FR3 and broadcast on France-Inter at peak viewing time, usually just after the main evening news bulletins.

Those political parties represented in the National Assembly by a parliamentary group were given the following time allocation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parties of the majorité:</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 minutes before the first ballot:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPR</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>réformateurs and centristes</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 minutes before the second ballot:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPR</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>réformateurs and centristes</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Parties of the opposition:               |         |
| 90 minutes before the first ballot:      |         |
| PS/MRG                                   | 52      |
| PC                                       | 38      |
| 45 minutes before the second ballot:     |         |
| PS/MRG                                   | 26      |
| PC                                       | 19      |

The allocation of broadcasting time to individual parties within the majorité and the opposition reflected the proportional

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strength of their parliamentary groups in the outgoing Assembly. However, formal equity was maintained between the two blocs. Those political parties who were not represented in the previous Assembly were each given 7 minutes before the first ballot and 5 minutes before the second ballot, provided that they presented at least 75 candidates at the first ballot. 102

Eleven political formations satisfied these requirements in 1978. The supervision of the time allocations and of the other regulations surrounding the official campaign broadcasts was entrusted to an ad hoc committee consisting of three top civil servants. 103 The parties were not allowed to use film material in their campaign broadcasts, which consisted, therefore, of declarations, discussions or replies to questions posed by sympathetic journalists. While the result of this restriction made for very old-fashioned television, the broadcasts were nonetheless watched by about 40% of the potential audience, no doubt due to the fact that they were shown on the three television channels and transmitted on France-Inter simultaneously. Little can be said about the official campaign, except that it represented a limited and very ostentatious attempt at balance in political coverage.

(b) The unofficial campaign

The balance preserved in the official campaign broadcasts did not extend, however, to the coverage of the campaign in news bulletins

102. See table on following page.
103. The members of this supervisory committee were Marc Barbet, conseiller d'État (chairman), Georges Barnicaud, conseiller honoraire à la cour de cassation and Paul Therre, conseiller maître à la cour des comptes.
Allocation of time in the official campaign broadcasts

### Parties represented in the National Assembly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>RPR</th>
<th>PR</th>
<th>CDS/Rad.</th>
<th>PS/MEG</th>
<th>PC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 28</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Parties not represented in the National Assembly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 27/March 14</td>
<td>Christian Democratic Movement</td>
<td>7 minutes/5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 28/March 14</td>
<td>Front autogestionnaire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1/March 14</td>
<td>L'Union ouvrière et paysanne pour la démocratie prolétarienne</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2/March 15</td>
<td>Lutte ouvrière</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/March 15</td>
<td>Ligue communiste et révolutionnaire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 3/March 15</td>
<td>L'Action républicaine indépendante et libérale</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/March 16</td>
<td>Centre national des indépendants paysans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 6/March 16</td>
<td>Le rassemblement des usagers des services publics, des contribuables et groupements de defense</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 7/March 16</td>
<td>Le mouvement des démocrates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 8/March 17</td>
<td>Le collectif Ecologie 78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 9/March 17</td>
<td>Le parti des forces nouvelles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and current affairs programmes. On France-Inter, for example, which is the most popular channel of Radio France, there was a pronounced bias in favour of candidates of the majorité, as is shown by the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Majorité</th>
<th>Opposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Petits déjeuners politiques</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parlons clair</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-midi</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debats de France-Inter</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le téléphone sonne</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The current affairs coverage of TF1 and A2 was better balanced than that of France-Inter, with TF1 having 7 representatives of the majorité and 7 representatives of the opposition, and A2 8 and 6 respectively. However, the news coverage of the two main television channels again reflected a distinct bias in favour of the majorité. This was particularly true of the coverage given to Giscard d'Estaing personally on numerous occasions during the run-up to the elections.

For example, on January 27 Giscard d'Estaing's long-awaited speech at Verdun-sur-le-Doubs, in which he revealed what he regarded

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104. We are here concerned with balance between the four main political formations: Gaullist, UDF, Socialist and Communist. Coverage of the campaigns of the minor parties was minimal.

105. R. Cayrol, op.cit., p.31.

106. Ibid, p.32.
as "the correct choice for France", was given extensive coverage by the state broadcasting media, being shown live by all three television channels and then uncritically mulled over in the main evening news bulletins.

"One looked in vain that evening or the next day for a notable reaction on the part of the opposition: did it have nothing to say about the speech? But there was not in fact any real reply to the presidential proclamation on the "correct choice"; the coverage had been organised in such a way that the President's commitment appeared without any reply ..." 107

"Imagine the stupor of foreign broadcasting correspondents in Paris when they see 'la rue Cognacq-Jay' (the news studios of both TF1 and A2) become one month away from the legislative elections an annex of Matignon and the Elysée. This invasion in force, this occupation of our screens by the Government and the members of the majorité was particularly shocking on Friday, the day of the speech by M. Giscard d'Estaing at Verdun-sur-le-Doubs. Transmitted in full on all radio and television channels at 7 p.m., the news bulletins at 8 p.m. then devoted more than a quarter of an hour to it in extracts, explanations and the reaction of ... M. Barre.

It is not enough to say that the leaders of the opposition are invited more often ... after 8.30 p.m., in fierce competition with a film or a quiz, by our current affairs programmes.

What counts in fact is the amount of coverage given to them in the news bulletins, whose audience ratings are still considerable." 108.

Various other examples of beneficial coverage of the campaign of the majorité, particularly featuring Giscard d'Estaing himself, could be mentioned, including presidential interviews on February 9 and February 27. Taken together, they reflect a willingness of those in authority within the programme companies (director general, director of news and news editor) to infringe even the most rudimentary norms regarding balance in political coverage.

"Imagine a BBC TV news next October - four days into the general election campaign - which begins with Mr. Roy Hattersley announcing another round of splendid price statistics. Not merely announcing those statistics either: after his first few words

we move to a slice of voice-over film which shows smiling shoppers revelling in the supermarket splendour of Hattersley's achievement. That is the start of the news. The next item involves Mr. Callaghan: he has been meeting some star footballers at Downing Street and he has had his picture taken with them. There follows - third item - a short BBC 'election special' in which a shuffling journalist shuffles large coloured cards explaining the superiority the social service benefits a returned Labour Government will offer. Mr. Denis Healey shows his face for a few ebullient moments.

And then, fifth in line, we get some mention of Mrs. Thatcher. She, it transpires, has been having another bad day. Peter Walker has attacked her again. Long interview with Peter Walker. Short, embarrassed defensive interview with Mrs. Thatcher at which point the BBC forgets about the election.

Such a TV news in Britain, in an election or at any other time, is hard to imagine: it would cause a riot: it would lead the Conservative press ... to prophecies of the end of democracy. Yet, changing a few characters, like Giscard for Callaghan and Barre for Healey, that is the precise and typical formulation of Friday's main television news in France. To any observer from Britain, it stands sorely alone as manipulation of the mass media by those who have the power to the detriment and if possible damnation of those who do not. ..." 109

The most blatant manipulative television appearance by Giscard d'Estaing during the run-up to the elections was a speech made on the eve of the first ballot at peak viewing time after the campaign had officially closed, with the result that the opposition parties did not have the opportunity to reply to his intervention. In speaking on the very eve of the election itself, Giscard d'Estaing was merely continuing a tradition of the Fifth Republic. 110 Moreover, the decision to make a broadcast speech after the campaign was over was defended by the Prime Minister, who argued tongue in cheek that,

"... it is normal that in important circumstances the President of the Republic, aside from any partisan feeling, indicates to the French people what are the problems posed and what is his point of view, a long-term opinion, on the way in which one's vote should be cast in the forthcoming election.


110. During the 1967 legislative election campaign de Gaulle had addressed the nation on the eve of the first ballot. In 1968 he had done the same on the eve of the second ballot. In the 1973 legislative elections Pompidou had made a strong anti-communist speech immediately prior to the second ballot.
The President of the Republic is not the leader of a party, he is not the leader of a faction; he is the representative of all French people and it is, I think, with the long-term interests of the country in mind that he will address the French people. 111

Yet the President's decision to make an eve of poll declaration was nonetheless surprising. Despite its relative moderation, the speech was obviously designed to encourage last minute waverers to vote in favour of the majorité. 112 The President had, however, already made his own personal preference plain on numerous occasions both before and during the official election campaign. Thus, it could hardly be argued that he was making a non-partisan declaration in his role as arbiter above party squabbles.

On the other hand, unlike his predecessors in the presidential office, Giscard d'Estaing had consistently maintained that in the event of a left-wing victory he would not stand down from the presidency. His own presidential career was not at stake in the legislative elections. The President was, therefore, trying to have it both ways: to seek to influence the result of the legislative contest, while at the same time refusing to be bound personally by the decision of the sovereign people. The ambivalent role of the French President of the Republic had rarely been so acutely revealed.

It is obviously difficult to quantify the impact of Giscard d'Estaing's eve of poll speech. Even if the impact were non-existent, however, the intention would still have been to gain an advantage for the majorité. In any case, there is some evidence that the speech did


112. It is surprising that Frears and Parodi claim that "it was not a partisan speech." J. Frears and J.-L. Parodi, War will not take place, London, Hurst, 1979, p.61. The speech was not crudely partisan, but its objective was clear.
have a measurable impact. The Sofres post-election poll suggested that

"... about 2% of electors changed their vote to the majorité at the last moment and about one quarter of these specifically claim to have made the decision after the President's broadcast." 113

The second major broadcasting incident of the campaign involved a refusal by the director of news at A2 to show a report on the internal divisions within the majorité after a similar report on the divisions within the left had already been screened. This incident flared up in the week between the first and second ballots when in the Tuesday evening news bulletin following the reconciliation of the Socialist and Communist parties, an item was included on the division of the left over the previous six months. A2's news team immediately asked for a similar report on the divisions between the Gaullists and the UDF in the months prior to the election to be shown.

"At first, Elkabbach agreed to show an item on the split within the right. Then he postponed the preparation of this report and kept on postponing it until the Friday before the second ballot. When it was not shown on the Friday evening news, the news team gave the statutory notice of a strike which took place the next week. This incident was the major problem at A2 during the legislative election campaign." 114

On the Friday evening itself, the newscaster, Patrick Poivre d'Arvor appeared late on screen, explaining that there had been a conflict between the management and the news team. In a communiqué published the same day, the news team condemned the failure to broadcast several film reports "whose only defect was that they

113. Ibid.

gave an unbiased view of the problems posed by the second ballot." 115

In the light of this conflict within A2, it is illuminating to read the comments by A2's management on the company's observation of the electoral regulations contained in its cahier des charges.

"In general, during this electoral period, A2 took, with the authority of its board of governors, all necessary steps to ensure, with increased respect, that the rules of objectivity and pluralism in programming ... be observed." 116

(c) 1978 elections: conclusion

The inevitable conclusion to be drawn from this short section on the 1978 election campaign as covered by the state programme companies is that while in the official campaign broadcasts balance was rigorously preserved, in the other programmes covering the campaign, and particularly in the news bulletins, there was a distinct quantitative and qualitative imbalance in favour of the candidates of the majorité, particularly the UDF component of the majorité. The special treatment accorded to Giscard d'Estaing personally was symptomatic of electoral coverage designed to further the interests of the Giscardian candidates above all others.

Party political broadcasts.

Under the terms of article 15 of the 1974 broadcasting statute, the programme companies' cahiers des charges allocate a specific amount


of time to political groups and representative professional organisations in which "to express their views freely." Access to these programmes is accorded to those political parties which are represented in the National Assembly and in the Senate by at least twenty parliamentarians and to those professional organisations which are deemed representative at the national level. These broadcasts are paid for by the programme company concerned and are shown once every fortnight in the case of TF1 and A2. The provisions of the 1974 statute with respect to these programmes are a distinct improvement on the terms of the 1972 ORTF statute, which had been noticeably vague on this matter.

After an initial delay in implementing the provisions of the cahiers des charges, it was decided by the Government that there should be 28 programmes per year on TF1 and A2 together, divided equally between parties of the majorité and the opposition. In addition, 12 programmes were to be allocated annually to cover the role and functions of the two chambers of Parliament. The allocation of programme time to professional and trade union organisations was temporarily postponed because of difficulties in ascertaining the representative nature of the groups involved.

Carrying on a practice already well established at the ORTF, the party political broadcasts on TF1 and A2 are conducted with due respect for the concept of balance between majorité and opposition.

117. Cahiers des charges, TF1 and A2, article 16.
118. Ibid, article 17.
120. Le Monde, February 6 1976.
121. See appendix 10.1.
The viewing figures for these broadcasts are, however, very low and their importance, compared with political coverage during news bulletins, is therefore minimal.

Right of reply for the opposition parties

While party political broadcasts were already shown at the ORTF, the right of reply granted the parties of the opposition is an innovation of the 1974 broadcasting reform, though it was not included in the 1974 statute and was introduced only after the 1978 legislative elections were over. The demand for a right of reply (droit de réponse) to presidential and ministerial broadcasts was voiced by the opposition parties on several occasions. After all, they argued, if the Government had the statutory right to broadcast any declaration which it judged to be necessary, provided that it was announced as being shown at the request of the Government, why should the opposition parties not have the right of reply to these and similar broadcasts?

As part of his policy to tone down the stringency of political debate in France (la décrispation) and to improve working relations between the majorité and the opposition, President Giscard d'Estaing decided in the flush of electoral victory in 1978 to make a limited concession to the opposition's demands. This concession was

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123. Article 16 of the 1974 broadcasting statute and article 11 of the cahiers des charges of TF1 and A2.

announced during the presidential press conference of June 14, 1978. 125

"The question of the right of reply has been raised and we have looked at how to put into practice this right of reply. ... What can be done is to introduce ... what exists at present in the British broadcasting system.

The right of reply exists in Great Britain for a particular reason: there are two main political parties, one in power and the other in opposition. It is thus normal that there exists a certain dialogue between them. We know that the situation is not the same in France. Nonetheless, we are going to propose the introduction in our system of the same regulation, which, I should stress, will undoubtedly not change the present system (les pratiques actuelles) fundamentally.

But the principle of the right of reply must be introduced. ... when the Prime Minister or a member of the Government makes a declaration using the means which the texts give the Government to address the country over the mass media, and when the topic is not at the same time the subject of a debate in Parliament, ... the opposition will then be allocated, on the same media at the same viewing time and before forty eight hours have elapsed, an equal amount of time in which to reply to the original broadcast. This time allocation will be shared out among the leaders of the opposition by the board of governors of the medium concerned. This reply will then be followed by a debate between an equal number of representatives of the opposition and of the majorité or the Government on the same subject." 126

These provisions were later made more specific so that they covered only those opposition parties represented in the National Assembly by a parliamentary group. Moreover, the time allocated to each spokesman of the opposition was to be in proportion to the number of seats his group held in the Assembly. 127

The first occasion on which this formula was put into practice took place in early September 1978. On the 6th of the month the Minister of Employment, Robert Boulin, gave a speech broadcast on A2.

125. Le Monde, June 16 1978. It was also at this press conference that the President announced that he was "preoccupied" with the lack of Communist journalists in the news departments of the state programme companies.

126. Ibid.

Two days later Francois Mitterrand and Charles Fiterman replied on behalf of the Socialist and Communist parties respectively. Finally, on September 11 a televised debate was held on A2, featuring the minister, and a representative of the Gaullist, UDF, Socialist and Communist parliamentary groups. 128

Though a concession to a perennial demand of the opposition parties, the right of reply is hedged with various important limitations. Since it cannot cover a topic being debated in Parliament at the same time, there is the danger that important topical areas of concern may be prohibited as subject matter of the right of reply. Secondly, the right of reply specifically does not apply to broadcasts made by the President of the Republic. Once again the ambivalent role of the President as Head of State and de facto leader of the majorité allows him to escape inclusion in the official calculations of what constitutes balance. Finally, and most importantly, the right of reply applies only to broadcast ministerial speeches which are officially announced as such and which the broadcasting companies are statutorily obliged to show. Appearances by government ministers and the Prime Minister himself during news bulletins and other political programmes are excluded from the official formula, despite, or rather because of, the fact that it is in this context that imbalance in political coverage is most noticeable.

FR3: Tribune libre

The access programme, Tribune libre, also constitutes an innovation of the 1974 broadcasting reform. By the terms of article 10

of the 1974 statute FR3 reserves "a privileged place ... for the organisation of programmes dealing with the direct expression of different tendencies of creed and thought." FR3's cahier des charges lays down the guidelines for the screening of these access programmes. The company is to devote five programmes per week each lasting a quarter of an hour to access broadcasts. The board of governors, on the advice of a special consultative committee set up by the Government, draws up the list of group representatives who are to participate in the programmes. This list must include those political formations which have twenty parliamentarians in the National Assembly and the Senate and the representative trade union organisations. The chairman of the company cannot stop the showing of an access programme unless the content is likely to lead to criminal proceedings. The financing of the access programmes is undertaken by FR3 itself. Finally, these access programmes are not shown during the period of official election campaigns so as to preserve balance in political coverage.

Hailed by ministerial spokesmen as an exciting innovation in French broadcasting, the access programme, Tribune Libre, is nonetheless subject to severe constraints in practice. First of all one might note the restrictions on the nature of the groups allowed to participate.

"Obviously we had to guard against two opposing excesses. Too great a liberty in admitting candidates would quickly have lowered the appeal of the programme. ... to make of this programme

129. The composition of this consultative committee as set out in an arrêté of March 12 1975 was as follows: Michel Morizot, maître des requêtes au Conseil d'État; Maurice Vienois, conseiller à la cour d'appel de Paris; Huguette le Foyer de Costil, juge au tribunal de Paris; Jean Chariot, maître de recherches à la fondation nationale des sciences politiques; and Jean Cahen-Salvador, conseiller d'État, chairman.

the 'Hyde-Park corner' of broadcasting would have been to restrict unduly its scope and would have been contrary to the spirit of the law. On the other hand, too rigorous a selection procedure ... would have given too great a share to the large organisations of a quasi-institutional character which already enjoy regular and easy access to the important mass media." 131

The following conditions of access were thus laid down by the FR3 management and the board of governors.

"Are admitted by right ... the political parties who have at least twenty representatives in Parliament, as well as representative trade union organisations. Also are admitted without dispute the principal religions practised in France and those political organisations which were allowed access to the official campaign broadcasts during the recent legislative elections.

Are excluded, with reservations, organisations which are principally devoted to the defence of economic, social, regional or professional interests and which can in no way be considered as a tendency of creed and thought (famille de croyance et de pensée). Exceptions are possible when their views constitute a contribution to a debate of national interest." 132

Thus, certain minority groups may find themselves excluded from the possibility of participating in a Tribune libre because of the wording of the 1974 statute.133

Secondly, the timing of the programme obviously affects the size of its potential and actual audience. At first the programme was shown at 7.40 p.m., peak viewing time prior to the main evening news bulletins on TF1 and A2. However, the programme was competing against two very popular programmes on the two main national channels at the same time. Its audience was, therefore, very small. Moreover, in the summer of 1978 the time of the programme was changed from 7.40 p.m. to 6.55 p.m., a move scarcely designed to enhance its audience appeal.134

132. Ibid.
133. See table 10.ii for a list of participants during 1978.
134. The company originally wanted to change the time to 6.30 p.m. Le Monde, July 19, August 2, 4 and 16 1978.
Lasting only a quarter of an hour, the Tribune libre has a minute audience rating of around 1%, which represents about 375,000 viewers.\textsuperscript{135}

Thirdly, the programme has a very limited budget of around 100,000 francs per week. The participants are not allowed to use pre-recorded film or video material with the result that the programmes are of the familiar "talking heads" formula. This provision was included to prevent the better off organisations from producing more attractive programmes than the less well off, but the resultant equality of misery hardly makes for exciting viewing.\textsuperscript{136}

Finally, and most importantly, while the participants are supposed to have full editorial control over the content of their programme, the FR3 management has not always been content to watch from the sidelines. For example, in June 1977 a Tribune libre in which the writer and philosopher André Glucksmann was intending to interview three East European dissidents was postponed when it was discovered that the programme, subtitled Bonsoir M. Brejnev, coincided with the arrival of the Soviet leader in Paris.\textsuperscript{137} It was rumoured that the programme had been previewed at the Hotel Matignon, though the FR3 management refused to make any comment regarding the reasons for the postponement.\textsuperscript{138} In any event, whether the decision

\textsuperscript{135} Téléciné, no.204, January 1976.

\textsuperscript{136} Le Quotidien de Paris, October 31 1975.

\textsuperscript{137} Le Monde, June 21 1977.

\textsuperscript{138} Libération, June 20 and 21 1977; Le Monde, June 22 1977; Le canard enchaîné, June 22 1977.
to postpone the showing of the programme came from inside or outside the company, the decision itself revealed that the freedom of the participants to edit the content of their own programme was limited not only by the company's legitimate fear of criminal proceedings but also by obvious though ill-defined political criteria. 139

It would appear, therefore, that for a variety of reasons the impact of Tribune libre has been nowhere near as significant as forecast by ministerial spokesmen. While the number of participants is impressive, as is the frequency of the programme, the nature of the groups allowed to appear and the timing and formula of the programme itself do not encourage large audiences. Only acceptable minority groups are given access to what must be regarded as a safety valve of dubious value for the political system and the broadcasting companies. While the existence of Tribune libre allows ministerial spokesmen and the FR3 management to boast of this innovation in access programming, in reality the programme is of more propaganda value to the Government as an example of the "liberal" nature of the 1974 reform than it is to the participants to whom it gives limited and marginal access. 140

Conclusion

In this chapter on the news output of the state programme companies, we have argued that the relationship between the

139. In February 1980 a Tribune libre of the CGT was not screened in similar circumstances. Le Monde, February 22, 23, 24-25 and 26 1980.

Government and the broadcasting services is no longer the same as it was during either de Gaulle's presidency or the last two years of Pompidou's following the Chaban-Delmas experiment. Since 1974 cases of overt ministerial censorship have virtually ceased to exist. There is no longer a Ministry of Information and its successor, the Ministry of Culture and Communication, exercises no influence on news programming; nor do the civil servants employed in the Service Juridique et Technique de l'Information. Representatives of the Socialist and Communist parties appear frequently on television and radio. Thus, Michel Rocard's standing with the electorate has been improved by his appearances on television, while Georges Marchais has become a television personality in his own right. In addition, there are many journalists with Socialist sympathies employed in the programme companies, some in relatively senior posts. Since Giscard d'Estaing's declaration in 1978 it is even possible that some journalists with Communist leanings will be employed in the news departments of the state programme companies.

Other improvements have also been made since 1974. A right of reply for the opposition has been established. Party political broadcasts are programmed on the basis of strict equality of time between the majorité and the opposition. Moreover, if one excludes the time given to the President of the Republic, there is a rough equality of time allocation for government ministers and spokesmen of the majorité on the one hand and representatives of the opposition on the other.
In these circumstances it is perhaps not surprising that, apart from the Government and the different sets of company management, some disinterested observers have made favourable comments regarding the quality and impartiality of the political coverage of the state programme companies. For example, in its 1976 report on the companies' observation of the regulations contained in their cahiers des charges, the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel remarked:

"As far as news (l'information) is concerned at the national level, the Haut Conseil considers that the effort to ensure political objectivity is real and that the companies respect ... the obligations contained in their cahiers des charges." 1

In addition, an opinion poll published in June 1976 revealed that 45% of the viewing public considered that the television news bulletins since 1974 were more objective than in the two years prior to the reform, against only 11% who thought the opposite. 2

There can be no doubt that the crude interventionism which marked the early years of the ORTF no longer exists. However, the political coverage of the state programme companies is neither balanced nor impartial. Nor, given the links which exist between the Government and the companies, could it reasonably be expected to be so. Some aspects of this imbalance are readily apparent. They include, for example, the unduly favourable coverage, both quantitative and qualitative, given to speeches and interviews of


the President of the Republic. Other aspects, perhaps less readily apparent, include the ceaseless pro-Giscardian stance adopted by such leading television journalists as Patrice Duhamel, head of the politics desk at TF1. In the post-1974 broadcasting system external pressures, such as those from government ministers and their staffs, seem less significant than the systemic constraints imposed by the close nature of the relationship between the broadcasting companies and the Government. The most evident symptom of this close relationship is the fact that the top decision-making posts within the news departments are generally held by persons appointed at the instigation or at least with the tacit agreement of the Government. For political and/or career reasons these persons tend to be sympathetic to the Giscardian regime. Indeed, the directors of news and news editors have replaced the Minister of Information as the key figures in the news production process. They, we would argue, are largely responsible for the partisan political coverage which operates overwhelmingly in favour of the Giscardian component of the majorité.

In short, the change in the relationship between the Government and the state broadcasting services since 1974 has been more formal than substantive. The imbalance in political coverage is qualitative rather than quantitative and so less crude than previously. Moreover, the source of the partisan coverage has been internalised within the companies and is thus less immediately visible to the observer than before. The former model whereby control was mainly overt and external has given way to one in which control is largely covert and internal.
CHAPTER 11

Criticisms of the reform

One of the explicitly declared objectives of the 1974 broadcasting reform was an improvement in the quality of programmes. An evaluation of the reorganisation in terms of the product, the programmes presented to the viewing public, ought therefore to form an integral part of any assessment of the success or failure of the 1974 reform. However, since an assessment of programme quality poses insuperable definitional and methodological problems, we have confined ourselves in this chapter to a more limited and hence more readily attainable objective.

The aim of this chapter is to examine certain aspects of the 1974 reform with regard to programming. Particular emphasis will be given to what have proved to be the main areas of controversy and to proposals to amend the reform. The first two sections on televised feature films and French television production look at certain criticisms of the reform made by interested parties such as the cinema industry, television producers and actors' unions. A third section is devoted to measures introduced by the Government in an attempt to accommodate these criticisms. Following

1. See the article entitled "Priorité à la qualité" by André Rossi, the minister in charge of implementing the reform, in Le Monde, November 9 1974.

See also the speech by Jacques Chirac, introducing the reform bill in the National Assembly. Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, July 24 1974, p.3648.

2. Whatever anyone else thinks of programme quality since the reform, it would appear that the viewing public at any rate are not satisfied. In an opinion poll conducted in November 1979 45% of those interviewed considered that the programmes were of less good quality than before, 36% of identical quality and only 7% thought that they were of better quality. Le Monde, November 2 1979.

3. We do not consider news programming in this chapter. See separate chapter on News programmes.
a section on the importance of the audience ratings in the broadcasting system, a separate section analyses the variety of reform proposals which have been made since 1974 to reorganise the state broadcasting services. The final section of this chapter seeks to place this debate on programming since the reform within a comparative perspective, using material from the experience of other national broadcasting systems. We conclude that the malaise in French television programming and production perceived by some commentators is not unique to France; nor does it date from 1974. It would appear, therefore, that the 1974 reform exacerbated rather than caused what various critics have seen as a decline in the programme standards of French broadcasting.

Feature films on television

One major area of controversy surrounding the programme schedules of the three state television companies concerns the screening of feature films on television. Even before the new companies began their transmissions, fears were being publicly expressed by representatives of the cinema industry that the programme schedules would include an excessively high proportion of feature films. In particular, it was argued that an increase in the quantity of films shown on television would have further adverse effects on the size of cinema audiences which had already spectacularly declined from 411 million in 1957 to 178 million in 1974.5

4. Le Figaro, November 26 1974. See also the article by the general secretary of the Société des réalisateurs de films, Jean Chapot, in Le Monde, November 21 1974.

While FR3 was officially designated by the 1974 statute as the company given the special task of fostering knowledge and appreciation of the cinema, it was expected that TF1 and A2, given their budgetary constraints, would also rely heavily on feature films, especially as these were less expensive than original television material. In a half-hearted bid to protect the cinema industry the Government included a series of provisions relating to the screening of films on television in the cahiers des charges of the three television companies.

FR3 was restricted to 208 films per year, while TF1 and A2 were permitted to screen an annual maximum of 150 films each in 1976. Restrictions were placed on the showing of films over the weekend when the cinemas do a large share of their business. Moreover, all three television companies had to pay the cinema industry a sum of money in the form of aid. In 1976 the total included a fixed sum of 2.45 million francs for TF1 and A2 and 3.27 million francs for FR3, plus 13,500 francs for each film screened. In addition, at least half of the films shown had to be French productions or coproductions with majority French participation. In the event of foreign productions accounting for over half of any of the three companies' film output, the company concerned had to pay an additional sum to the cinema industry in compensation. In 1976 this sum represented 11,000 francs per film in excess of the 50% ceiling.

6. 1974 broadcasting statute, article 10. See also, article 31 of FR3's cahier des charges.
7. Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets, arrêtés of March 3 1976, modifications to the cahier des charges of the broadcasting companies.
8. Ibid.
All three television companies promised to remain within the limits imposed by their cahiers des charges. In fact, in the face of pressure from the cinema industry and the state production company, TF1 and A2 agreed to a voluntary reduction in the number of feature films screened on their channels. A2 accepted a progressive decrease in its feature film output: 130 films in 1975, 110 in 1976 and 100 in 1977.9 TF1, on the other hand, agreed to maintain its output at a maximum of 125 films per annum.10

However, these agreements entered into with the Union syndicale des artistes (non-affiliated) were observed by neither company, with TF1 showing 150 feature films in 1976 and 135 in 1977 and A2 127 and 114 respectively.11 While these figures did not transgress the official limits imposed by the cahiers des charges, they did exceed the self-imposed quotas of the two programme companies, which were then successfully sued by the Union syndicale des artistes at the end of 1977 for breach of contract.

Other interested parties have also sought to bring pressure to bear on the television companies and the Government. For example, at the beginning of 1978 the Bureau de liaison des industries cinématographiques mounted a publicity campaign to have the relevant provisions of the companies' cahiers des charges modified so as to reduce the number of feature films screened on television and increase the rather derisory payments made by the television companies to the cinema industry.12

The cinema industry's self-interested preoccupation with the competition provided by television in the showing of feature films has been echoed by the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel. According to the HCA the plethora of feature films shown on television has had adverse effects on demand for original television production. In its 1976 report the HCA criticised the television companies for screening at peak viewing times films which were already guaranteed a large audience, proposing that minority interest films should also be shown at these times. In addition, to encourage the programming of French films, it was recommended that the amount of compensation paid to the cinema industry be substantially increased in the event of the 50% maximum on foreign films being infringed.\(^{13}\)

During 1976 517 feature films were shown by the three television companies in toto.\(^{14}\) Not surprisingly, therefore, the 1977 report of the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel was even more damning than the previous year's. While the HCA recognised that the companies were operating within the limits of their cahiers des charges, it proposed that the system be tightened up.\(^{15}\) The total maximum of 500 films should be rigorously enforced, as should the weekend restrictions on the showing of feature films on television.


As the 50% maximum quota on the screening of foreign films was not being strictly adhered to, the HCA recommended that the compensation to the cinema industry be raised from 13,000 to 50,000 francs per film in excess of the permitted limit. Foreign telefilms should not be allowed to prejudice the screening of French productions. Moreover, the television companies ought to be encouraged to provide greater financial aid to the cinema industry. In addition, the HCA proposed that films should not be shown on television until 30 months after their general release in the cinema. Finally, the Haut Conseil warned that if its proposals were not put into effect, then the overall number of feature films shown on television would have to be drastically reduced.\(^{16}\)

Since the publication of these two critical reports the French government has introduced various measures designed to relieve the tension between the cinema industry and the television companies. Its first response to the criticisms voiced by the Bureau de liaison des industries cinématographiques was to reduce the rate of VAT on cinema tickets from 17.6 to 7%.\(^{17}\) In addition, in the broadcasting companies' cahiers des charges for 1980 the provisions regarding the showing of feature films on television were tightened up.

The maximum number of films to be shown by TF1 and A2 during 1980 was 130 each, compared with 150 each in 1979. For films coproduced between one of the programme companies and the cinema industry the period of time which had to elapse before they could be shown on television was increased

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from 18 to 24 months. Finally, restrictions on the times at which feature films could be shown on television were also reinforced.\textsuperscript{18}

Nevertheless, whether these palliative measures will be sufficient in themselves to satisfy the demands of the cinema industry remains doubtful. If not, the conflict of interests between the cinema industry and the television companies seems likely to continue unabated.

**French television production**

In its 1976 report the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel pointed out that while in 1973 the three channels of the ORTF had shown 140 French produced series and dramas, in 1976 the three television companies showed only 60.\textsuperscript{19} This decline was emphasised by the marked preference demonstrated by the companies for foreign produced series which cost up to five times less than a French production. Obviously the crisis of the SFP which came to a head in 1978-1979 was closely related to the shift by the television companies towards both foreign series and the production of their own programmes internally. While this change in programming trends concerned all broadcasting staff, it particularly affected two specific categories: television producers (réalisateurs) and actors (artistes-interprètes), both of which have been vociferous critics of the 1974 reorganisation.

The position of the television producers in the new broadcasting companies, as at the ORTF, differs from that of most of the staff.

\textsuperscript{18} Le Monde, May 9 1980.

Since they are not considered as full-time employees of the companies, they are not covered by a staff statute or a collective staff agreement. Rather the producer in the French system is

"... outside the main institution, working in a manner which we in Britain would describe as short-term contract or freelance. Despite the enormous changes which have occurred during the Fifth Republic to the institutional structure of the ORTF, despite the total reorganisation which has taken place in 1974-1975, the role of the réalisateur has remained much the same... operating under agreements between the union representing the réalisateurs and the broadcasting institution, which have survived several successive waves of reorganisation."  

Because of this system of employment on short-term contracts, the réalisateurs are more than most of the other categories of broadcasting staff subject to the vicissitudes of the market. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, that the réalisateurs, witnessing a noticeable worsening in their employment prospects since the 1974 reform, should be critical of the programming and production policy of the television companies.

In a report published only a few months after the break-up of the ORTF, the Syndicat Français des Réalisateurs de Télévision (CGT), the most representative union in the profession, drew up a critique of the consequences of the reform for television production. The report pointed out that despite an overall increase in the length of viewing time, unemployment among television producers had dramatically increased. The réalisateurs have echoed the criticisms made by other critics: the decline of television documentaries and drama programmes, the increase in serials and the plethora of inexpensive studio debates and "talking heads" programmes. In addition, the réalisateurs have stressed other symptoms of

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20. See chapter on the Broadcasting Unions.


what they regard as a reduction in production standards such as the decrease in the number of technical staff assigned to a production and the imposition of more stringent timetables on production.

Since the publication of this report in the immediate aftermath of the reorganisation, the réalisateurs have on several occasions reiterated their criticisms. Moreover, their complaints have been backed up by action. Thus, in January 1977 the réalisateurs decided to come out on strike in support of the action being taken at that time by television actors. The réalisateurs demanded guarantees regarding the programming of a minimum amount of original television material by the state television companies. They also wanted their own conditions of employment to be improved. However, though supported for part of its duration by other unions in the profession, the strike called by the Syndicat Français des Réalisateurs de Télévision ended without any agreement being reached on the question of a guaranteed quota of home-produced television programmes.

The strike by the television actors during the winter of 1976-1977 was much longer than that held by the réalisateurs, lasting from mid-November 1976 to mid-February 1977. Like the réalisateurs, the actors are not salaried staff of the broadcasting companies, but are paid only when they are actually working on a programme, which also makes them especially vulnerable to any cutbacks in production.


Two actors' unions were involved in the dispute: the Syndicat Francais des artistes-interprètes (CGT) and the Union syndicale des artistes (autonomous). The actors' demands covered three related issues: to improve their financial position with respect to repeated showings of programmes, to standardise their conditions of employment and payment and, lastly, to obtain a guaranteed increase in the amount of French produced television material. 25

While the actors gained satisfaction of their first two demands soon after the start of their strike, their third demand met with stiffer opposition from the television companies. It was not until mid-January 1977 that the dispute was partially resolved when the Union syndicale des artistes accepted proposals by the television companies to increase the screening of original television material (création originale) over the following three years. 26 For its part the Government promised that over this period the budgets of the television companies would be increased in real terms to take account of the new costs.

The agreement of January 14 marked a breakdown in the united front put up by the two unions concerned since November 1976. While the USDA accepted the proposals, the SFA decided to carry on with the strike action in an attempt to outbid the USDA and gain more concessions for the television actors. In this the SFA was partly successful, obtaining guarantees regarding the production as well as the programming of more original television material. However, the ending of strike action by the USDA had weakened the actors' bargaining position,


with the result that the SFA strike came to an end in mid-February with some demands still not satisfied.27

The strike by the television actors, which at the time was the longest running dispute in the state broadcasting services since the break-up of the ORTF, highlighted the failure of the reform to generate demand for home-produced television drama and fiction. In retrospect the dispute was a dress rehearsal for the crisis which was to hit the SFP in 1978-1979, during which many of the same issues were to be raised once again.28

The Government's response

Since the establishment of the broadcasting companies in January 1975 the Government has introduced various measures in response to the criticisms outlined above. For example, in 1976 the Government was under pressure from various sources to boost French television production, with the issue being highlighted in a much publicised meeting between a well-known television producer, Jean-Christophe Averty, and President Giscard d'Estaing at the Elysée.29

Barely a week after this tête-à-tête, Giscard d'Estaing declared his concern about the decline in programme quality since the break-up of the ORTF.

28. See chapter on Finance.
29. For Averty's account of this meeting see J. Siclier, Un homme averty, Paris, Jean-Claude Simoen, 1976, pp.192-201.
"As far as programme quality is concerned, we have indeed witnessed a certain number of features, and notably a reduction in creative programming on television. In the same way, it seems to me, one has witnessed a quite perceptible increase in the number of productions bought from outside and naturally from abroad. I think that we have to reintroduce into the working of the television companies this concern for creativity and for quality. ... I am going to ask the Government to look at the possibility of introducing in the cahiers des charges regulations designed to improve television quality. ..." 30

Remarkable for its frankness, this statement amounted to a grave indictment by the President of his own reform. Since programme quality was supposed to be encouraged by the licence revenue allocation procedure and safeguarded by the companies' cahiers des charges, the President's remarks clearly revealed that these devices were failing to fulfil their function satisfactorily.

Following the presidential declaration, therefore, a series of measures were announced by the Government in an attempt to encourage more creative television. For example, the Government prescribed that there should be an increase in the number of programmes shown which had been produced specifically for television. Between them TF1 and A2 were to screen 260 hours of original fictional material in 1977 compared with 197 hours in 1976. In addition, the two channels were set an annual target quota of 150 hours minimum of "creative documentaries". In response to the President's expressed desire that young producers and writers should be given greater encouragement, the Government recommended that 10% of fiction production and 10% of documentary production should be set aside for new talent. Finally, in an attempt to prevent certain established

producers from monopolising television production, a set of regulations was to be drawn up by the programme companies to ensure that this practice was discontinued. 31

These measures were to be financed from direct grants awarded to the programme companies by the Government before the formal allocation of the licence revenue. 32 Thus, no extra expenditure was to be incurred by the Government. Moreover, anxious to observe the spirit of the reform, the Government left it up to each company's board of governors to decide how the measures should be put into effect. The recommendations were not, however, specifically included in the cahiers des charges, an omission which was viewed by some commentators as severely diminishing their significance. 33 Furthermore, as the term "creativity" was never explicitly defined, some company chairman appeared to consider that they were already operating within the norms set by the Government.

In any event despite the measures announced in 1976, criticisms of the consequences of the 1974 reform for programming have not abated. Recommendations have been put forward from a wide variety of sources to remedy what is perceived as a grave crisis in French television. Some are mere palliative measures, designed to alleviate some of the worst excesses of the reorganisation. Frequently the Government has been


32. See chapter on Finance.

sympathetic to these proposals and has acted upon them. Other proposals, however, have taken a more fundamental approach to the problem and have recommended structural changes in the organisation.

34. For example, following the publication of the 1978 Caillavet report and the 1979 Cluzel report, the Government sought to direct funds towards the development of French television production at the very time when the SFP was suffering from a crippling financial crisis.

In 1979 a fonds de création audiovisuelle was established by the Ministry of Culture and Communication to aid production and research in the field of documentaries, particularly by new authors. The budget of this special fund, however, was extremely small, with only 5 million francs being set aside for its first year of operation.

At the end of 1979 Lecat announced the creation of another special fund, entitled le fonds de la qualité, which was designed to encourage creative programming by the television companies. While this fund was allocated greater financial resources, around 50 million francs in 1980, the money was to come from the total of licence revenue collected and was then to be given to the television companies in the form of direct grants. Thus, in this case no additional resources were being made available by the Government.

Other measures were also announced by the minister at the same time. The proportion of French produced drama and fiction shown by the television companies was to be increased from 56% to 60% of the total. The objective that 60% of drama and fiction shown on television should be home produced had been included in the original cahiers des charges in 1975. However, it was only in 1980 that this objective was to be realised.

Greater harmonisation of programme schedules was to be asked of the television company chairmen and the Quality Committee was given the task of monitoring the execution of this directive. Finally, the licence revenue allocation equation was to be modified to exclude quantitative criteria.
of the broadcasting services. In other words, they have sought to reform the reform. The following two sections examine some of the main points raised by the principal critics of the 1974 reorganisation, their reform proposals and the Government's reaction to them.

**Audience ratings**

The importance attached to audience ratings by the programme companies is a feature of the 1974 reform. However, the role accorded audience ratings in the new broadcasting system has been criticised because, it is argued, the television companies tend to pursue the largest possible audience and so are forced to cater for the lowest common denominator in taste. One of the most ardent critics of the audience ratings system was the then chairman of A2, Jullian, who argued that they discouraged creative programmes and rewarded a conservative approach to programme scheduling and content.\(^{35}\) Jullian's antipathy towards the audience ratings system has been echoed by other critics including the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel and interested parliamentarians such as Le Tac, Caillavet and Cluzel.\(^{36}\)

The Government, however, was slow to react to these criticisms and when it eventually did react, it was not to attack the problem at source.

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Interview with Joel Le Tac, January 25 1977.


For example, in late 1976 the role of audience ratings in charting public reaction to the programme output of the television companies was being stoutly defended by government ministers.

"The truth is that a modern television service cannot function without audience ratings, which allow it to learn the reactions of its public. A television service without ratings would be blind to and ignorant of the preoccupations of the population." 37

It is certainly true that audience ratings if properly used constitute an important element of information for any developed broadcasting service. If employed in conjunction with more specialised surveys on viewer motivation and satisfaction, ratings can be a highly useful piece of information for programme planners. On the other hand, though they may effectively reflect the current state of public interest in a given programme or set of programmes, ratings cannot indicate which new options ought to be tried. They have, therefore, an in-built conservative bias, particularly if the television channels are competing for the same mass audience.

Moreover, despite government protestations to the contrary, it was apparent from an early stage that though the marks given for programme quality were weighted three times more highly than audience ratings in the licence revenue allocation procedure, the companies were more interested in amassing as large an audience for their programmes as possible. Only in late 1979 did the Government admit that the quantitative criterion of the ratings would be downgraded in the procedure to allocate the broadcasting budget for 1981 among the programme companies. 38


38. This announcement was made by Lecat as part of the Government's response to the publication of the Cluzel report, 1979. Le Monde, October 21-22 1979.
Though this governmental initiative was undoubtedly welcome to the critics of the audience ratings system, it was scarcely sufficient to satisfy them entirely. The importance attached to audience ratings by the programme companies since 1974 derives as much from the dependence of the two main television companies on commercial advertising as from the role they play in the licence revenue allocation procedure. As we have seen, TF1 and A2 both rely heavily on commercial advertising and are obliged to achieve their annual advertising targets if they are not to lose out financially. According to the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel the logic of this dependence on advertising has led the two main television companies to adopt a commercial approach to programming whereby they are excessively attentive to capturing as large an audience as possible. 39

To mitigate the competition for advertising revenue between TF1 and A2, the HCA recommended that the separate advertising services of the two television companies, RFP-TF1 and RFP-A2, should be abolished. 40 The revenue obtained from advertising would be added to the licence revenue to form a single body of funds which would then be shared out among the programme companies by a procedure which accorded greater weight to the criterion of programme quality. In this way no single company would depend overwhelmingly on advertising revenue with the result that the companies could afford to experiment with programme schedules if they so desired. 41


41. This proposal has also been put forward by Le Tac, Caillavet and the Quality Committee. See the annual budgetary reports on broadcasting by the National Assembly finance committee; the Caillavet report, 1978; and the first report of the Quality Committee, 1975-1976, p.22.
Commercial advertising on French television is now a fact of life with which even the Socialist and Communist parties have been forced to come to terms. While in 1972 the parties of the left called for the abolition of advertising on the state television channels, by 1977 they regarded its maintenance as inevitable and were demanding only its strict control. This volte face in the policy of the left towards television advertising is perhaps not surprising, given the important role it now plays in the finances of the state television companies. It was estimated by one government minister that the abolition of commercial advertising on television would lead either to the loss of one of the television channels or to a 40% increase in the cost of the licence-fee.

The problem, therefore, is no longer whether to have advertising on television or not, but rather how best to control it and minimise its effects on programming. The parties of the left, along with other critics of the 1974 reform, called for the creation of a single pool of funds divided up among the channels by a central authority. The Government, however, has steadfastly refused to make this kind of structural reform. Thus, the separate advertising services of TF1 and A2 remain in existence, competing with each other for advertising and seeking to achieve their target figures while still respecting the overall 25% statutory maximum on revenue from commercial advertising.

See the debate between Gaston Defferre and Francois Régis-Bastide which took place within the Socialist party in 1977, the former calling for the abolition of television advertising if a left-wing government came to power and the latter reluctantly accepting the necessity of advertising revenue. Le Matin de Paris, May 3 and 4 1977 and Le Monde, May 4 and 5 1977.
For the change of policy by the Communist party on this question see L'Humanité, May 14 and 23 1977.

Reform proposals

The Government's rejection of the demands to abolish the separate advertising services at TF1 and A2 forms part of a wider strategy to resist calls for greater centralisation within the new broadcasting system. As we have already seen, the 1974 broadcasting reform eschewed the establishment of a central body to coordinate the running of the separate companies and regulate the competition between the two main television channels. The Government argued that competition between TF1 and A2 would result in an improved service for the viewer. On the other hand, any attempt to introduce complementary programme scheduling would, according to ministerial spokesmen, be an unwarranted interference in the management of the companies and contrary to the spirit of the reform.44

In the face of parliamentary pressure, however, the Government was compelled to compromise slightly on this view, with an amendment to the Government's bill being passed in the Senate and included in the 1974 statute proposing that the chairmen of the television companies should meet periodically to ensure the harmonisation of programme schedules.45 In practice, however, this article of the 1974 statute has proved remarkably ineffective. TF1 and A2 frequently broadcast the same type of programme simultaneously. Moreover, in the first couple of years of their existence the two companies even went so far as to screen exactly the same programme simultaneously, particularly a popular sporting event.46

44. See, for example, the speech made by Christian Poncelet in Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, June 25 1977, pp.4217-4219.

45. Article 9 of the 1974 broadcasting statute. See chapter on Parliamentary control.

46. Le Quotidien de Paris, March 20-21 and 24 1976. This practice of the same programme being shown simultaneously by both main television companies is now less prevalent. See, for example, the agreement between the two companies on programming for the 1978 world cup. Le Monde, May 23, 1978.
Not surprisingly, many of the critics of the Giscardian broadcasting structure regard the creation of some sort of central federating body as a key element in their proposals to remedy what they regard as the undesirable face of competition within the present system. Le Tac, for example, has proposed the creation of a central authority, half of whose members would be appointed by the Government and half by Parliament and the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel. This body would coordinate the management of the different companies and ensure complementary programme schedules. It would also perform certain specific functions at present carried out by a variety of agencies. For instance, it would be responsible for the running of those services common to the companies, such as the audience research service. It would also take over the work of the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee, sharing out the licence revenue and advertising receipts among the companies on the basis of the quality and cultural merit of their programmes and their fulfilment of the obligations laid down in their cahiers des charges. The Licence Revenue Allocation Committee would be abolished, as would the Quality Committee. Finally, the Government's role would be confined to fixing the cost of the licence-fee and thereby determining the amount of resources to be allocated in toto to the state broadcasting services.⁴⁷

The Socialist and Communist parties in their policy statements prior to the 1978 legislative elections also favoured the creation of a central coordinating body to allocate the licence revenue, manage the


See also Le Figaro, April 18 1977 and the annual budgetary reports on broadcasting of the National Assembly finance committee, particularly Journal Officiel, Documents Assemblée Nationale, 1976-1977, no.2525, Rapport fait au nom de la commission des finances ... sur le projet de loi de finances pour 1977, annexe no.49, Radiodiffusion et télévision, rapporteur spécial: Joel Le Tac, annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 5 octobre 1976, pp.27-29.
production services and generally deal with those problems common to
the separate companies. The most explicit statement of future
intentions was provided by the Socialist party in a report published
in December 1978. This report called for the creation of a national
broadcasting council (Conseil national de la radio-télévision) which
would exercise various functions common to the different companies:
supervision of the regulations contained in the statute and cahiers
des charges, allocation of revenue among the companies, coordination
of staff policy and research into broadcasting technology. The national
broadcasting council would not, however, be directly involved in the
production, programming and transmission of broadcasts. There was no
question of reconstituting the ORTF.

The most recent proposal to reorganise the broadcasting companies
was set out in the 1979 Cluzel report. This special parliamentary
committee of inquiry called for the creation of a central public
corporation with a general overlord function. As we have seen, this
corporation would be responsible for monitoring technological development
in the broadcasting field, controlling investment policy, allocating the
revenue from the licence and commercial advertising and coordinating
the programme schedules of the companies.

49. "Rapport du parti socialiste sur la radio-télévision", published as
a supplement to Le poing et la rose, no.77, December 1978.
50. Ibid, pp.12-16.
51. See chapter on Parliamentary control.
Criticisms of the lack of harmonisation in the new broadcasting structure have also been made by the Quality Committee, the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel, the broadcasting unions and the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting.\textsuperscript{53} It would appear that the viewers also would like greater coordination in programme scheduling among the television companies.\textsuperscript{54} However, any proposal to introduce a greater level of coordination in the present system by the establishment of a central, federating body necessarily calls into question the very basis of the 1974 reform.

With the defeat of the left in the 1978 legislative elections, any major structural reorganisation of the state broadcasting services along the lines of the introduction of a central body was effectively postponed until after the 1981 presidential elections at the earliest. Though measures were announced in late 1979 to encourage harmonisation of programme schedules through regular meetings of the company chairmen, structural reform is not even on the agenda for discussion as far as the Government is concerned.\textsuperscript{55}

"I experience some astonishment when I hear certain people, moved by a strange strategy of regrouping, desire a return to the organisation of the ORTF. This is out of the question. The reform is irreversible."\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{53} See the third annual report of the Quality Committee, 1977-1978, pp.10-14.

\textsuperscript{54} L'Humanité, April 8 1977. 88\% of those interviewed in a public opinion poll favoured a greater degree of harmonisation than at present.
\textsuperscript{55} Le Monde, October 21-22 1979.
A comparative perspective

The Government's determination not to make any substantial reorganisation of the broadcasting structure established in 1974 may be due to sheer obstinacy on its part. After all, it has nothing to gain from yet another broadcasting reform. However, it is by no means certain that the kind of reorganisation called for by the critics would in any case markedly improve the range, not to mention the quality, of programmes afforded the viewer. The creation of a central federating body would allow for the coordination of programme schedules and so apparently provide a wider choice for the viewer. However, it is open to doubt whether the benefits of such a reorganisation on programming would be as far-reaching as the critics imply.

The reason for this is that the structure of the broadcasting services is only one factor, not necessarily the most important either, affecting programme output. By attributing the decline in home-produced drama and fiction to the 1974 reform, many critics may be underestimating the importance of other factors which affect broadcasting services other than the French, in particular the dominance of the international television programme market by the American networks. In other words, what the critics have perceived as a crisis in French production may not be due solely to the 1974 reorganisation.

One of the principal spokesmen in favour of adopting a wider perspective is Jacques Thibau, former deputy head of television in the mid-1960s. Thibau's thesis may be summarised as follows.

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Three tendencies are apparent in French television programming: the importance of commercial advertising, the trivialisation of programme content and the preponderance of American films and series. All three features, according to Thibau, are symptomatic of the crisis affecting all western European broadcasting systems. Thus, if the 1960s can be regarded as the high water mark of European broadcasting, the 1970s have witnessed a remarkable decline. On the one hand the national television services have been hit by serious financial difficulties following the saturation of the television market, while at the same time production costs have escalated.

The introduction of commercial advertising to supplement income, far from solving the problem, has merely given it another dimension. To fill out their programme schedules the European television organisations are obliged to import low cost American series and films. As a result, the programmes no longer reflect the culture of each particular nation, but become "the vehicle of the dominant American ideology." In short, in the international broadcasting market the USA is in an overriding position of strength. For Thibau, the 1974 broadcasting reform in France must be viewed in this context of the American dominance of the western European broadcasting media.

One does not have to accept the whole of Thibau's thesis to appreciate that an assessment of the 1974 reform with regard to programming would benefit from a comparative perspective. If Thibau's thesis has any validity, one might expect the broadcasting organisations of other western European countries to show signs of the same problems which are affecting the state broadcasting companies in France.

There is some evidence that this is in fact the case. For example, in 1974 Belgian television broadcast 50 original television dramas compared with 78 in 1965. The drama services of Norwegian television saw its budget reduced from 17% of the total budget in 1965 to 14% in 1975. Thus, the decline in French production of drama series since 1974 may be seen as part of a wider phenomenon.

Another symptom of the decline in programme quality, according to the critics, is the increase in the number of foreign programmes, particularly American series and telefilms, shown by the French television companies. Once again, however, this phenomenon is not confined to France. For example, the Danish television organisation has estimated that the cost of an original dramatic production amounts to about 40,000 dollars per hour, compared with 3,000 dollars for an American film. It is hardly surprising then that in 1976-1977 55% of programmes broadcast on Danish television were foreign productions. Even the BBC imported over 12% of its total programme output in 1974-1975.

In a study published in 1974 on the international flow of television programmes, it was discovered that on average western European countries imported annually 30-40% of their programmes. The countries which

60. Le Monde, October 24-25 1976.


62. 156 hours of American telefilms and series were shown during the first six months of 1977 compared with 96 hours during the first six months of 1974. M. Souchon, La télévision et son public; 1974/1977, Paris, La documentation française, 1978, p.17.

63. Le Monde, October 24-25 1976.


depended least on foreign purchases were France, Great Britain and Italy, who imported respectively 9%, 12% and 13% of their programmes, mainly from the USA. In the case of France half of the feature films shown were imported, while just over half of the series broadcast were produced abroad. 66 As for the BBC, two thirds of its feature films were imported as were over half the series. 67 The ORTF was, in short, much better off than the majority of its European counterparts and slightly better off than the BBC in terms of dependence on imported programmes.

However, it can be seen that even before the 1974 reform the French state broadcasting services were not impervious to foreign, and especially American, penetration. It is hardly surprising, therefore, to find criticisms of the American influence on French television programming long before the 1974 reform. For example, the Paye report published in 1970 commented that,

"The massive broadcasting of American films to a mass whose way of life and daily problems are profoundly foreign to the pictures they receive, but which tends to see in them fashions or models to copy, creates a form of cultural 'colonialism' contrary to the educative vocation of the national public service." 68

Likewise, in a book published in 1973 Thibau condemned what he regarded as the trivialisation of programme content at the ORTF during the early 1970s, one criterion of which was the increasing recourse to American series and telefilms. 69

66. Ibid, p.22.
67. Ibid.
The following table shows the number of feature films screened by the French state television channels before and after the 1974 reform.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Films</th>
<th>Percentage of Foreign Films</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>327 films, of which 63% were foreign;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>392 films;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>463 films, of which 57% were foreign;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>517 films, of which 51% were foreign.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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While there has been an overall increase in the number of feature films shown on French television since 1969, this increase has not been dramatic, nor does it date from 1974. In fact, as a percentage of the total viewing time the proportion of feature films has actually declined between 1974 and 1977.70 Moreover, in percentage terms there has also been a decline in the proportion of foreign films broadcast. If one looks solely at American feature films, they have declined in both real terms and as a percentage of the total viewing time: 202 hours in the first six months of 1974 (5.9%) compared with 174 hours in the first six months of 1977 (3.8%).71 While there has been an increase, therefore, in the proportion of viewing time devoted to American telefilms and series from 1974 to 1977, there has been a corresponding decrease in the proportion of viewing time given to American feature films.

It would appear, therefore, that the argument which seeks to lay the blame for the crisis in French television production solely on the 1974 reform is not borne out by all the evidence. The 1974 reform certainly...

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70. M. Souchon, op.cit., p.17.
71. Ibid.
highlighted many of the problems of the production services which had perhaps been less evident at the ORTF. The 1974 reorganisation probably exacerbated these problems by giving the production services separate company status in the new broadcasting system. However, it is highly debatable whether the 1974 reform was itself the cause of what have been regarded by various critics as the twin programming evils in French broadcasting: the crisis in French television production and the increasingly commercial ethos of the state programme companies.

Conclusion

The 1974 broadcasting reform has come under attack from various quarters. The cinema industry is displeased with the number of feature films shown by the television companies. Television producers and actors are only two of the interested parties whose livelihood is threatened by the decline in French television production. Interested parliamentarians such as Le Tac, Caillavet and Cluzel have all severely criticised the effects of the 1974 reform on programming. Indeed both Caillavet and Cluzel have been rapporteurs of special parliamentary committees of inquiry on the subject of French television production. Other critics have included the Quality Committee and the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel. The viewers themselves do not appear to be particularly content. Even the Government has been forced to introduce supplementary measures to encourage "creativity" among producers and programme planners.

Neither the cahiers des charges nor the licence revenue allocation procedure would appear to have been sufficient safeguards to protect the television companies from the desire to pursue the largest audience
possible. In these circumstances various critics, including the parties of the left, have called for the establishment of a central federating body to coordinate the activities of the various companies. In their opinion many of the defects of the present system could be abolished if such a central body were set up.

However, a comparison of programming at the ORTF with the programme output of the present companies does not lead easily to a belief in the efficacy of such a structural reorganisation. Some improvement in the amount of home-produced programmes might be made, though even this is not certain. Any reformed broadcasting organisation would still require revenue from commercial advertising, introduced well before the 1974 reform, to maintain services as at present. Moreover, there would always be the danger of reconstituting the bureaucratic structure of the ORTF by default.

By concentrating their attention on the 1974 reform itself, many of the critics may well be overestimating the importance of the structure of the broadcasting services. Low budget programmes, cheap imports and feature films have become commonplace in all western European broadcasting systems at a time of spiralling production costs. France is no exception to that rule. In these circumstances tinkering about once again with the structure of the state broadcasting services may well divert attention from a consideration of more basic questions, such as whether continual extensions of viewing time or the existence of three state television channels are necessarily in the interests of the viewing public. 72

72. In 1974 the three ORTF television channels broadcast around 6,800 hours of programmes. In 1977 the three state television companies broadcast over 9,000 hours of programmes. To our knowledge France is the only country in the world to have three state television channels.
Section 4

Challenges to the state broadcasting monopoly
CHAPTER 12

The State Monopoly

The 1974 broadcasting statute reaffirmed the state monopoly in transmission and programming which has been in existence since the wartime Vichy regime. ¹ Prior to the outbreak of the second world war the State was guaranteed a monopoly "in the transmission and reception (sic) of electronic signals of any kind", but in fact during the 1930s revocable licences were granted to several private radio stations giving them permission to broadcast. ² Thus, on the eve of the second world war eleven private radio stations were operating on French territory, financed from advertising. ³

Following the occupation of France in 1940 the country was split into two zones.

"In the north, the Germans requisitioned all radio installations whether public or private, while in the south, the Vichy government created a public organisation, National Broadcasting, which exercised a monopoly in that zone and which formed a vital part of its propaganda services." ⁴

After the liberation all private station licences were cancelled and the Vichy laws on broadcasting were reinstalled after temporary repeal. The private radio stations were compelled either to cease broadcasting altogether or to transmit from outside French territory, an option which

1. Article 2 of the 1974 broadcasting statute confirmed the state broadcasting monopoly.
The production monopoly was finally abandoned in 1964 to allow the state broadcasting services to purchase programmes from external production companies.


See also F. Ténot, Radios privées, radios pirates, Paris, Denoel, 1977, pp.11 and 43-52. Ténot gives a total of 15 stations broadcasting at some time during the period 1922-1944.

the peripheral stations were to choose after the war. From 1945 onwards, therefore, broadcasting in France has been organised within the legal framework of the state monopoly.

This monopoly status of the state broadcasting services has not, however, gone unchallenged. For example, various abortive attempts have been made during the Fifth Republic to establish a commercial television channel, including one made at the discussion stage of the 1974 reform. The aim of this chapter is to examine the present condition of the state broadcasting monopoly and in particular to analyse certain challenges which it has had to face since 1974. A separate section is devoted to each of the following topics: peripheral radio, cable television and local radio. In the conclusion to this chapter we consider whether the state monopoly can continue to remain the legal framework for French broadcasting in the 1980s.

Peripheral radio

With regard to television the state monopoly of transmission and programming has so far proved to be very effective. However, the same cannot be said about the provision of radio services. The state programme companies Radio France and FR3 broadcast national and regional programmes respectively within the framework of the state monopoly. They face strong competition, however, from the peripheral radio stations such as Radio Europe 1, Radio Luxembourg, Radio-Monte-Carlo and Sud-Radio. These peripheral stations transmit quite freely from just outside French


See R. Thomas, op. cit., pp. 110-123 for a survey of the different schemes to establish a commercial television channel prior to 1974.

6. See section on cable television and the conclusion to this chapter.
territory to audiences in France. Producing their programmes in their headquarters and studios inside France, frequently in Paris, they then relay them to their transmitters on the French border without any interference from the state transmission company, TDF, which is the legal custodian of the monopoly. These peripheral stations have acquired a reputation for providing more reliable political news than the state radio services, a legacy from their role in reporting the events which took place in the Latin Quarter in May 1968.

Their infringement of the state broadcasting monopoly, however, is more apparent than real. Despite their dependence on advertising revenue, their commercial orientation and their supposedly less partisan news reporting, the peripheral stations are by no means independent of the French state. Through a holding company, Sofirad, the State owns important and frequently majority shareholdings in all the peripheral radio stations, with the exception of Radio Luxembourg. As a result while these stations provide strong competition for Radio France, their finances are closely controlled by the State via Sofirad.

7. In fact in the early 1970s one of the peripheral stations, Radio-Monte-Carlo, was allowed to construct a transmitter on French soil at Roumoules in the Alpes de Haute Provence department. See C. Durieux, La télécratie, Paris, Tema, 1976, p. 45.


On Radio Luxembourg see Presse Actualité, no. 95, November 1974, pp. 2-17, and no. 108, March 1976, pp. 36-43.


On Radio Europe 1 see Presse Actualité, no. 96, December 1974, pp. 15-19.

However the State has a controlling interest in Radio Luxembourg through the Havas advertising agency.


See Table 12.ii for a list of the French state's shareholdings in peripheral radio and television.
Of the twelve members of Sofirad's board of governors ten, including the chairman, are appointed by the Government. The post of chairman is of course a political appointment of considerable importance. Pierre Lefranc, a former member of de Gaulle's cabinet, held the post until 1973 when he was replaced by Denis Baudouin, one of Pompidou's personal advisors on media policy and the head of the President's press service. In 1977 Baudouin left Sofirad to become head of communications in the entourage of the former Prime Minister, Chirac, who had just been successfully elected mayor of Paris. Baudouin's departure left the way open for Giscard d'Estaing to appoint a new chairman loyal to him personally. As we have seen, the President chose a close collaborator, Gouyou-Beauchamps, former head of the Elysée press service.\(^{10}\)

Through Sofirad the French government retains the power of appointment to the key managerial and editorial posts in the peripheral radio stations.\(^{11}\) One of the clearest examples of governmental intervention in the running of peripheral radio occurred in October 1974 when Maurice Siégel was dismissed from his post as director general of Radio Europe 1. Apart from Siégel himself, the main protagonists in the affair were Chirac, who at that time was still at Matignon, and the chairman of Sofirad, Baudouin. It was Chirac who took the initiative, reacting angrily after an interview with a Europe 1 journalist, Gérard Carreyrou, during which he had refused to answer certain questions, was played back in full in the station's news bulletin. The Prime Minister considered this a personal affront and condemned Europe 1's "slack reporting" and "frivolous tone."

Through Sofirad the Government owns 35% of the shares and controls just under half the votes in Europe 1. As a result, when Baudouin was

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10. See chapter on Appointments.

11. The Government exercises a similar though more constrained power through Havas in the case of Radio Luxembourg.
instructed by Chirac to secure Siégel's dismissal, the director general of the station had little alternative but to leave. His position was made even less tenable because the other major shareholder in the station, the Floirat group, was unwilling to make an issue out of the matter. 12

It was clear that the reasons behind the Government's decision were political and not commercial. It was rumoured that Europe 1 had taken a pro-Chaban-Delmas line during the recent presidential election campaign. 13 The station's listening figures were high and its income from advertising compared favourably with that of the other peripheral radio stations. Moreover, Siégel's successor, Jean-Luc Lagardère, could be relied on to adopt a more favourable stance towards the new regime. A successful industrialist, Lagardère was accustomed to working in close liaison with the Government in his capacity as director of Matra engines, a firm which benefits greatly from government contract work.

Though undoubtedly the most spectacular, Siégel's dismissal was only the first in a process by which the holders of key posts in all the peripheral radio stations have been changed during Giscard d'Estaing's presidency. The President has placed personal supporters at the head of Sofirad, the Havas advertising agency, Radio-Monte-Carlo, Radio Luxembourg and through Sofirad, Sud-Radio. 14 In short, though not a part of the State's broadcasting monopoly in law, the peripheral radio stations can still be legitimately regarded as an integral part of the State's broadcasting monopoly in fact.

See also l'Express, no. 1217, November 4-10 1974 and le Nouvel Observateur, no. 521, November 4-10 1974.

In an interview with the author Siégel denied having any pro-Chaban-Delmas leanings. Interview with Maurice Siégel, March 15 1977.

14. See chapter on Appointments.
Cable television

In the early 1970s cable television was widely regarded as an exciting new development in broadcasting technology which would revolutionise communications. No longer would broadcasting have to be organised on centralist lines with large national broadcasting organisations transmitting to vast mass audiences. The advent of cable television would provide the opportunity for the development of local community television.

Prior to Giscard d'Estaing's election to the presidency the French government had been prepared to give a cautious go-ahead to cable television. Originally the Government was in favour of regulating the development of cable television in an a priori manner. However, due partly to the intervention of Jean d'Arcy, a leading member of the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel, the Government was persuaded to set up cable television projects in an experimental fashion before introducing any legislation. In July 1973, therefore, the Government authorised cable television

15. On cable television in France before the Giscardian presidency see:

R. Thomas, op. cit., pp. 162-168


Communications, no. 21, 1974.

F.R. Barbry, La télévision par câbles, Paris, Cerf, 1975

experiments in seven French towns: Cergy-Pontoise, Chamonix, Créteil, Grenoble, Metz, Nice and Rennes. In fact, however, only the experiment at Grenoble transmitted programmes on a regular basis, consisting mainly of a video news magazine shown every fortnight.\footnote{16}

At the same time as it authorised these experiments the Government established the \textit{Société Francaise de Télédistribution} (SFT) under the joint ownership of the ORTF and the Ministry of Posts.\footnote{167} This company was given overall responsibility for the development of cable television in France. Its main role was to coordinate any local initiatives in the field of cable television and also to monitor the experimental projects allowed by the Government.

Since 1974, however, the role of cable television as a potential alternative to the national state networks has waned quite dramatically. In April 1975 the Government formally decided not to develop cable television as a local medium of communication.\footnote{18} In the summer of 1976 the Grenoble experiment ground to a halt after the Government had refused to continue its subsidy to the scheme.\footnote{19} Lacking any positive contribution to make, the SFT was, in the words of one of its staff, "put to sleep", though it still remains in existence.\footnote{20}

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{16. \textit{Télédistribution et vidéo-animation: la situation française Janvier 1974}, p. 55}
\item \footnote{17. \textit{Journal Officiel, Lois et décrets}, decree no. 72-160 of March 1 1972. See also \textit{Société Française de Télédistribution}, \textit{Pour une télédistribution française}, Paris, 1974.}
\item \footnote{18. \textit{Le Monde}, June 25-26 1978.}
\item \footnote{19. \textit{Le Journaliste}, No. 156, June-July-August 1976.}
\item \footnote{20. Jean-Claude Altérèsco, \textit{chargé d'études} at the SFT. See also \textit{International Institute of Communications}, \textit{The financing of community and public access channels on cable television networks in member countries of the Council of Europe}, Strasbourg, Council of Europe, CCC/DC (76) 97-E, 1977, p.16.}
\end{itemize}
In September 1977 the Government published two decrees regulating the use of cable television. Under the terms of the first decree a national committee for cable networks was set up. This committee, which was due to meet at least once a year, has the purely technical task of ensuring that the choices made by TDF and the Ministry of Posts with regard to cable equipment are compatible. The committee has no mandate to encourage the development of cable television. The second decree concerned the use to be made of the local cable networks. The major provision of this decree was that these networks should be used exclusively for the distribution of programmes transmitted by the state broadcasting companies or "in due course by foreign broadcasting stations". Thus, the decree reinforces the control of TDF over the cable networks to the exclusion of any local participation. Moreover, the cable networks are to be used purely as a technical aid to the broadcasting of the programmes of the state television companies and foreign stations in areas of poor reception.

This limited role assigned to the cable networks reflected the President's lack of support for any local initiatives. Thus, in an interview published in Télé-7-jours in early 1976 the President affirmed:

"I think that at the moment we should think about whether we have to keep on multiplying ad infinitum the range of mass media. The risk in fact is that the organs of information destroy each other, as we can see happening with the present difficulties of the press. The three state television channels have not yet reached a stage of full development. Therefore, we have to wait for the full use of the present media before asking the question about the future role of alternative media.

Questioner: Nonetheless, can cable television not be used immediately in those regions where geographical conditions prevent the comfortable reception of the hertzian waves?

President: Of course. The technique of cable television may be used in this case. But cable television understood as a supplementary local medium of communication is not a major priority."


22. Since in January 1980 TDF was placed under the tutelage of the Ministry of Posts, Telegraphs and Telecommunications, the function of this committee already seems redundant.

Giscard d'Estaing's opposition to the development of cable television as a local medium was based partly on the difficulties such a measure would create for the regional press and the competition it would generate for the state television channels. Both of these media stood to lose as disseminators of information and beneficiaries of advertising revenue. The opposition of the regional press to cable television certainly seemed to play an important role in preventing the latter's development. Moreover, the Government had no desire to encourage the production and programming of local television programmes which might prove politically embarrassing. This was particularly the case in the period leading up to the 1978 legislative elections with candidates of the majorité under strong attack in many constituencies. In any case, however, cable television was unable to find sufficient financial resources to take off without the need for subsidies from either central government or the local authorities. Lacking adequate commercial appeal and in the absence of any encouragement from the Government, therefore, the proclaimed cable television revolution fizzled out in France, as it was also to do in other Western European countries.

Local radio

With the complete halt on the development of cable television as a local medium, the challenge to the state broadcasting monopoly and to the centralist state networks moved to the field of radio. This challenge has come not from the peripheral radio stations, but from small pirate stations transmitting from within French territory on a local basis.

These pirate stations sprung up during 1977-78 at a time when technological advances had made the transmission equipment cheap to buy and easy to operate. Moreover, the example of the Citizens' Band in the United States and of the private radio stations in Italy provided models of decentralised broadcasting for the French to emulate. Largely excluded from access to the state broadcasting services, small highly motivate political groups among others retaliated by setting up their own alternative media.

The examples of Great Britain and Italy contrasted sharply with the situation in France. At that time there was no local radio in France. Regional radio, which comes under the responsibility of FR3, covers a much wider geographical area than would local radio stations. In any event the contribution of regional radio to the total broadcast output is quite limited. While at first sight the figure of 25,000 hours per year broadcast by regional radio seems impressive, it should be remembered that this represents only around 1,500 hours a year per regional radio station, or approximately four hours a day. Regional radio as presently conceived in France is, in short, a supplementary service for national radio rather than a fully fledged competitor.

Reacting against this centralised control of broadcasting, various groups and individuals established their own pirate radio stations in 1977. The total number of pirate stations probably exceeded 100 by early 1978 though it is impossible, given the rapidity with which some stations were set up and then disbanded, to estimate their numbers accurately. The Paris region alone had about 20 stations, while in the rest of France the pirates were concentrated mainly though not exclusively


in major urban centres.\textsuperscript{27}

The first pirate station to begin broadcasting was Radio Verte which was set up in Paris in spring 1977 as one of the mouthpieces of the ecological movement.\textsuperscript{28} Other ecological stations were set up soon afterwards in other parts of France including Radio Verte Fessenheim (Alsace), Radio Soleil (Montpellier) and Radio Polyphème (Lyon). The example set by the ecologists was soon copied by other groups including feminists (Les radiotéuses), homosexuals (Radio Fil Rose) and commercial interests (Génération 2000).

This overt challenge to the state broadcasting monopoly compelled the Government and the traditional political forces to clarify publicly their positions on the legal framework for broadcasting. Prior to the 1978 legislative elections the Government reacted fairly circumspectly, jamming the broadcasts of the pirate stations without in the main taking those responsible for the illegal broadcasts to court. Though wishing to enforce the monopoly the Government did not wish to alienate potentially crucial sectors of the electorate such as the ecologists in what all polls forecast would be a closely contested election. Moreover, in case of defeat the parties of the governing coalition might wish to make use of radio outside the state broadcasting services, since the latter would be in the hands of the left.

However, following the victory of the governing coalition these electoral considerations quickly evaporated. Just one week after the second ballot the Government published a decree, which had been in preparation well over a year, specifying the few limited exceptions

\textsuperscript{27} See appendix 12.iv.

allowed to the state monopoly of transmission and programming. These exceptions included broadcasts to a predetermined audience such as at conferences, close circuit television and broadcasts made for the purposes of scientific research or in the interests of national security. Since they were not explicitly included in the list of permitted exceptions, the pirate radio stations found their illegality confirmed.

The mainstream political parties had, as one might expect, differing reactions to the phenomenon of the pirate stations. Moreover, they were frequently internally divided regarding their views on the state monopoly. For example, the Gaullist party had traditionally been a resolute defender of the state broadcasting monopoly and had favoured its maintenance during the 1974 reform debate. Faced with the challenge of the pirates, however, the Gaullists were disunited. For example, Le Tac among others continued to defend the principle of the state monopoly as the best means of guaranteeing a public service broadcasting system. Le Tac favoured the creation of local radios within the framework of the state monopoly to be administered by a holding company in each region made up of representatives of Radio France, FR3 and TDF.

Officially, however, the policy of the Gaullist party on local radio was put forward by Vivien in the debate in the National Assembly in June 1978 on the enforcement of the monopoly. Vivien's proposal was that the State should retain the monopoly of transmission, which meant control of technical infrastructure and allocation of frequencies. The monopoly of programming, however, should be abolished. An authority should be set up to allocate licences to local radio stations. These transmitting licences would be accompanied by a cahier des charges and would be revoked


in the event of the station not respecting the public service obligations set out in its cahier des charges. The stations would not own their transmitters but would hire them from the state transmission company who would be responsible for the actual transmission of the broadcasts. The stations would be financed from advertising revenue and controlled by representatives of the local authorities and the press. 31

This proposal of the Gaullist party indicated a significant move away from support of the state broadcasting monopoly towards a more flexible policy which would allow outside bodies such as the regional press to gain a foothold in the broadcasting field. It was accompanied by recommendations to allow the peripheral radio stations to establish transmitters on French soil and to give one of the state television channels a status not unlike that of ITV in Great Britain. 32

In contrast to the Gaullists the Giscardians have traditionally favoured the establishment of a commercial television channel to compete against the state channels. Moreover, prior to the 1978 elections various members of the Giscardian Republican party explicitly demonstrated their support for the abolition of the monopoly and the creation of independent local radio stations. 33 In Montpellier local Giscardians even went so far as to set up their own pirate station, Radio Fil Bleu, in July 1977. The

32. See articles entitled "Pour une nouvelle politique" by Jean-Claude Servan-Schreiber, RPR spokesman on broadcasting, in Le Monde, August 21 and 22 1979.
33. Le Monde, May 21-22 1978

This private member's bill favoured the creation of local radio stations with public service obligations, financed from advertising revenue and open to the financial participation of the regional press. This proposal if adopted would have allowed the creation of local radios along the lines of independent local radio in Great Britain.
honorary president of the station was François Delmas, a member of the Republican party's national council and a former mayor of Montpellier before his defeat by the left in the 1977 municipal elections.

A supporter of commercial broadcasting, Delmas wanted to use Radio Fil Bleu to help in his campaign, which proved successful, to capture the parliamentary seat from the left in the 1978 legislative elections. More generally, it is likely that Radio Fil Bleu was a trial balloon to pave the way for the introduction of independent radio in the event of a left-wing victory in the 1978 elections and the transfer of the state broadcasting services to Socialist-Communist control. Whether Giscard d'Estaing tacitly supported the initiative or not, it was noticeable that following the victory of the governing coalition in 1978 Delmas was brought into the Government as Secretary of State for the Environment. 34

The natural tendency of the Giscardians to exploit the situation created by the pirates to push for the privatisation of at least part of the state broadcasting services was offset by their loyalty to the President who in 1978, as in 1974, favoured the maintenance of the state monopoly. The President was naturally unwilling to disown his own broadcasting reform of only four years' standing and be seen to be reacting to events rather than controlling them, particularly as the challenge to the monopoly came largely from political outsiders. With no major elections due until 1981, Giscard d'Estaing could afford to clamp down on the pirate stations as a short-term response while preparing in his own time any future reorganisation of broadcasting.

Moreover, though certain commercial interests as well as the peripheral radio stations would have benefited from a relaxation of the monopoly, other powerful interests were campaigning for its retention. Foremost among this

latter group was the management of the regional press who have consistently opposed the establishment of any independent radio on French soil for fear that this would adversely affect circulation figures and advertising revenue. Though the regional press has shown itself willing to participate financially in the establishment and control of local radio if necessary, it has consistently preferred that local radio stations should not be set up at all. If they were to be set up, the monopolistic position held by press groups in diverse regions of France would come under threat.

Giscard d'Estaing himself appeared particularly aware of the opposition of the regional press to the abolition of the monopoly and the creation of some form of independent local radio. Thus, in early 1976, admittedly before the advent of the pirates, the President declared that he was opposed to the establishment of local radio on the grounds that such a step would have serious consequences for the regional press which in contrast to the national press was in a financially healthy condition.

The divisions within the two main parties of the right were reflected in 1978 by shifting and often inconsistent policy stances adopted by the parties of the left. Traditionally both the Socialist and Communist parties had been ardent supporters of the state broadcasting monopoly, favouring its retention in both 1972 and 1974. However, since 1974 the commitment of both parties to the state monopoly has been weakening, with the result that in 1978 neither appeared as committed to the principle as they had done in the past.

35. Le Monde, June 16 and 17 1978.

In 1980 the regional press was also opposed to the Government's plan to introduce local radio on an experimental basis within the framework of the state monopoly. Le Monde, January 26 1980.

In the case of the Socialist party one can trace the increasing disenchchantment with the concept of the state monopoly back to the 1974 presidential elections. Disgruntled with the way in which a face-to-face interview between the two rival candidates, Mitterrand and Giscard d'Estaing, had been conducted on Radio Europe 1 on the eve of the second ballot, Maurice Séveno, the Socialist party's spokesman on broadcasting policy, drew up a plan for the establishment of a radio station in the Paris region under the control of the Socialist party. In defence of their project, which if it had come to fruition would have been a blatant infringement of the monopoly, the Socialists pointed out that the Government had itself breached the principle of the state monopoly by permitting the construction within French territory of a transmitter for the use of Radio-Monte-Carlo.

The Socialist party project was in an advanced stage when, bowing to governmental pressure, it was postponed indefinitely. In any case the Socialists were by no means united in their attitude towards the establishment of their own radio station. Some members of the national executive remained attached to the concept of the monopoly as the best means of ensuring a public service broadcasting system. Others feared that the creation of such a radio station would lead to retaliation by other political parties, not least the Communists, and the start of a propaganda war over the airwaves. It was also feared that this breach in the monopoly would open broadcasting to commercial interests which naturally the Socialist party wished to avoid.

Following the defeat of the left in the 1978 elections the policy of


38. Le Monde, November 7 1975

the Socialist party on the issue of the state broadcasting monopoly had to take account of the fact that the party's hopes of governmental office were now postponed until the 1981 presidential elections at the earliest. In the National Assembly debate in June 1978, however, the policy of the Socialist party was rather vague. The Socialists opposed three possible options: the establishment of local radio under the control of commercial interests, the State or the relevant municipal authority. They favoured the creation of local radio stations within the framework of the public service to be financed from public funds. Each radio station would have a cahier des charges which would define its public service obligations. The stations would be placed under the overall supervision of a tripartite body composed of representatives of the State, the local collectivity and the listeners. However, the Socialists recognised that their proposals were by no means finalised, since they proposed that their policy recommendations be put into operation on an experimental basis for a period of two to three years to allow for further research on the subject. 40

The Communist party, on the other hand, was more specific. It too favoured the maintenance of a public service broadcasting system though not necessarily within the framework of the state monopoly. In the June 1978 debate the Communists proposed that local radios be established under the overall control of the relevant municipal authority, a policy option which was particularly favourable to the Communists after their victories along with the Socialists in the 1977 municipal elections. Each radio station would have its own board of governors composed of representatives of the local authority, the staff and the listeners. The radios would be


By late 1978 the policy of the Socialist party had altered somewhat to allow advertising on any local radio stations set up. These stations would still have to conform to public service obligations. "Rapport du parti socialiste sur la radio-télévision" published as a supplement to Le poing et la rose, no. 77, December 1978, pp. 17-19.
It would appear that the mainstream political parties were caught unawares by the advent of pirate radio, with the result that their responses were frequently vague and fluid. The rapidity of development in broadcasting technology had not been matched by the relevant policy-makers within the parties. The Government too was caught out by this challenge to the state monopoly. In a controversial test case at the end of 1977 Radio Fil Bleu was found not guilty of infringing the monopoly legislation, a decision upheld in the appeal court in May 1978.

As a direct result of the verdict in the Radio Fil Bleu case the Government decided to introduce supplementary legislation to plug the loophole in the 1974 statute. The Government's bill was introduced in Parliament in June 1978. It contained a single article which stated that any person who in violation of the state broadcasting monopoly transmitted a radio or television programme would be subject to a term of imprisonment of between one and twelve months and/or a fine of between 10,000 and 100,000 francs. In addition, the transmission equipment would be impounded by the authorities. The Gaullists and Giscardians supported the Government's bill, though neither did so wholeheartedly. The Socialist and Communist parties opposed it. A Senate amendment declaring an amnesty on all offences committed under the

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42. For the text of the judgements see M. Fansten, Le débat sur les radios locales, Paris, La documentation française, 1979, pp. 21-22.
the previous legislation before July 1 1978 was accepted by the Government and included in the statute which was published on July 28 1978.\textsuperscript{43}

The future of the pirate stations in the summer of 1978 looked, therefore, to be very bleak. In their attempt to persuade the Government and Parliament to allow the creation of local radio stations outside the structure of the state broadcasting services the pirate stations were hampered by their lack of unity. At least three separate groups of pirate stations were discernible, frequently directing their fire against each other rather than concentrating all their efforts on persuading the Government to accede to their demands.

These three groups consisted of an organisation which favoured the creation of commercial stations, Consensus liberté radio; a federation of pirate stations which eschewed any concession to commercial interests and was particularly opposed to the use of advertising revenue to finance local radio, la fédération des radios libres non commerciales; and an association which adopted a more pragmatic attitude towards the question of the role of local radio and which while not opposed to revenue from advertising was not committed to the commercialisation of local radio, l'Association pour la Libération des Ondes (ALO).

In an attempt to strengthen the case in favour of independent local radio, Consensus liberté radio and ALO united forces in the period prior to the parliamentary debate on the broadcasting monopoly. A liaison body was established which produced a manifesto outlining the main policy options favoured by the two pressure groups. This manifesto proposed the maintenance of the state monopoly at the national level only. Local independent radio stations would be allowed. Frequencies

\textsuperscript{43} See appendix 12.v.
would be allocated by an independent committee composed of representatives of the regional council, the trade unions, the listeners, the transmission company, the postal ministry and the radio stations themselves. The independent radio stations would have limited transmission power and would be bound by public service obligations. Each controlling group would be limited to one transmitter so as to prevent private companies from establishing their own commercial monopolies in a region. Finance would come from a combination of listeners' subscriptions, donations, subsidies and local advertising revenue.  

The \textit{fédération nationale des radios libres non commerciales} grouped together about thirty radio stations, in general the most socially and politically committed of the pirates. Prior to the introduction of the supplementary legislation in 1978 this federation proposed a moratorium lasting two years during which the pirate stations would be allowed to operate under the following conditions: the power of any transmitter was not to exceed 200 watts; no commercial advertising was to be allowed; and a technical charter was to be drawn up to establish a fair distribution of frequencies.

The main bones of contention between the \textit{fédération nationale} on the one hand and ALO and Consensus liberté radio on the other centred on the political role of the radio stations and their means of finance. The \textit{fédération nationale} wanted the pirate stations to play an active political role, while the other two groups eschewed such overt political

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45. See table 12.vi.

46. Bulletin of the \textit{Fédération nationale des radios libres non commerciales}.
commitment. On the question of finance the fédération nationale was opposed to commercial advertising, while ALO and Consensus liberté radio were both willing to allow advertising, albeit with certain restrictions.

The pressure groups for the pirate stations were not only divided among themselves. They also failed to build any links with the well-established broadcasting trade unions. For example, while the SURT-CFDT was a strong critic of the Government's perceived abuse of the state monopoly for its own political ends, it nonetheless showed extreme scepticism towards the pirate stations. In particular, it feared that if the pirates were legalised then commercial interests would immediately step in to fill the breach made by the abolition of the state monopoly. The SURT-CFDT supported the concept of a public service broadcasting system, decentralised so as to allow the effective expression of as many groups as possible. The SNRT-CGT also adopted a sceptical attitude towards the pirate stations, fearing the intervention of commercial interests if the state monopoly were abolished. It sought to place more emphasis on the need to democratise the state services rather than setting up independent stations in competition with the state services.

Weakened by disunity among themselves and lacking any organic links with either the main broadcasting unions or the parties of the left, the pressure groups for the pirate stations were in a hopeless position to seek to influence the Government in the drafting of its proposed legislation. However, the passing of the supplementary legislation in

47. Le Monde, June 6 1978. However in 1979 the SURT-CFDT was more sympathetic to the demands of the pirate stations and regarded them as a means of breaking what it regarded as the State's stranglehold over broadcasting.

the summer of 1978 did not resolve the problem of the future of the state broadcasting monopoly. Nor could it realistically have been expected to do so, since the new law was a short-term punitive response to the immediate problem posed by the pirates.

Pirate radio stations have not disappeared because of the new legislation. While some stations ceased broadcasting in 1978, others carried on in defiance of the law. Moreover, during 1979 the appearance of two pirate stations in particular showed that the debate on alternatives to the state and peripheral radio stations was by no means at an end.

The first of these two stations was set up by the local branch of the CGT in Longwy, a Lorraine steel town badly affected by the recession in the world steel industry. This pirate radio, baptised Lorraine Coeur d'Acier, transmitted regularly throughout 1979 and successfully resisted attempts by the authorities to close the station down. In fact, mindful of the political sensitivity of the steel issue, the authorities appeared to be dragging their feet on the question of enforcing the law against what by all accounts was a very popular radio station in the locality.49 Encouraged by the success of Lorraine Coeur d'Acier the CGT set up other pirate stations in different regions of France, some of which were raided by the authorities in 1980.50

The second pirate station to receive maximum publicity during 1979 was Radio-Riposte, which was set up by the Socialist party in

49. Le Monde, May 19, June 3-4 and 16, and November 7 1979; L'Humanité, June 14, 15 and 25 1979; Libération, August 15 1979; and Presse Actualité, no. 142, January 1980, pp. 25-29. Lorraine Coeur d'Acier was reputed to have an audience rating of 45% during 1979. Le Monde, January 27 1980.

The local branch of the CFDT had already established their own private radio in Longwy, Radio SOS Emploi. See Claude Collin, Ecoutez la vraie différence!, Claix, la pensée sauvage, 1979.

50. The other CGT radio stations set up in late 1979 included Radio Quinquin, Radio 92, Radio 93, Radio Action CGT Radio 76 Radio SAM and Radio Paris. The transmission equipment of Radio Quinquin and
protest against "government interference" in the state broadcasting media. Though transmitting only infrequently, Radio-Riposte became front page news in the French press in the summer of 1979 when the Socialist party headquarters in Paris were forcibly invaded by police searching for the transmission equipment. Several prominent members of the Socialist party, including its leader Mitterrand, were summoned to appear in court for infringement of the state monopoly.51

Despite the 1978 legislation, therefore the state broadcasting monopoly is still under attack. Having failed to prop it up with purely repressive measures, the Government decided at the end of 1979 to establish experimental local radio stations under the control of the state radio company, Radio France. Thus, the Government is attempting in a very limited fashion to accommodate the demand for local broadcasting within the framework of the state monopoly while at the same time enforcing the 1978 legislation wherever feasible. This mixture of repression and accommodation would appear to be a similar strategy to that followed in the 1960s by the BBC when, after the commercial pirate stations had been banned, the BBC's radio services were reorganised to fill the pop music gap left by the disappearance of the pirates.52

50. Lorraine Coeur d'Acier at Nancy was seized by the authorities in early June 1980. Le Monde, June 8-9, 1980.

51. Le Monde June 30, July 1-2, August 16 and 25 and November 16 1979;

Le Matin, June 29, August 10 and 25 1979;

Libération, June 29, August 24 and 27 1979; and

Le Point, no. 363, September 3-9 1979.

52. On the new local radio experiments see Le Monde December 5 and 15 1979, February 29, March 25, April 20-21, May 16, 21 and 24 1980.
Radio France is obviously very keen to have local radio established under its control. Not only would this extend its range of services, but it would also help correct the Parisian bias in the company's organisational structure. The allocation of the regional radio services in 1974 to FR3 rather than to Radio France has been a source of conflict between the two programme companies ever since, with Radio France claiming that its lack of radio services below the national level seriously hampered its ambition to provide a comprehensive radio service. If the Government were to give the go-ahead to a policy of local radio within the framework of the state monopoly, and this seems the likeliest development in the short term, Radio France would be the major beneficiary, while the opposition of the regional press to independent local radio could also be accommodated.

Conclusion

The state broadcasting monopoly, though challenged throughout the 1970s, still remained in existence at the end of the decade. In the field of television the state television companies have remained more or less immune to external competition. There is no commercial television channel operating within French territory,

53. See interview with Jacqueline Baudrier in Press Actualité, no. 127, April 1978, p. 52.

despite various attempts to have one established. Another potential threat to the predominance of the state television companies, cable television, has not fulfilled its early promise. Therefore, only in certain frontier regions can French viewers watch programmes from a source other than the three state companies. In these regions, which cover about 30 departments, programmes can be received from different foreign television channels.\footnote{55} In addition, some French viewers can receive programmes from the peripheral television companies \textit{Téléd'Luxembourg} and \textit{Téléd-Monte-Carlo}, both of which transmit from just outside French territory.\footnote{56} Nonetheless, for the majority of the French population the present choice in television viewing lies between TF1, A2 and FR3.

In the field of radio French listeners can receive national programmes from the state radio company, Radio France, and regional broadcasts from the state programme company, FR3. The State's legal monopoly in radio transmission and programming is infringed by the peripheral stations, which have, however, become a \textit{de facto} part of that monopoly. Recently this monopoly has come under attack from pirate stations, with the Government reacting, first, by introducing repressive measures to shore up the monopoly, and secondly, by trying to accommodate the demands for local radio through the establishment of experimental stations under the control of Radio France

The future of the state broadcasting monopoly, however, is uncertain. The recent transfer of the transmission company to the

\footnote{55. In Alsace, for example, viewers can receive up to 11 different television channels. \textit{Paris-Match}, no. 1551, February 16 1979.}

\footnote{56. See table 12.ii for the shareholdings of the French state in peripheral television.}
tutelage of the Ministry of Posts, Telegraphs and Telecommunications reinforces the view that the State has no intention of giving up its monopoly of transmission. The overall control of the technical infrastructure, whether in the form of land transmitters or broadcasting satellites, will remain firmly in the hands of the State via TDF.

On the other hand, the monopoly of programming has now become an area of contention with none of the four main political formations favouring its retention. Instead they have all embraced the much vaguer concept of the public service, which is open to a wide variety of interpretation. This change of emphasis reflects disillusionment on the part of some with the way in which the state monopoly has been controlled, and the belief shared by most that with the advent of new technology the monopoly has now become an outmoded concept in any case.

At present the monopoly of programming is threatened on two fronts. The first, as we have seen, is reflected in the demand for some form of local radio outside the state services. There is no evidence that the Government has any intention of giving way to these demands in the near future. On the contrary, public statements by government ministers point to the enforcement of the state monopoly and at most a possible extension of the services provided by Radio France.


58. While "state monopoly" refers to the organisation of broadcasting, "public service" refers to its goals and ethos. For example, Great Britain has a public service broadcasting system organised in the duopoly of the BBC and IBA.

59. See statements by Jean Lecat, Christian Bonnet and Raymond Barre in Le Monde, September 5, 6 and 9-10 1979
The second threat to the programming monopoly, this time in the provision of television services, may come with the arrival of satellite broadcasting. The French and German governments have already agreed to combine forces on the construction of direct broadcasting satellites. At present it is intended that the French satellite will be in operation by the mid-1980s. While this satellite would obviate the need for the construction of more land transmitters, it would also provide an extra channel for the transmission of television programmes.

Of the three channels available two will be used by TF1 and A2, FR3's regional vocation making transmission by satellite impossible. The Government has not yet decided who, if anyone, will benefit from the vacant channel, though at one stage Radio Télévision Luxembourg was reputed to be interested. However, though the channel will probably be financed from advertising, it is too early to say what effect it will have on the State's monopoly of programming. Technical and financial considerations apart, the presidential elections of 1981 and legislative elections of 1983 may well have led to another reorganisation of state broadcasting before satellite broadcasting even gets off the ground.

60. Le Monde, October 4 1979.


CONCLUSION

The objectives of this thesis were to examine critically the 1974-75 reorganisation of the state broadcasting services in France and to evaluate the consequences of this reform for the relationship between the Government and broadcasting during the early years of the Giscardian presidency. We have intentionally viewed this reorganisation from a political rather than historical, sociological or jurisprudential perspective, by placing the reform within the context of the election of the first non-Gaullist President of the Fifth Republic and the ensuing conflict within the governing Gaullist-Giscardian coalition.

With regard to government-broadcasting relations a major conclusion to emerge from our research is that controls over the political output of the state broadcasting services since 1974 have been to a large extent internalised within the broadcasting companies. The crude direct interventionism of the Ministry of Information, which characterised the period of de Gaulle's presidency, is no longer a feature of this relationship. Instead there is an increasing reliance on indirect controls, particularly via partisan appointments to the key managerial and editorial posts in the new companies.

The results of our research cast grave doubt on the terms in which the debate on government-broadcasting relations in liberal democracies is usually conducted. Neither of the two antithetical models frequently employed in this debate, the "fourth estate" and "state control" models, seems a satisfactory description when applied to government-broadcasting relations in France during the Fifth Republic.

The fourth estate model, underpinned by the twin concepts of the independence of the broadcasters on the one hand and the impartiality of
the political output on the other, has never been applicable to
government-broadcasting relations in France since 1958. Various
studies have shown this for the period up to 1974. While according
to government spokesmen and the President of the Republic himself the
1974 reform was intended to establish a fourth estate type relationship
between the Government and broadcasting, and the terminology of the
companies' cahiers des charges reflects this apparent desire, our research
has demonstrated that this goal is very far from being achieved. We have
shown in this thesis the multiplicity of the links between the Government
and the new broadcasting companies, whose interdependence is not based
on anything resembling a balance of power relationship.

The Government has at its disposal a variety of means through which
to control those aspects of broadcasting in which it has an interest.
This thesis has studied in detail those areas of control where the
Government plays a primordial role, from determining the legal framework
for broadcasting to ensuring that political sympathisers are appointed
to key posts in company news departments.

The other actors involved in the contribution of the state broadcasting
companies to the political communications process are subject to a variety
of constraints. For example, the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel and the
Quality Committee are not directly involved in the running of the companies.
The broadcasting unions have been weakened, first, by the reorganisation
itself and, secondly, by specific measures designed to reduce their capacity
for effective corporate action. The radio and television journalists
have been the victims of successive purges in 1968, 1972 and 1974. In the
light of these experiences and with a high rate of unemployment in their

1. See among others R. Thomas, Broadcasting and Democracy in France,
London, Crosby Lockwood Staples, 1976; J. Thibau, La télévision,
le pouvoir et l'argent, Paris, Calmann Lévy, 1973; and the Diligent
profession, the journalists, even if they wished to do so, could scarcely be expected to present an effective counter-balance to the Government and the broadcasting management. In any case the hierarchical structure of the news departments militates against the possible effectiveness of opposition within the companies. The civil servants of the Service Juridique et Technique de l'Information have very little to do with the running of the broadcasting companies. The boards of governors exercise very little power in practice and are in any case dominated by persons appointed directly or indirectly by the Government. Parliament has neither the power, the time, nor the information to challenge the dominance of the executive in this policy area. Finally, the broadcasting management are tied to the Government through the system of partisan appointments, which tends to ensure a convergence of interests between the two bodies. In any case if for some reason their performance is deemed to be unsatisfactory, the chairman, news director and other holders of key posts can be dismissed with a minimum of fuss "pour encourager les autres." The example of Jullian is a case in point. In short, the broadcasting management lack the independent power base necessary for the fourth estate model even to begin to work in practice.

In rejecting the applicability of the fourth estate model, however, we cannot accept as satisfactory the alternative model of state control, which is too static and monolithic for our purposes, unable to allow for change except of a totally radical kind. Our empirical examination of broadcasting in France has highlighted certain deficiencies of this model, particularly its imprecision since as it stands it could be applied to government-broadcasting relations during the whole of the Fifth Republic. Yet this thesis has shown that this relationship has altered greatly in form and to a limited extent in substance over this period. In particular, the state control model underestimates or ignores the importance of the following three features of government-broadcasting
relations which have emerged from our research.

First, the state control model tends to present the governing coalition in France as a more homogeneous entity than in fact it is. One main theme running through this thesis has been the conflict between the Giscardian and Gaullist components of this coalition, especially highlighted in the chapters on the origins of the 1974 reform, appointments and news programmes. This thesis has provided a case-study of the change in the balance of power within the governing coalition following the victory of Giscard d'Estaing in the 1974 presidential elections. In fact, we have argued that the break-up of the ORTF was itself primarily a political act best understood within this context. Since the ORTF was a powerful symbol of the so-called Gaullist state, its abolition marked the end of the Gaullist domination of ministerial, administrative and para-administrative posts which had lasted since 1958 and the advent to power of a different, not to say antagonistic, tendency within the French right. It might even be contended that the nature of the reform, a mixture of liberalism and dirigisme, was an accurate reflection of the new President's ideological stance.

Secondly, the state control model fails to take account of changes in the areas and degrees of control exercised. Yet as we have argued the type of overt, external control exerted over news programming during de Gaulle's presidency has no parallel in the present government-broadcasting relationship. Moreover, if one examines the financial arrangements of the state broadcasting services one can see a similar shift of emphasis away from the micro level of individual programme budgets to the macro level of the company. Therefore, there have been changes in the nature of the government-broadcasting relationship during the Fifth Republic, and particularly since the 1974 reform, which are glossed over by the state control model.

Finally, the state control model has little to say about the source of control. While we have argued that the Government working through a largely dependent broadcasting management is usually able to exercise control in those areas in which it has an interest, it is also clear that within the political executive the source of policy-making on the main decisions connected with the running of the state broadcasting companies is the President of the Republic. There has, therefore, been a transfer of power within the executive during the Fifth Republic from the Ministry of Information (1958-1969) to the Prime Minister's office (1969-1972) and finally to the Presidency of the Republic (1972 onwards) which has been consolidated by the 1974 reform.

While the Prime Minister, the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Culture and Communication have all played some role since 1974 in supervising the drafting and implementation of particular decisions with regard to the running of the broadcasting companies, the source of the major policy decisions is the Elysée. The content of the 1974 reform, appointments to key managerial and editorial posts within the state companies and peripheral radio stations and the Government's continuing support for the principle of the state monopoly, all reflect the views of Giscard d'Estaing.

This thesis, therefore, supports the view that the Fifth Republic has become increasingly presidential in character. De Gaulle's reserved domain of policy-making (covering foreign affairs, defence, and, of course, Algeria), which was enlarged under Pompidou, has become so all-encompassing under Giscard d'Estaing that it has now been dropped as a concept from political discourse in France. The present President of the Fifth Republic dominates the executive and the Giscardian component of the governing coalition, both in Parliament and in the country. Thus, within the executive there is no room for strong, independent ministers either at
Matignon, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Defence or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At the same time the Giscardian party, le parti Républicain, remains a loose cadre party lacking a mass following. As such it cannot afford its general secretary, Jean-Pierre Soisson, who is in any case a close political friend of the President, a potential independent power base in the political system.

The 1974 reform can be placed quite easily within this context of presidential dominance since the break-up of the ORTF itself removed one possible power base in French politics, the combined position of chairman and director general of a large state broadcasting organisation. Unlike Conte, for example, the chairmen of the seven separate companies established in 1974 lack the authority necessary to consider a challenge to the Presidency of the Republic, even if Conte's challenge in 1973 ended in disaster. Moreover, it is noticeable that increasingly the state broadcasting media and peripheral radio stations have been colonised by close supporters of the President, including various former members of the Elysée staff.

This thesis has demonstrated, therefore, the inadequacies of the fourth estate and state control models as descriptions of government-broadcasting relations in France since 1974. Our research has also shown the failure of the 1974 reform to resolve many of the problems which led to the break-up of the ORTF. For example, the Government hoped that the smaller units created by the reorganisation would be more efficient than the ORTF. While this has generally proved correct with regard to the programme companies, the production company has been a major victim of the reform, failing to establish a commercially viable position in the new broadcasting structure. Secondly, the Government maintained that the new companies would require fewer staff than the ORTF. Yet by 1979 the number of staff employed in the new
companies was greater than that working at the ORTF. Finally, with the
strikes in the broadcasting companies in 1978-79 at the time of the SFP
crisis, the level of strike activity in the new companies exceeded that
which had triggered the decision to break up the ORTF.

In addition, the reform was intended by the Government to encourage
competition between the two major television companies in the belief that
this would improve the quality of the output. In fact, not only has the
supposed low level of programme quality been attacked from a variety of
interested and disinterested sources, but the Government has been compelled
to intervene to encourage greater creativity in programming and to protect
interested parties such as television producers and actors from what
they regard as unfair and excessive foreign competition.

Finally, another objective of the reform was to open up broadcasting
to a wider section of the population through, for example, the access
programme, Tribune Libre, and a decentralisation of power to the regions.
However, the concessions made to regional broadcasting are minimal. One
response to the centralised nature of the state broadcasting companies
has been the creation of pirate radio stations outside the state networks
by groups who consider that they have been denied access on the official
channels. Although hit by the supplementary legislation introduced in
1978, these pirate stations have demonstrated that there exists a demand
for communication at the local level to which the Government was in 1980
finally forced to make an albeit limited response.

The 1974 statute has not, therefore, removed broadcasting as an area
of political contention in France. Debates about the most suitable
organisational structure for the state broadcasting services were as
prevalent at the end of the decade as they were at the beginning. In fact
by the end of the 1970s the wheel had virtually turned full circle with
the 1979 Cluzel report calling for the establishment of a central
body to coordinate the running of the separate companies as compared with the 1970 Paye report which recommended a greater degree of functional decentralisation within the ORTF under the overall control of a central organism.

However, this sense of \textit{déjà vu} can also be misleading, since the continuing debate about the organisational structure of broadcasting cannot merely replough the same ground. Thus, while at the beginning of the decade there was a large degree of consensus regarding the desirability of preserving the legal framework of the state monopoly, with the advent of new broadcasting technology the very existence of the state monopoly has been increasingly called into question. In these circumstances it remains to be seen to what extent the 1974 statute will prove flexible enough to deal with the problems French broadcasting will have to face in the 1980s.

\textbf{Future research}

This thesis has concentrated on one particular aspect of the political communications process in France. Although we have tried to be as comprehensive as possible in our research, our study of the 1974 broadcasting reform cannot be totally self-contained. Therefore, we have thought it useful to suggest possible future lines of inquiry which would complement our own research. Two in particular seem highly relevant.

The first area of research would concentrate on the internal organisation of the separate broadcasting companies. If our thesis is correct that controls over broadcasting output, particularly news programmes, have been largely internalised within the companies, then there is an obvious need for a study of role allocation and patterns of behaviour within the companies. In particular, a lengthy observation study inside the news department of one or more of the programme companies
would be a useful complement to our research. There is already a
tradition of inquiry in Great Britain on the sociology of broadcasting
institutions which could be usefully employed as a basis for any research
into the French companies.  

A second line of research which would fit in with our own would be
a content analysis of programming, particularly news programmes. A
methodical analysis of radio and television news content over a specific
time period might then be used to exemplify, or even falsify, some of the
necessarily impressionistic conclusions about news content contained
in this thesis. Once again there is a recent example of this tradition
of inquiry in Great Britain with the publication of the findings of the
Glasgow University Media Group.  

An observation study of the work of the news departments and a
content analysis of their output pose problems of access, methodology
and finance. If they were undertaken, however, they should make an
important contribution to what has remained until now a largely
unresearched area in France. Our research has, we hope, made its own
contribution to our knowledge of government-broadcasting relations
in France and more generally to our understanding of the Giscardian
presidency.

3. See T. Burns, The BBC: Public Institution and Private World,
London, Macmillan, 1977; P. Schlesinger, Putting 'reality'together,
London, Constable, 1978; and M. Tracey, The production of political

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Appendix I.

Law no. 74-696 of August 7 1974 on the subject of radio and television

The National Assembly and the Senate have adopted,

The President of the Republic promulgates the law the provisions of which follow:

Article I: The national public service of French broadcasting assumes, within the limits of its competence, the task of fulfilling the needs and aspirations of the population, with regard to information, communication, culture, education, entertainment and the values of civilisation generally. It has as its objective in this regard to ensure that the exclusive pursuit of the general interests of the community prevails.

It affords equal access to the expression of the principal trends of thought and major currents of opinion. Broadcasting time is placed regularly at their disposal.

It participates in the spreading of French culture in the world.

These responsibilities give it a duty to safeguard the quality and renown of the French language.

Article 2: The Office de radiodiffusion-télévision française is abolished.

The execution of the public service obligations and of the radio and television monopoly set out in article 1 above and in article 2 of law no. 72-553 of July 3 1972, are entrusted to a state public corporation of an industrial and commercial character (établissement public de l'État à caractère industriel et commercial) and to national companies (sociétés nationales) in conditions fixed by the present law.

Article 3: There is created an audiovisual institute with particular responsibilities for the conservation of archives, research in broadcasting creativity and professional training.

This institute constitutes a public corporation of an industrial and commercial character.

Article 4: There is established a parliamentary delegation for French broadcasting.

This delegation carries out in particular the functions set out in article 164, paragraph IV, of ordinance no. 58-1374 of December 30, 1958 and receives the special reports of the committee verifying the accounts of public companies (la commission de vérification des comptes des entreprises publiques).

It has as its function to give opinions (avis) to the Government in the following conditions:

a) The delegation is compulsorily consulted on permitted exceptions (dérrogations) to the monopoly provided for in article 3 paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of law no. 72-553 of July 3, 1972, on agreements reached by the public corporation and the companies created by the present law concerning the production, transmission and reproduction of programmes and in the other cases provided for by the present law;

b) The delegation may be consulted or give its opinion on its own initiative in the areas covered by the present law.

II. The parliamentary delegation is composed of:

The general rapporteurs (rapporteurs généraux) of the finance committees of the two Assemblies, the special rapporteurs of the same committees and the rapporteurs of the cultural affairs committees concerned with broadcasting;

Five deputies and three senators chosen in such a way as to ensure a balanced representation of the political groups.

III. The delegation draws up its own internal rules. It gives account of its activities to the parliamentary assemblies and drafts an annual report which is laid before the assemblies at the opening of the first ordinary session.

Chapter I

The Public Transmission Corporation (L'établissement public de diffusion)

Article 5: A public corporation of an industrial and commercial character, benefiting from administrative and financial autonomy, has the tasks of ensuring the transmission of radio and television programmes in France and abroad and of organising, developing and maintaining the transmission networks and installations.
It has in particular the task of providing the necessary equipment to cover those areas which cannot yet receive the programmes of all the national companies.

It undertakes research and cooperates in the setting of standards with regard to broadcasting equipment and material.

Half of the board of governors is composed of persons representing the State. In addition the board includes two parliamentarians chosen respectively by the competent permanent committees of the National Assembly and the Senate as well as representatives of the national programme companies and two staff representatives of the corporation appointed from lists drawn up by the representative trade union organisations.

The members of the board of governors exercise their mandate for three years. The term of office of the state representatives can be ended at any time.

The chairman (président), chosen from among the members of the board of governors, and the director general are appointed for three years by decree in the council of ministers.

**Article 6:** The resources of the Public Transmission Corporation include:

1. The sum paid by the national programme companies to cover the cost of the transmission of their programmes and the money paid for services rendered whatever they may be, as well as capital assistance;

2. A percentage of the licence revenue, calculated in such a way as to permit progressively the transmission of programmes over the whole of the territory of the Republic and abroad;

3. The product of loans;

4. The revenue from investments and authorised shareholdings;

5. State subsidies;

6. The product of gifts and legacies.

The budget of the corporation is subject to approval.

**Chapter II**

The National Programme Companies (**Les sociétés nationales de programme**)  

**Section 1**

The national radio company.
Article 7: A national company is given the task of producing and programming radio programmes.

It produces programmes and can hand over to a third party the rights which it possesses over these programmes.

It manages and ensures the development of the orchestras both in Paris and in the provinces.

Section 2

The national television companies

Article 8: Three national companies are given the task of the conception and programming of television programmes. They produce programmes and can hand over to a third party the rights which they possess over these programmes.

Article 9: The chairmen (présidents) of the national television companies meet periodically to ensure the harmonisation of programmes.

Article 10: One of the national companies reserves a privileged place for the programming of cinema films and for the organisation of programmes given over to the direct expression of different tendencies of creed and thought. It is given the task of managing and developing the regional radio and television centres.

A consultative regional broadcasting committee is set up attached to each regional broadcasting centre. It is composed of personalities representative of the principal tendencies of thought and of the main groups which contribute to the economic, social and cultural life of the region. The composition of these committees is fixed by decree after the opinion (avis) has been given of the regional council or councils concerned. They include one third of locally elected politicians chosen by the departmental councils (conseils généraux) from among the mayors and departmental councillors (conseillers généraux).

The body given the task of organising radio and television in the overseas departments and territories is attached to the national company mentioned in clause 1 according to provisions fixed by decree and by charter (cahier des charges), with the specific needs of these departments and territories taken into account.

A consultative programme committee for the overseas departments and territories assists the chairman of the board of governors (le président du conseil d'administration). It is made up of two members chosen by each of the departmental councils or territorial assemblies, of two persons appointed by ministerial decision (arrêté) and of two parliamentarians chosen by their assembly.
Section 3

Provisions common to the national programme companies

Article 11: The board of governors of each company is composed of six governors: two representatives of the State, one parliamentarian, one representative of the press, one representative of the staff and a leading figure from the cultural world. For the company mentioned in article 10, this person must come from the cinema industry.

The members of the board of governors exercise their mandate for three years.

The representative of the staff is appointed from a list drawn up by the trade union organisations representative of the staff.

The chairman, chosen from among the members of the board of governors, is appointed for three years by decree in the council of ministers. He organises the management and appoints its members.

Article 12: The State is the sole shareholder in the national programme companies. These companies are subject to the legislation on limited companies (sociétés anonymes), with the exception of any provisions of this legislation incompatible with the particular structure of the companies and the demands of their public service role.

The powers of the general assembly of shareholders are exercised by the board of governors. It draws up the statutes which are approved by decree.

Chapter III

The Production Company

Article 13: A production company, subject to the legislation on limited companies, without any exception other than those which result from the present law, makes film and video productions which it sells on a commercial basis notably to the programme companies.

The shares of this company are registered. They can be held only by the State, other persons of public law (droit public), national companies or mixed economy companies (sociétés d'économie mixte), the public capital being always over 50%.

The statutes of the company are approved by decree. The appointment of the chairman and, if necessary, of the director general, as well as any increase or decrease in capital and any transfer of shares are submitted for approval to the Prime Minister or to a member of the Government appointed by him for this purpose.
Chapter IV

Common provisions

Section 1

Role of the State

Article 14: The Prime Minister or a member of the Government appointed by him for this purpose ensures the respect of the monopoly, supervises the observation by the public corporation and the national companies of their charters and, in general, of their public service obligations.

Article 15: A charter (cahier des charges) drawn up by the Prime Minister or the minister appointed by him lays down, after the opinion (avis) of the parliamentary delegation for broadcasting has been given, for the public corporation and for each national company, to the exclusion of any pressure by private economic interests, the goals to be attained for the accomplishment of the public service obligations, especially the development of the networks and the minimum amount of programmes.

The national company which manages the regional radio and television centres will broadcast its programmes either on the network of the former first channel or on that of the former second channel.

The charter sets out their obligations in the fields of news and culture which must conform with the tasks laid down in article 1, especially through the transmission of lyrical, dramatic or musical works, produced by subsidised theatres, festivals or cultural bodies. It fixes their obligations with regard to external services and cooperation.

In addition, it obliges the national television companies to favour by any means they judge appropriate inventiveness, creativity and originality in programming.

The charter includes minimum air time for political formations and representative professional organisations to express themselves freely.

It determines the rules to which advertising is subject, respecting the limits laid down by article 22 and fixing the maximum amount of advertising revenue which can come from the same advertiser.

The charter fixes the amount and the control of advertising in the overseas departments and territories.

Article 16: The Government may at any time require the programming and transmission of any declaration or communication which it considers necessary. These programmes are announced as being broadcast by order of the Government.

The national companies are obliged to produce and to programme and the public corporation to transmit election campaign broadcasts. The facilities provided by the
national companies in this regard will be the subject of provisions contained in their charters.

The coverage by radio or television of parliamentary debates is carried out under the control of the bureaux of each of these assemblies.

Equality of air time is accorded the parliamentary groups of the majority (majorité) and the opposition.

Section 2

The tasks of the boards of governors

Article 17: The boards of governors of the public transmission corporation and of the programme companies lay down the general guidelines of the activity of the corporation or the company within the confines of their charters. They vote the budget or the provisional account of income and expenditure which must be in balance; they supervise its execution.

The boards of governors of the national radio and television companies guarantee the quality and morality of their programmes. They supervise the objectivity and accuracy of news broadcasts as well as guaranteeing access to the main tendencies of thought and major currents of opinion.

Section 3

Financial provisions

Article 18: The provisional account of income and expenditure of each national programme company is passed to the Government for comment.

Article 19: Each year, on the occasion of the voting of the finance act, Parliament, following the report of a member of each of the finance committees of the National Assembly and the Senate having the powers of special reporter (rapporteur spécial), authorises the collection of the broadcasting licence.

The allocation of the licence revenue among the public corporation and the national companies, which results from the application of the provisions of article 20, is submitted to approval by Parliament.

The financial results of the preceding year, the provisional accounts of the public corporation and of each of the national programme companies for the current year as well as the budget and the provisional statement of income and expenditure for the following year,
accompanied by any observations on the part of the Government, are attached to the finance bill.

The charters for the current year, additional clauses which possibly modify their content for the following year, comments from the Prime Minister or the minister appointed by him to ensure the respect by each company of the provisions of its charter, are also included as an appendix to the finance bill.

Also included are the operational accounts, the statement of profit and loss and the balance-sheet of the production company.

**Article 20:** The licence fee is collected by the State; the amount collected is provisionally set out in a special Treasury account (compte spécial du Trésor).

The revenue from the licence is shared out annually among the national programme companies and the public corporation on the basis of criteria laid down by decree in the Council of State (Conseil d'Etat) after the opinion of the parliamentary delegation for French broadcasting has been given. In particular, account has to be taken, on the one hand, of the provisions of the charters, of programme quality and cultural value, and, on the other hand, of the audience ratings and the company's own income. A committee chaired by a magistrate of the Accounts Court (Cour des comptes) supervises this distribution of the licence revenue.

**Article 21:** Categories of person benefiting from licence fee exemption or from special tariffs are fixed by decree in the Council of State. These exemptions or special tariffs are reimbursed by the State.

**Article 22:** The length and distribution of advertising slots and the corresponding volume of revenue must remain compatible with the tasks laid down in article 1 above; the proportion of revenue derived from commercial advertising must not exceed altogether 25 per cent of the total revenue of the companies listed in article 2 of the present statute. The charters set out the conditions for the application of this provision and in particular the proportion of screen time which can be filled by advertisements.

The French advertising board (La Régie française de publicité) ensures the control and execution of these provisions.

**Article 23:** When the construction of a building of a great height or a group of buildings adversely affects television reception by the inhabitants of the surrounding area, the constructors must have installed at their expense a television transmission aerial or ensured by some other technical means the normal reception of television programmes by said inhabitants.
Article 24:  The control of the commission verifying the accounts of public companies (la commission de vérification des comptes des entreprises publiques) applies to the public corporation and companies created by the present law as well as to their subsidiaries.

Chapter V

Provisions relating to staff

Section 1

Permanent provisions

Article 25:  The staff of the public transmission corporation are governed by a statute laid down by decree in the Council of State.

The staff of each of the companies are governed by collective agreements (conventions collectives).

The statute of the public corporation and the collective agreements drawn up by management and trade unions cannot adversely affect the guaranteed rights of the workers with regard to salary, sickness and accident at work. The length of service acquired by staff of the ORTF will be recognised in the public corporation and the companies, in particular with regard to redundancy.

The public corporation and the companies will take the necessary steps to affiliate staff allocated to them to superannuation schemes (des régimes de retraite complémentaire).

The provisions of this article are applicable to staff working in the overseas departments and territories.

Article 26:  In the case of concerted industrial action, the continuity of those parts of the service necessary for the accomplishment of the tasks laid down in article 1 must be ensured by the public transmission corporation and by the national programme companies. The chairman of each company selects those categories of staff who must remain at work.

Section 2

Temporary provisions

Article 27:  Subject to the provisions of article 29, staff employed at the ORTF on December 31 1974 who are governed by the
general statute covering civil servants (statut général des fonctionnaires) are reclassified in comparable agencies of State (corps homologues de l'Etat), in conditions fixed by decree in the Council of State.

Article 28: Former state civil servants who are now covered by the Office's staff statute (intégrés comme agents statutaires de l'Office), under sixty years of age, may, up to December 31 1974, ask for their reclassification in their original corps or in comparable state corps in conditions fixed by decree in the Council of State.

This reclassification is guaranteed by law.

Article 29: The civil servants and, subject to the provisions of article 30, the statutory staff (agents statutaires) working full time in the licence collection service, employed as at December 31 1974, are from that date employed by the State. They preserve the benefits of their statute up to a date fixed by decree. This decree lays down the conditions in which they will be integrated into state civil service corps or into other public corporations or agencies, with the proviso that their acquired rights with regard to length of service cannot be adversely affected, both within metropolitan France and in the overseas departments and territories.

Article 30: Staff subject to the statutes of the Office aged sixty and over on December 31 1974 are placed from that date in early retirement (en position spéciale). This status guarantees them remuneration comparable to a salary and revalued to keep pace with salary increases, equivalent to the total of their pension and, where applicable, the superannuation to which they would have been entitled if they had pursued their career up to the age limit set down in the texts which are applicable to them at present.

Under the same conditions, statutory staff of the Office, aged fifty five and above on December 31 1974 can, at their request, be granted early retirement (mis en position spéciale).

The provisions of the first paragraph are not applicable either to staff having dependent relatives or to staff having dependent children as defined in article L.527 of the social security code or by the income tax regulations. These staff will, at their request, be maintained in employment as long as they have dependent children and, at the latest, until they reach the age limit laid down in the texts which are applicable to them at present.

Article 31: The reallocation of staff taken on by the different corporation and companies is carried out, account being taken of the requirements of these bodies, by decision of the president director general (président directeur général) of the Office, following the opinion of a committee presided over by a member of the administrative judiciary and comprising representatives of the public
corporation and of the companies, of the ORTF and of the staff, the latter being appointed by the representative trade union organisations.

Subject to the provisions of articles 27 to 30, those staff not allocated to one of these companies may, if they so request before December 31 1974, be reclassified in an administrative department of the State, of another public body, of public corporations or companies.

If they do not make this request, a redundancy payment is automatically granted them on December 31 1974. This payment equals that which is laid down by the statutes applicable to them. For those staff who have at least five years' service by December 31 1974, this payment is not less than one year's salary.

Those staff who make a request for reclassification will continue to receive their salary up until the date at which they are reclassified and, at the latest, up to June 30 1975.

Proposals for reclassification will be made to them, taking into account their professional qualifications. Those staff who refuse three such proposals will be made redundant and will automatically receive the redundancy payment.

Those staff, who having made such a request have not been reclassified by July 1 1975, will automatically be given a redundancy payment conforming to the provisions of paragraph 3 of the present article, less the payments made in application of paragraph 4.

The provisions of articles 27, 29, 30 and 31 do not apply, unless specifically requested by those affected, to staff deported and interned during the Resistance (aux agents déportés et internés de la Résistance), to staff deported and interned for political reasons (aux agents déportés et internés politiques), to staff who hold the voluntary combat card of the Resistance, to staff whose services in the Resistance have been validated by law no. 51-1124 of September 26 1951, to staff who have belonged to the Free French Forces, to ex-servicement holders of the Croix de guerre and to the seriously war wounded.

Article 32: Staff taken on by the corporation or the companies remain up to the drafting of the statutes or contracts laid down in article 25 and, at the latest up until December 31 1975, subject to the provisions which are applicable to them at present. The company to which they are allocated is substituted for the Office with regard to the rights and duties of these staff.

Chapter VI

Final provisions

Article 33: The patrimony and the rights and duties of the Office
are transferred to the public corporation and to the companies created in application of the present law, by the joint decision (arrête) of the Prime Minister or a minister appointed by him and the Minister of the Economy and Finance.

The property, rights and duties which, at the date the law starts being applied, have not been the object of such a transfer are taken over by the State. They may be transferred thereafter under conditions fixed by decree in the Council of State.

The regulations according to which the liquidation service or services will ensure the payment of salaries or redundancy payments as laid down in articles 27 to 29 above as well as the payment of national insurance contributions (cotisations sociales) corresponding to the period during which these staff have been placed in temporary retirement (dans la position spéciale) are fixed by decree in the Council of State.

The transfer of property, rights and duties as laid down in the present law does not give the right either to any indemnity or to the collection of fees or taxes or to the payment of salaries or honoraria.

Article 34:

Decrees in the Council of State determine the conditions of application of the present law.

The date from which article 2 will be applied and the date of the transfer of staff and property, rights and duties are the first of January 1975. However, the ORTF may retain responsibility for programmes until the first Monday of January 1975.

Articles 3, 4, 8 and 10, paragraph 1, of the ordinance no. 59-273 of February 4 1959 and articles 2, 3, 8 and 16 law no. 72-553 of July 3 1972 are maintained in operation. The other provisions of these texts are abrogated as from January 1 1975.

The present law will be executed as a law of the State.
Daily newspapers in France: number of titles and circulation figures since the Liberation.

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Table 2.1.

Source: P. Albert, *La Presse Française, Paris*, La documentation française, Notes et études documentaires no. 4469, 1979, p. 94 and 158.
Circulation figures are given in thousands.
Total circulation of daily newspapers per 1,000 inhabitants

<table>
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Table 2.ii

Sources: Cahiers françois, *La presse quotidienne*, Paris
La documentation française, no. 178, 1976, notice no. 2 table 4 and p. 7.
Number of copies of daily newspapers produced per 1,000 inhabitants

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<td>Luxembourg</td>
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<tr>
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Table 2.111

Source: Cahiers français, La presse quotidienne, Paris, La documentation française, no. 178, 1976, notice no.2 table 4.
Growth of television: 1955 - 1979

<table>
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<td>984,394</td>
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<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>1,902,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>2,555,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>3,426,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>4,400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>5,414,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>6,489,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>7,471,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>8,336,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>9,277,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>9,900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>10,600,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>11,500,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>12,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>12,900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>13,700,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>14,400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>14,800,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>15,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17,500,000*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This represents a figure of just under 90% of French households. Of these 17.5 million sets, however, only 5.8 million were colour. *(Le Matin, Sept. 6 1979)*

Table 2.iv.
Number of television sets per 1,000 inhabitants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1955</th>
<th>1960</th>
<th>1965</th>
<th>1972</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Germany</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 2 v.
Composition of the National Assembly in July 1974

**Majorité**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.D.R.</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Republicans</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Centristes</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Réformateurs démocrates sociaux</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Opposition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socialists and left-wing Radicals</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communists</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Non-inscrits**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>490 deputies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1.
1974 Broadcasting Statute: Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 29</td>
<td>Conseil interministériel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2</td>
<td>Conseil interministériel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 3</td>
<td>Conseil des ministres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 13</td>
<td>Conseil interministériel restreint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 17</td>
<td>Conseil des ministres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 20</td>
<td>Government bill published. (Journal Officiel Documents Assemblée Nationale, no. 1161.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 22</td>
<td>Rapport de Jean de Préaumont au nom de la commission des affaires culturelles. (Journal Officiel Documents Assemblée Nationale, no. 1162.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 25</td>
<td>Amended bill goes to Senate. (Journal Officiel Documents Sénat, no. 287.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 25</td>
<td>Rapport de Michel Miroudot, au nom de la commission des affaires culturelles. (Journal Officiel Documents Sénat, no. 288.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 27</td>
<td>Amended bill goes to the Commission mixte paritaire. (Journal Officiel Documents Assemblée Nationale, no. 1165)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 28</td>
<td>Commission mixte paritaire draws up a common text by 10 votes to 4. (Journal Officiel Documents Assemblée Nationale, no. 1166 and Documents Sénat, no. 290.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 8</td>
<td>Law no. 74-696 of August 7 1974. (Journal Officiel, Lois et Décrets, August 8 1974.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.ii.
Minister with responsibility for broadcasting: 1958-1979

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minister</th>
<th>Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>André Malraux</td>
<td>June 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacques Soustelle</td>
<td>July 1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger Frey</td>
<td>January 1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louis Terrenoire</td>
<td>February 1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian de la Malène</td>
<td>August 1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alain Peyrefitte</td>
<td>April 1962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Fouchet</td>
<td>September 1962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alain Peyrefitte</td>
<td>November 1962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yvon Bourges</td>
<td>January 1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georges Gorse</td>
<td>April 1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yves Guéna</td>
<td>May 1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joel le Theule</td>
<td>July 1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacques Chaban-Delmas</td>
<td>June 1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippe Malaud</td>
<td>July 1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean-Philippe Lecat</td>
<td>October 1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>André Rossi</td>
<td>May 1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymond Barre/Françoise Giroud</td>
<td>August 1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymond Barre/Michel d'Ornano</td>
<td>April 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean-Philippe Lecat</td>
<td>April 1978</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1
Administrative status of the broadcasting companies

After 1959 the state broadcasting services were accorded the status of établissement public à caractère industriel et commercial which was intended to mark a change from the previous administrative status of broadcasting as a civil service department. The change of status in 1959 was designed to reflect the growing independence of the RTF from the Government, though the practical effect was minimal. The 1964 and 1972 ORTF statutes reaffirmed the status of the state broadcasting services conferred by the 1959 ordinance.

The 1974 broadcasting statute accorded the new companies different administrative statuses depending on the role they were to play in the reorganised broadcasting structure. For example, the transmission company, TDF, and the archive and research institute, INA, were both given the status of établissement public à caractère industriel et commercial which meant that they remained governed by the domain of public law. As TDF is the custodian of the state transmission monopoly and responsible for the development and maintenance of the technical infrastructure of the broadcasting networks, its administrative status is not surprising. Control of the transmission facilities, vitally necessary in times of political upheaval, remains firmly in the hands of the State.

1. See also, J. Chevallier, La radio-télévision française entre deux réformes, Paris, Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1975, pp. 168-198, for a detailed account of the importance of the different administrative statuses of the separate broadcasting companies set up by the 1974 reorganisation.


3. 1964 ORTF statute, article 1 and 1972 ORTF statute, article 4.

4. 1974 broadcasting statute, article 5.
The four programme companies, on the other hand, were accorded the status of société nationale. This meant that they were to be subject to the rules governing the operation of commercial enterprises in the domain of private law, even though they remained public companies with public service goals and with the State as sole shareholder.\(^5\)

Finally, the production company, the SFP, was given the status of société anonyme. This too placed the production company firmly in the domain of private law. Unlike the programme companies, shares in the production company could in theory be owned by agents other than the State, such as public companies (sociétés nationales) including the programme companies or mixed economy companies (sociétés d'économie mixte). The Government willingly accepted an amendment put forward by the Centrists in the National Assembly that the majority of the SFP's shares should remain in public hands, and in fact, since 1974 the State has owned over 99% of the SFP's capital.\(^6\) The administrative status of the SFP, however, places it closest to that of a private company.\(^7\)

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7. For more information on the SFP see chapter on Finance.
Appendix 4.iii

The reallocation of ORTF shares among the new broadcasting companies

The transfer of shares held by the ORTF in companies operating in the broadcasting field was done by government decree and the transfer was usually dictated by the nature of the company involved.

The ORTF's 33.3% capital stake in the Société Auxiliaire de Radiodiffusion, which was responsible for the installation and financing of relay transmitters in areas of under 1,000 inhabitants, was transferred to the transmission company, TDF.¹

The ORTF's 50% capital stake in the Société Française de Télédistribution, which was responsible for the development and exploitation of cable television in France, was also given to the transmission company.²

The ORTF's 50% share in the Société Française de Vidéogrammes, which was responsible for the development of video-cassettes and video-records, was transferred to the production company, the SFP.³

The 51% capital stake held by the ORTF in the Société Française d'études et de réalisation d'équipement de radiodiffusion et de télévision (SOFRATEV), which was concerned with the technical development of foreign and particularly third world broadcasting services, was transferred to TDF.⁴ In 1977 both INA and the SFP

each acquired an additional 7.5% stake in SOFRATEV.  

The ORTF's 45% stake in the Société monégasque d'exploitation et d'études de radiodiffusion (SOMERA), which was responsible notably for the installation of a relay transmitter on the island of Cyprus to transmit programmes in Arabic to the Middle East on behalf of Radio-Monte-Carlo, was transferred to Radio France (30%) and to TDF (15%). In 1978 TDF acquired the shares of Radio France with the result that the transmission company held all of the ORTF's former 45% stake in SOMERA.

The ORTF's 35% share in Télé Europe, which was responsible for the production, purchase and sale of radio and television programmes, was divided up equally among TF1, A2, FR3 and the SFP.

The ORTF's 35% stake in Technisonor, which was responsible for the commercialisation of the Office's musical works as well as the coproduction of telefilms and series with the ORTF, was divided up among Radio France (5.5%), TF1 (6.5%), A2 (6.5%), FR3 (6.5%) and the SFP (10%).

Finally, the ORTF's 51% majority shareholding in the Régie Française de Publicité (RFP), which was set up in 1969 to administer the ORTF's advertising by acting as the middle-man between the Office and the advertising agencies, was taken over by the State.

subsidiaries of the RFP were then created, one for each of the two television companies allowed to benefit from advertising revenue, to fulfil the same role as the RFP had done for the ORTF. The distribution of the shares in these two subsidiaries was as follows: RFP-TF1 subsidiary was jointly owned by the RFP (49.5%) and TF1 (48%) and the RFP-A2 subsidiary was also jointly owned in the same proportions by the RFP and A2. 11

### Heads of the state broadcasting services during the Fifth Republic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Head</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>RTF</td>
<td>Christian Chavanon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>RTF</td>
<td>Raymond Janot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>RTF</td>
<td>Robert Bordaz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>ORTF</td>
<td>Jacques Bernard Dupont</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>ORTF</td>
<td>Jean-Jacques de Bresson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>ORTF</td>
<td>Arthur Conte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>ORTF</td>
<td>Marceau Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>New companies</td>
<td>Jean Cazeneuve (TF1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Marcel Jullian (A2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Claude Contamine (FR3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jacqueline Baudrier (Radio France)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jean Autin (TDF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jean-Charles Edeline (SFP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pierre Emmanuel (INA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>New companies</td>
<td>Jean-Louis Guillaud¹ (TF1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maurice Ulrich² (A2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Claude Contamine (FR3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jacqueline Baudrier (Radio France)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jean Autin (TDF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Antoine de Clermont-Tonnerre ³ (SFP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gabriel de Broglie ⁴ (INA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.i.**

1. Jean-Louis Guillaud replaced Jean Cazeneuve at the head of TF1 at the beginning of 1978.

2. Maurice Ulrich replaced Marcel Jullian at the head of A2 at the beginning of 1978.

3. Antoine de Clermont-Tonnerre replaced Jean-Charles Edeline at the head of the SFP at the beginning of 1979.

4. Gabriel de Broglie replaced Pierre Emmanuel at the head of INA in the summer of 1979.
### Viewing figures for the main evening news programme: TF1 and A2: 1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>TF1</th>
<th>A2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TF1</th>
<th>A2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.11**

Official figures expressed as a percentage of the possible total viewing population. 1% = approx. 375,000 viewers.
Viewing figures for the main evening news programme: TFl and A2: 1976

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TFl</th>
<th>A2</th>
<th>FR3 (quiz game)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January:</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February:</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March:</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April:</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May:</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June:</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July:</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August:</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September:</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October:</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November:</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December:</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.iii

Official figures expressed as a percentage of the possible total viewing population. 1% = approx. 375,000 viewers.
Board of governors: (numerical composition): ORTF 1964-1974

1964-1968: 16 governors

- 8 representatives of the State
- 4 "qualified" persons, appointed by the Government
- 2 representatives of the staff
- 1 representative of the press
- 1 representative of the viewers

1968-1972: 24 governors

- 12 representatives of the State
- 5 representatives of the staff
- 4 "qualified" persons, appointed by the Government
- 2 representatives of the press
- 1 representative of the viewers

1972-1974: 14 governors

- 7 representatives of the State, including the PDG.
- 4 representatives of the staff
- 2 representatives of the viewers
- 1 representative of the press

Table 5.4
Boards of governors: (numerical composition): post-1974 broadcasting system

TDF: 16 governors

8 representatives of the State,
4 representatives of the programme companies
2 representatives of Parliament
2 representatives of the staff

INA: 22 governors

10 representatives of the State
6 representatives of the other broadcasting companies
4 "qualified" persons, 2 of whom are chosen by the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel
2 representatives of the staff

SNP: 6 governors each (TF1, A2, FR3 and Radio France)

2 representatives of the State, including the chairman
1 representative of Parliament
1 representative of the press
1 representative of the staff
1 representative of the world of culture. In the case of FR3 this governor must be a member of the cinema industry.

Table 5.v
Membership of the boards of governors of the programme companies: 1975-77

**TF1**

Representatives of the State: Jean Cazeneuve
André Neurisse

Representative of Parliament: Pierre-Roger Gaussin (réformateur)

Representative of the press: Daisy De Galard
Representative of the staff: Maurice Billy (CFDT)
Representative of the world of culture: Maurice Le Roux

**A2**

Representatives of the State: Marcel Jullian
Michèle Legras

Representative of Parliament: Robert-André Vivien (Gaulist)
Roland Faure
Jacques Rousseau (SCORT)

Representative of the press: Claude Lévi-Strauss
Representative of the staff: Claude Contamine
Representative of the world of culture: Michel Rougevin-Baville
Michel Miroudot (Giscardian)
Gaetan Capuccio
Michèlle Morgan

**FR3**

Representatives of the State: Claude Contamine
Michel Rougevin-Baville

Representative of Parliament: Michel Miroudot (Giscardian)
Jacques Kielholz
Gaetan Capuccio

Representative of the press: Claude Lévi-Strauss
Representative of the world of culture: Michèlle Morgan

**Radio France**

Representatives of the State: Jacqueline Baudrier
Jean-Marc Delettrez

Representative of Parliament: Jacques Carat (Socialist)
Roger Bouzinac
Jacques Alexandre (FO)

Representative of the press: Jacques Alexandre (FO)
Representative of the world of culture: René Rémond

1. Daisy de Galard was replaced by Marguerite Puhl-Demange in August 1975
2. Claude Lévi-Strauss was replaced by André Roussin in February 1976.

Table 5.vi
Membership of the boards of governors of the programme companies: 1978-80

**TF1**

| Representatives of the State: | Jean-Louis Guillaud  
Guy Verdeil |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Representative of Parliament: | Pierre-Roger Gaussin  
(reformateur) |
| Representative of the press:  | Marguerite Puhl-Demange |
| Representative of the staff:  | Maurice Billy (CFDT) |
| Representative of the world of culture: | Georges Duby 2 |

**A2**

| Representatives of the State: | Maurice Ulrich  
Claude Laery |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representative of Parliament:</td>
<td>Robert-André Vivien (Gaulist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative of the press:</td>
<td>Roland Faure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative of the staff:</td>
<td>Jean Favre (Inter-union list)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative of the world of culture:</td>
<td>Silvia Monfort</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FR3**

| Representatives of the State: | Claude Contamine  
Charles Debbasch 4 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representative of Parliament:</td>
<td>Michel Miroudot (Giscardian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative of the press:</td>
<td>Jacques Kielholz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative of the staff:</td>
<td>Jean-Pierre Courbet (SCORT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative of the world of culture:</td>
<td>Michèle Morgan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Radio France**

| Representatives of the State: | Jacqueline Baudrier  
Renaud Denoix de Saint Marc |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Representative of Parliament:</td>
<td>Jacques Carat (Socialist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative of the press:</td>
<td>Roger Bouzinac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative of the staff:</td>
<td>Jacques Alexandre (FO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative of the world of culture:</td>
<td>Jean Dorst</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Pierre-Roger Gaussin was replaced by Gérard Longuet (UDF) after the 1978 legislative elections.

2. Georges Duby was replaced by Francoise Mallet-Joris in April 1980.

3. Roland Faure was replaced by Pierre Sainderichin in October 1979.

4. Charles Debbasch was replaced by Marie-Thérèse Rougerie in October 1979.

Table 5.vii
TF1 Management

1975 - 1977

Chairman of the board of governors and titular head of the company: Jean Cazeneuve
Director general: Jean-Louis Guillaud
Director of administration and finance: Georges Riou
Head of the programmes department: Jacques Zbinden
Director of news: Henri Marque
News editor: Christian Bernadac
Head of the politics desk: Jean Idier

1978-1980

Chairman of the board of governors and director general: Jean-Louis Guillaud
Deputy director general: Georges Riou
Director of production: Jean Leclerc
General secretary for programmes: Monique Trnka
Director of news: Henri Marque
News editor: Christian Bernadac
Head of the politics desk: Patrice Duhamel

1. Jean Idier was replaced by Patrice Duhamel in the autumn of 1976.
2. Christian Bernadac was replaced by André Célarié in November 1979.

Table 5.viii
A2 Management

1975-1977

Chairman of the board of governors and director general:
Marcel Jullian

Director:
Xavier Larère

Adviser to the company head:
Jacques Chancel

Programme committee:
Charles Baudinat
Armand Jammot
Claude Barma
Pierre Tchernia

Director of news:
Jacques Sallebert

News editor:
Georges Leroy

Head of the politics desk:
Patrick Poivre d'Arvor

1. Larère was appointed director general of A2 in January 1977.
2. Baudinat was appointed directeur de l'actualité (news, current affairs and magazine programmes) in the summer of 1976.
3. Jammot was appointed directeur des spectacles in the summer of 1976. Between them, Baudinat and Jammot covered the whole range of A2's programming. Baudinat lost his post at the end of 1976 and Jammot lost his at the beginning of 1978 immediately after the appointment of Ulrich as chairman of the company.
5. When Leroy became director of news in early 1976, he was replaced as news editor by Cavada. After Elkabbach's appointment as director of news, Cavada was replaced by Bériot as news editor.
6. Poivre d'Arvor was replaced by Copin as head of the politics desk following Elkabbach's appointment as news director. He then became A2's main newscaster.

Table 5.ix
Chairman of the board of governors and head of the company:

Director general:

Programme committee:

Director of news:

News editor:

Head of the politics desk

Maurice Ulrich
Xavier Larère
Jacques Chancel
Armand Jammot
Claude Barma
Bernard Pivot
Jean-Pierre Richard
Martine Lefèvre
Jean-Pierre Elkabbach
Louis Bériot
Noel Copin

Table 5.x
FR3 Management

1975 - 1977

Chairman of the board of governors and director general: Claude Contamine
Director of the national channel: Maurice Cazeneuve
Director of the regions: Claude Lemoine
Director of the DOM-TOM: René Han
Director of administration and finance: Noel Sanviti
Director of news on the national channel: Claude Lefèvre

1978 - 1980

Chairman of the board of governors and head of the company Claude Contamine
Director general: Claude Lemoine
Director of the DOM-TOM: René Han
Director of administration and finance: Noel Sanviti
Director of news on the national channel: Jean-Marie Cavada

1. Cavada replaced Claude Lefèvre in September 1978

Table 5.xi
Radio France Management

1975 - 1977

Chairman of the board of governors and
director general: Jacqueline Baudrier
Director of administration and finance: Gabriel de Broglie
Director of France-Inter: Pierre Wiehn
Director of France Culture: Yves Jaigu
Director of France Musique: Pierre Vozlinsky
Director of news: Michel Péricard

1978 - 1980

Chairman of the board of governors and
head of the company: Jacqueline Baudrier
Director general: Gabriel de Broglie
Director of France-Inter: Pierre Wiehn
Director of France Culture: Yves Jaigu
Director of France Musique: Pierre Vozlinsky
Director of news: Jean Lefèvre

1. Péricard was replaced by Jean Lefèvre in the summer of 1977.
2. De Broglie was appointed company head of INA in the summer of 1979. Jean Izard, former deputy director in charge of general administration and then director of administrative, professional and social affairs, was appointed deputy director general following de Broglie’s departure to INA.
3. Lefèvre was replaced by Roland Faure in the summer of 1979.

Table 5.xii
Composition of the Commission de reclassement des fonctionnaires et anciens fonctionnaires de l'ORTF

Chairman: Perier, Jean-Claude

Representative of the minister with responsibility for broadcasting: Dumurgier, Patrick

Representatives of the ORTF staff department: Vincent, Jean-Francois, Izard, Jean

Representatives of the ORTF civil servants: Geneix, Bernard, Winckelmuller, Pierre, Gavalda, Germain

Representatives of the civil service trade unions: Panier, Roger, Tourneau, Guy, Perrault, Claude

General secretary: Guerder, Pierre

Table 6.1.

Composition of the committee to reallocate the ORTF's general statutory staff

Chairman: Guldner, Erwin
Conseiller d'Etat

Vice-chairman: Perier, Jean-Claude
Conseiller d'Etat

Representatives of the ORTF: Vincent, Jean-François
Gilles, Pierre

Representatives of TDF: Autin, Jean
Rémy, Maurice

Representatives of the SFP: Edeline, Jean-Charles
Oudin, Michel

Representatives of FR3: Contamine, Claude
Sanviti, Noel

Representative of Radio France: Baudrier, Jacqueline

Representative of TF1: Cazeneuve, Jean

Representative of A2: Jullian, Marcel

Representatives of the staff:
(In theory there ought to have been five staff representatives)
Guertault, Jean (FO)
Jarrige, Jean (SCORT)

Table 6.ii

Source: Official minutes of the Staff Reallocation Committee.
Composition of the committee to reallocate the statutory journalists of the ORTF

Chairman: Guldner, Erwin
          Conseiller d'Etat

Vice-chairman: Perier, Jean-Claude
               Conseiller d'Etat

Representative of the ORTF: Chauveau, Jean

Two representatives of Radio France:
  Baudrier, Jacqueline
  Aycard, Albert

Representative of FR3:
  Contamine, Claude

Representative of TF1:
  Cazeneuve, Jean

Representative of A2:
  Jullian, Marcel

Representatives of the staff:
  Michaud, Roger (FO)
(In theory there ought to have been three staff representatives)

Table 6.iii

1. Baudrier was in fact represented by the director of news at Radio France, Michel Péricard.

2. Contamine was in fact represented by the director of the regional broadcasting stations at FR3, Claude Lemoine.

3. Cazeneuve was in fact represented by the director general of TF1, Jean-Louis Guillaud.

4. Jullian was in fact represented by the director of news at A2, Jacques Sallebert.
Number of ORTF journalists not employed in the new companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Contract/Statutory</th>
<th>Permanent Freelance</th>
<th>Retirement (article 30)</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>External services</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel one</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel two</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel three</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports and miscellaneous</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>106</strong></td>
<td><strong>105</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>251</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.iv

### NUMBERS OF STAFF IN THE NEW BROADCASTING COMPANIES 1975-1979

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>TF1</th>
<th>A2</th>
<th>FR3</th>
<th>Radio France</th>
<th>TDF</th>
<th>INA</th>
<th>SFP</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>1,010</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>3,211</td>
<td>2,188</td>
<td>3,068</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>2,851</td>
<td>13,843</td>
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<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>1,112</td>
<td>948</td>
<td>3,466</td>
<td>2,172</td>
<td>3,079</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>3,045</td>
<td>14,443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>1,256</td>
<td>1,082</td>
<td>3,468</td>
<td>2,247</td>
<td>3,183</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>2,995</td>
<td>15,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>1,169</td>
<td>1,112</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>2,293</td>
<td>3,313</td>
<td>1,020</td>
<td>2,964</td>
<td>15,371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>1,208</td>
<td>1,179</td>
<td>3,567</td>
<td>2,335</td>
<td>3,365</td>
<td>946</td>
<td>2,665</td>
<td>15,265</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.v.

(+10.3% from 1975 to 1979.)

Monsieur le Ministre,

La loi du 7 août 1974, qui a supprimé l'O.R.T.F. et confié les missions de Service Public de la Radio et de la Télévision à cinq Sociétés et deux Établissements Publics, prévoit dans son article 25 que "les personnels de chacune des sociétés sont régis par des conventions collectives".

L'article 32 de cette loi impose aux partenaires sociaux la conclusion des négociations le 31 décembre 1975 au plus tard.

Nous attirons votre attention sur le fait, qu'à ce jour, les Directions des Sociétés n'ont fait parvenir aux organisations syndicales aucune proposition concernant les dispositions les plus délicates à négocier dans une convention (système de rémunération, classification et définition des fonctions, conditions de travail, consultation des représentants du personnel pour les emplois vacants, etc.)

Compte tenu des délais relativement courts qui nous séparent du 31 décembre, nous tenons à prendre date afin de fixer, le cas échéant, les responsabilités d'un désaccord persistant au-delà de l'échéance prévue par la loi.

Mais, surtout, nous nous étonnons qu'aucune initiative n'ait été prise pour explorer la possibilité d'élaborer une convention nationale applicable à tous les organismes nationaux de Radio et de Télévision à l'exception des Établissements Publics.

L'origine commune des agents des grandes familles professionnelles répartis dans ces organismes, les modalités semblables de recrutement, la formation commune effectuée en priorité par l'Institut National de l'Audio-visuel, les qualifications nécessaires à l'exercice de métiers identiques dans le cadre de travaux dont les finalités sont identiques, constituent des éléments qui devraient conduire les partenaires sociaux à rechercher des règles communes.

Ceux-ci pourraient, bien entendu, négocier dans un second temps les adaptations spécifiques à chacune des sociétés.

Dans cet esprit, en application des dispositions des articles L 133-1, L 133-7 et L 133-8, chapitre III, titre III, Livre Premier du Code du Travail, nous avons l'honneur de vous prier de bien vouloir provoquer la réunion d'une commission mixte réunissant les représentants :

- des sociétés nationales de télévision :
  Télévision Française 1
  Antenne 2
  France Régions 3,
- de la société nationale de Radiodiffusion,
- de la société française de production,
- du G.I.R.A.T.E.V.,
- des organisations syndicales représentatives des salariés de ces sociétés,

dans le but d'engager la négociation d'une convention collective nationale applicable aux personnels de ces organismes non rattachés à la convention collective de la Presse.

En nous tenant à votre entière disposition, nous vous prions, Monsieur le Ministre, d'accepter l'expression de notre respectueuse considération.

Appendix 7 i.

1979 legislation on the maintenance of the broadcasting service during strike action

April 10 Vivien-Madelin bill published. (Journal Officiel, Documents Assemblée Nationale, no. 941.)

April 19 Rapport fait au nom de la commission des affaires culturelles ... par Francisque Perrut. (Journal Officiel, Documents Assemblée Nationale, no. 990.)

April 26 Debate in the National Assembly. (Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, April 27 1979.)

April 27 Bill goes to the Senate. (Journal Officiel, Documents Sénat, no. 305.)

June 6 Rapport fait au nom de la commission des affaires culturelles ... par Henri Caillavet. (Journal Officiel, Documents Sénat, no. 367.)

June 12 Avis présenté au nom de la commission des affaires sociales ... par Robert Schwint. (Journal Officiel, Documents Sénat, no. 375.)

June 12 Debate in the Senate. (Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Sénat, June 13 1979.)

June 20 Avis supplémentaire présenté au nom de la commission des affaires sociales ... par Robert Schwint. (Journal Officiel, Documents Sénat, no. 407.)

June 21 Debate in the Senate. (Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Sénat, June 22 1979.)

June 22 Bill returns to the National Assembly. (Journal Officiel, Documents Assemblée Nationale, no. 1187.)

June 25 Rapport fait au nom de la commission des affaires culturelles ... par Francisque Perrut. (Journal Officiel, Documents Assemblée Nationale, no. 1188.)

June 26 Debate in the National Assembly. (Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, June 27 1979.)

June 27 Bill returns to the Senate. (Journal Officiel, Documents Sénat, no. 435.)

June 27 Debate in the Senate. (Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Sénat, June 28 1979.)


July 26 Law no. 79-634 of July 26 1979.

Sept. 5 Decree no. 79-747 of September 5 1979.

Table 7.ii
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Année</th>
<th>TF 1</th>
<th>Antenne 2</th>
<th>FR 3</th>
<th>Radiodiff.</th>
<th>INA</th>
<th>SFP</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>1978</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.iii

Composition of the Parliamentary Delegation for broadcasting 1975

Deputies as of right: Joel Le Tac Gaullist
                     Maurice Papon Gaullist
                     Jean de Préaumont Gaullist

Deputies elected:  Jacques Blanc Giscardian
                    Jean Boinvilliers Gaullist
                    Georges Donnez Réformateur
                    Georges Fillioud Socialist
                    Jack Ralite Communist

Senators as of right: Henri Caillavet Democratic left
                     Jean Cluzel Non-inscrit
                     René Monory Centrist Union

Senators elected: Félix Ciccolini Socialist
                  Maurice Fleury Gaullist
                  Dominique Pado Centrist Union

1. Joel Le Tac was a member in his capacity as rapporteur spécial of the National Assembly finance committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting.

2. Maurice Papon was a member in his capacity as rapporteur général of the National Assembly finance committee.

3. Jean de Préaumont was a member in his capacity as rapporteur of the National Assembly cultural affairs committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting.

4. Jean Boinvilliers was chairman of the delegation in 1975.

5. Henri Caillavet was a member in his capacity as rapporteur of the Senate cultural affairs committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting.

6. Jean Cluzel was a member in his capacity as rapporteur spécial of the Senate finance committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting.

7. René Monory was a member in his capacity as rapporteur général of the Senate finance committee.
### Composition of the Parliamentary Delegation for broadcasting 1978

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deputies as of right:</th>
<th>Fernand Icart</th>
<th>Giscardian 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joel Le Tac</td>
<td>Gaullist 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jean de Préaumont</td>
<td>Gaullist 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deputies elected:</th>
<th>Jean Boinvilliers</th>
<th>Gaullist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Georges Fillicoud</td>
<td>Socialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Louise Moreau</td>
<td>Giscardian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jack Ralite</td>
<td>Communist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bernard Stasi</td>
<td>Giscardian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senators as of right:</th>
<th>Maurice Blin</th>
<th>Centrist union 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Henri Caillavet</td>
<td>Democratic left 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jean Cluzel</td>
<td>Centrist union 6</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senators elected:</th>
<th>Felix Ciccolini</th>
<th>Socialist</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dominique Pado</td>
<td>Centrist union 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charles Pasqua</td>
<td>Gaullist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Fernand Icart was a member in his capacity as *rapporteur général* of the National Assembly finance committee.

2. Joel Le Tac was a member in his capacity as *rapporteur spécial* of the National Assembly finance committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting.

3. Jean de Préaumont was a member in his capacity as *rapporteur* of the National Assembly cultural affairs committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting.

4. Maurice Blin was a member in his capacity as *rapporteur général* of the Senate finance committee.

5. Henri Caillavet was a member in his capacity as *rapporteur* of the Senate cultural affairs committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting.

6. Jean Cluzel was a member in his capacity as *rapporteur spécial* of the Senate finance committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting.

7. Dominque Pado was chairman of the delegation in 1978.

Table 8.ii
Parliamentary representation on the boards of governors of the broadcasting companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Network</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Political Affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975-77</td>
<td>TF1</td>
<td>Pierre-Roger Gaussin</td>
<td>Deputy</td>
<td>Réformateur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Robert-André Vivien</td>
<td>Deputy</td>
<td>Gaullist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FR3</td>
<td>Michel Miroudot</td>
<td>Senator</td>
<td>Giscardian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radio France</td>
<td>Jacques Carat</td>
<td>Senator</td>
<td>Socialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TDF</td>
<td>Roger Gouhier</td>
<td>Deputy</td>
<td>Communist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TDF</td>
<td>Georges Lamousse</td>
<td>Senator</td>
<td>Socialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-80</td>
<td>TF1</td>
<td>Gérard Longuet</td>
<td>Deputy</td>
<td>Giscardian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Robert-André Vivien</td>
<td>Deputy</td>
<td>Gaullist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FR3</td>
<td>Michel Miroudot</td>
<td>Senator</td>
<td>Giscardian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radio France</td>
<td>Jacques Carat</td>
<td>Senator</td>
<td>Socialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TDF</td>
<td>Guy Ducoloné</td>
<td>Deputy</td>
<td>Communist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TDF</td>
<td>Claude Fuzier</td>
<td>Senator</td>
<td>Socialist</td>
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</table>

Table 8.iii
## Growth of advertising revenue on French television (1968-1979)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount (in millions of francs)</th>
<th>Amount (as percentage of total revenue)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>387.6</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>435.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>497.5</td>
<td>22.6</td>
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<td>1974</td>
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<td>1975</td>
<td>690</td>
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<td>820</td>
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</tr>
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<td>1977</td>
<td>940.3</td>
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<td>1978</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>1,255</td>
<td>25</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 9.1

### Cost of broadcasting licence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Radio</th>
<th>Black and White TV</th>
<th>Colour TV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>-</td>
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(Cost given in French francs)

Table 9.ii
Composition of the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee 1976

Bernard Beck
Conseiller maître à la Cour des Comptes

Henri Tessier du Cros
Maître des requêtes au Conseil d'Etat

Guilbert Guillaume
Maître des requêtes au Conseil d'Etat

Jean Massiani
Conseiller référendaire à la Cour des Comptes

Pierre Lafaye
Conseiller référendaire à la Cour des Comptes

Table 9.iii
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jules Antonini</td>
<td>Honorary general secretary of the SNCF and former member of the Constitutional Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean-Pierre Dubois-Dumée</td>
<td>Director general of Télérama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lazare Iglesis</td>
<td>Producer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcel Landowski</td>
<td>Inspector general of music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roland Sadoun</td>
<td>Business consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierre Schaeffer</td>
<td>Former head of the research service at the ORTF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mme. Simone Servais</td>
<td>Diplomatic envoy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mlle. Catherine Tasca</td>
<td>Head of the Youth and Cultural Centre at Grenoble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maurice Toesca</td>
<td>Writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maurice Allain</td>
<td>Group leader at the arsenal at Cherbourg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Boschetti</td>
<td>Pediatrician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mlle. Monique Dine</td>
<td>General secretary of the country-house club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mlle. Paulette Ferrier</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louis Gallien</td>
<td>Member of the Academy of Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mme. Michelle Mariette</td>
<td>Deputy mayor of Beauvais</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mme. Simone Martin</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Nugue</td>
<td>Director of the Cultural Animation Centre at Aix-en-Provence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean Rosselot</td>
<td>Assistant at the Law Faculty at Besançon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis Balle</td>
<td>Lecturer at the University of Paris 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mlle. Isabelle Campion</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marceau Crespin</td>
<td>Member of the Economic and Social Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Fromilhiague</td>
<td>Teacher at the University of Toulouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertrand Goldschmidt</td>
<td>Director at the Atomic Energy Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thierry Hatt</td>
<td>Teacher of History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mme. Eliane Perassso</td>
<td>Town councillor in Marseilles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mme. Simone Vedrenne</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean-Claude Perier</td>
<td>Conseiller d'État*</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 9.iv

* Perier was appointed President of the Quality Committee for three years from June 1975. In late 1974 Perier had been one of the two conseillers d'État appointed to head the committee in charge of the reallocation of ORTF staff among the new broadcasting companies. (See chapter on the Reallocation of ORTF staff.)
The budgetary equation used by the Licence Revenue Allocation Committee

Votre Rapporteur a jugé utile de publier en annexe la clef de répartition de la redevance dont la simplicité le dispense de tout commentaire.

1° $A'n = (0.20 + 0.60 \times Q + 0.20 \times V) \times An - 1$
   où
   $An - 1$ est l'attribution constatée l'année $n - 1$,
   $A'n$ est l'attribution théorique de l'année $n$,
   $Q$ est l'indice de qualité,
   $V$ est l'indice d'écoute.

2° $An = \frac{A'n}{\varepsilon A'n} \times Mn$
   où
   $Mn$ est la masse à répartir définie à l'article 5 du décret,
   $\varepsilon A'n$ est la somme des attributions théoriques aux sociétés,
   $A'n$ représente le pourcentage de droits de la société concernée.

3° $Q = 1 + \left( q - q' \times 1 \times \frac{R}{50} \times 10 \times \frac{r}{50} \right)$
   où
   $q$ est la note attribuée à la société,
   $q'$ est la moyenne des quatre notes attribuées aux sociétés de programme,
   $q - q'$ est le rapport de l'écart $q - q$ à la note médiane 50,
   $1$ est un coefficient destiné à ramener la variation de l'indice à une incidence acceptable sur les ressources de la société,
   $R$ est le montant des recettes totales de la société,
   $r$ est le montant des recettes de redevance de la société.

4° $V = 1 + (v - 1) \times \frac{R}{5} \times \frac{r}{5}$
   où
   $v$ est la variation du volume d'écoute,
   $1$ est un coefficient prévu par l'article 8 du décret,
   $R$ est le montant des recettes totales de la société,
   $r$ est le montant des recettes de redevance de la société.

Appendix 9.v.
Party political broadcasts on TF1 and A2 during 1978

Articles 16 à 18 : LIBRE EXPRESSION DES ASSEMBLÉES PARLEMENTAIRES ET DES FORMATIONS POLITIQUES.

CALENDRIER DES ÉMISSIONS DIFFUSÉES PAR T.F. 1 EN 1978

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>2 février</td>
<td>Majorité (Parti Radical 6’ - Centre des Démocrates Sociaux 9’), Opposition : Parti Communiste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 février</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 février</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 avril</td>
<td>Majorité : Centre des Démocrates Sociaux</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 mai</td>
<td>Opposition : Parti Socialiste</td>
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<td>18 mai</td>
<td>Sénat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1er juin</td>
<td>Opposition : Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 juin</td>
<td>Majorité : Rassemblement Pour la République</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 juin</td>
<td>Assemblée Nationale</td>
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<tr>
<td>1er juillet</td>
<td>Opposition : Parti Communiste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 juillet</td>
<td>Majorité : Rassemblement Pour la République</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 septembre</td>
<td>Opposition : Parti Socialiste</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 septembre</td>
<td>Majorité : Parti Républicain</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>26 octobre</td>
<td>Opposition : Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 novembre</td>
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Appendix 10.1.
# CALENDRIER DES EMISSIONS CONSCRÉES À LA LIBRE EXPRESSION DES ASSEMBLÉES PARLEMENTAIRES ET DES FORMATIONS POLITIQUES

1978

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## CAMPAGNE ÉLECTORALES
ELECTIONS LEGISLATIVES

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## CALENDRIER DES ÉMISSIONS CONSACRÉES À LA LIBRE EXPRESSION DES ASSEMBLÉES PARLEMENTAIRES ET DES FORMATIONS POLITIQUES

**1978**

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<td><strong>September</strong></td>
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TRIBUNE LIBRE

PROGRAMMATION DU 1er JANVIER AU 31 DECEMBRE 1978

2 janvier Eglise catholique
3 janvier Club de l'Horloge
4 janvier Lutte Ouvrière
5 janvier Présence Socialiste
6 janvier F.E.N.

9 janvier M.D.S.F.
10 janvier F.O.
11 janvier Fédération des Républicains de Progrès
12 janvier Front National
13 janvier P.S.U.

16 janvier Clubs Démocratie Nouvelle
17 janvier C.F.D.T.
18 janvier Club Perspectives et Réalités
19 janvier Fédération Anarchiste
20 janvier Nouvelle Action Française

23 janvier Club pour le Nouveau Contrat Social
24 janvier C.G.T.
25 janvier Parti Socialiste Démocrate
26 janvier C.G.C.
27 janvier Ligue Communiste

30 janvier Union Travailliste
31 janvier S.O.S. Environnement
1 février Association Démocratie Française
2 février Mouvement des Démocrates
3 février C.F.T.C.

6 février C.N.P.F.
7 février Union des Français de bon sens
8 février Centre des Démocrates Sociaux
9 février P.S.
10 février R.P.R.

Table 10.11
13 février  Parti Radical Socialiste
14 février  Parti Républicain
15 février  P.C.F.
16 février  Centre National des Indépendants
17 février  Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche

Diffusion des Tribunes libres interrompue
du 20 février au 17 mars 1978

20 mars  Michel Crozier
21 mars  Amitiés Judéo-Chrétiennes
22 mars  Comité International contre la Répression
23 mars  Mouvement National des Élus Locaux
24 mars  Fédération Française des Equipes St Vincent

27 mars  Jean-François Lyotard
28 mars  L'Islam
29 mars  U.N.A.P.E.I.
30 mars  F.E.N.
31 mars  Association Française d'Amitié et de Solidarité avec les peuples d'Afrique

3 avril  Jean Bousquet
4 avril  Fédération Sépharadie
5 avril  S.O.S. Amitiés
6 avril  F.O.
7 avril  Grande Loge Nationale Française

10 avril  Annie Kriegel
11 avril  Conseil National du Mouvement de la Paix
12 avril  C.D.S.
13 avril  C.F.D.T.
14 avril  Centre National des Jeunes Artisans

17 avril  Vladimir Jandelevitch
18 avril  Ligue Nationale contre la Vivisection
19 avril  C.F.T.C.
20 avril  R.P.R.
21 avril  Église Arménienne

24 avril  Clément Rosset
25 avril  Mouvement Solidariste Français
26 avril  C.G.T.
27 avril  P.S.
28 avril  Présent
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<td>Catacombes - Eglise du Silence</td>
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<td>16 mai</td>
<td>Citoyens du Monde</td>
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<td>17 mai</td>
<td>C.N.P.F.</td>
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<td>P.C.F.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Pierre Moustiers</td>
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<td>30 mai</td>
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<td>16 juin</td>
<td>Geneviève de Gaulle</td>
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</table>
19 juin  Pierre Daix (grève)
20 juin    Les Mormons
21 juin    C.G.T.
22 juin    R.P.R.
23 juin    Mouvement contre le Racisme, l'Antisémitisme et pour la Paix
26 juin    Jules Roy
27 juin    S.P.A.
28 juin    C.N.P.F.
29 juin    M.R.G.
30 juin    Association Francophone d'Accueil et de Liaison

3 juillet  Mouvement Fédéraliste
4 juillet  Jeunes Démocrates Sociaux
5 juillet  Mouvement pour une Alternative non Violente
6 juillet  Union Rationaliste
7 juillet  Alliage
10 juillet Front Libertaire
11 juillet Association Française du Fonds Mondial pour la Nature
12 juillet Alcooliques Anonymes
13 juillet Union Nationale des Associations Familiales
14 juillet Pas de Tribune libre

4 septembre Eglise Catholique
5 septembre Centre Féminin d'Etudes et d'Information
6 septembre Temps nouveaux
7 septembre Mouvement d'Action et de Réflexion pour les Réformes Socialistes
8 septembre Jeune Chambre Economique
11 septembre Union des Athées
12 septembre Le Club des Quatre
13 septembre Association des Chrétiens Témoins dans leur Entreprise
14 septembre Comité de Liaison pour l'Action Locale et Régionale
15 septembre CIMADE (Comité Intermouvement auprès des Evacués)
18 septembre Pierre Daix
19 septembre J.O.C.
20 septembre F.O.
21 septembre Mouvement d'Action Ecopolitique
22 septembre Libre Pensée
25 septembre Marc Julia
26 septembre Eglise Réformée de France
27 septembre P.C.F.
28 septembre C.G.C.
29 septembre Les Guides de France

2 octobre Jacques Ellul
3 octobre Mouvement de Défense des Exploitants Agricoles
4 octobre C.D.S.
5 octobre Choisir
6 octobre Action Catholique des Enfants

9 octobre Jeanne Favret Saada
10 octobre Le Boudhisme
11 octobre C.N.I.
12 octobre F.E.N.
13 octobre Combat Solidariste

16 octobre René Girard
17 octobre La Croix d'Or Française
18 octobre P.S.
19 octobre F.N.S.E.A.
20 octobre Mouvement Fédéraliste Européen

23 octobre Evelyne Sullerot
24 octobre Rassemblement pour une Renaissance Démographique (grève)
25 octobre Alfred Fabre Luce
26 octobre Planning Familial
27 octobre Alliance Nationale pour la Vitalité Française

30 octobre Claire Salomon Bayet (grève)
31 octobre Association Progrès... (grève)
1 novembre Equipes Autonomes d'Entreprises (grève)
2 novembre R.P.R. (grève)
3 novembre Confédération des Syndicats Libres

6 novembre Jean-Pierre Vernant
7 novembre Assemblée Consistoriale Israélite de Paris
8 novembre P.R.
9 novembre U.N.C.
10 novembre U.F.A.C.
<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>13 novembre</td>
<td>Rémy Chauvin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 novembre</td>
<td>Autrement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 novembre</td>
<td>C.F.D.T.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 novembre</td>
<td>Mouvement des Démocrates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 novembre</td>
<td>Mouvement Missionnaire Intérieur Laïque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 novembre</td>
<td>Pierre Racine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 novembre</td>
<td>Robert Laffont</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 novembre</td>
<td>Philippe Lamour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 novembre</td>
<td>Michel Crozier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 novembre</td>
<td>Georges Chavannes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 novembre</td>
<td>R.P.R.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 novembre</td>
<td>C.N.P.F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 novembre</td>
<td>P.C.F.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 novembre</td>
<td>Démocratie Chrétienne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 décembre</td>
<td>Fasti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 décembre</td>
<td>Equipes Autonomes d'Entreprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 décembre</td>
<td>Association Française pour la Communauté Atlantique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 décembre</td>
<td>Le Nouveau Procope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 décembre</td>
<td>M.R.G.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 décembre</td>
<td>C.F.T.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 décembre</td>
<td>Croix Rouge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 décembre</td>
<td>Rassemblement pour une Renaissance Démographique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 décembre</td>
<td>Espaces pour Demain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 décembre</td>
<td>C.N.I.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 décembre</td>
<td>C.G.T.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 décembre</td>
<td>Fédération Nationale de la Mutualité Française</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 décembre</td>
<td>C.G.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 décembre</td>
<td>Centre Chrétien des Patrons et Dirigeants d'Entreprises Français</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 décembre</td>
<td>Fraternité d'Abraham</td>
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<tr>
<td>22 décembre</td>
<td>Espérance et Vie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 décembre</td>
<td>Secours Catholique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 décembre</td>
<td>Fédération des Aveugles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 décembre</td>
<td>Secours Populaire</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 décembre</td>
<td>Fédération Nationale des Associations d'Accueil et de Réadaptation Sociale</td>
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<td>29 décembre</td>
<td>Fondation de France</td>
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</table>
### Dramatic fiction on French television

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>5,229</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>5,422</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>5,671</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>5,700</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Column 1 refers to the total viewing time of ORTF channels one and two / TF1 and A2.

Column 2 refers to the total amount of dramatic fiction broadcast.

Column 3 refers to the total amount of dramatic fiction produced by the ORTF/SFP.

All figures are in hours.

Table 11.1

Appendix 12.1

Chronology of major legislation on broadcasting: 1923-1974

1923 Legislation made explicit the monopoly of the State "with regard to the transmission and reception (sic) of radio-electric signals of any kind."

1926 Decree allowed the functioning of private radio stations, with derogations extending over a period of six years granted to certain private stations. In fact private stations continued to operate until 1945 when an ordinance of March 23 withdrew the authorisation granted by the decree of December 28 1926.

Establishment of the Service de la radiodiffusion which grouped together the various bodies concerned with the state radio stations.

1927 State radio became an external service of the Ministry of Posts.

1933 A broadcasting licence-fee was introduced and in return the state radio stations renounced all commercial activity.

1939 The state broadcasting service became a separate administrative department. Removed from the control of the Ministry of Posts it was now attached to the office of the Prime Minister.

1941-1942 Two pieces of legislation on the function and organisation of the state broadcasting service.

The broadcasting service was given a theoretical measure of administrative autonomy via the establishment of a semi-independent Higher Council and a General Board of Management. Both these bodies were abolished by ordinance in 1959.

Since during the Fourth Republic, there was no legislation passed on the organisation of broadcasting, the 1941-42 texts provided the relevant legal framework up to the beginning of the Fifth Republic

1945 State broadcasting monopoly reaffirmed.

Establishment of the RTF as a state monopoly public service financed by block grant and attached to the office of the Prime Minister/Ministry of Information. The RTF's administrative status was that of a civil service department.

1959 State monopoly and public service reaffirmed. RTF now given the status of a public corporation of an industrial and commercial character with an independent budget and placed under the authority of the Minister of Information.

1964 Establishment of the ORTF. The two main innovations of this legislation were, first, the creation of a board of governors with general administrative functions, and, secondly the transfer of the state broadcasting services from under the authority of the Minister of Information to under his supervision (tutelle).
1972 Reorganisation of the ORTF. Creation of the post of Président Directeur Général combining the previously separate functions of director general and chairman of the board of governors. Provision was now made for functional decentralisation within the overall unitary structure of the Office.

1974 Break-up of the ORTF. Creation of seven separate companies of different administrative status with no central coordinating body. Abolition of the Ministry of Information.
Shareholdings of the French state in peripheral radio and television

Radio-Monte-Carlo
Sofirad 83%
Principality of Monaco 17%

Radio Europe 1
Sofirad 35.2% (46.8% of the votes)
Floirat group 33.6% (29.3% of the votes)
Principality of Monaco 5.5%
Thomson-Brandt 1.1%
Other groups 14.2%
Diverse 10.4%

Sud Radio
Sofirad 99.9%

Radio Télé Luxembourg
Audiofina (including l'agence Havas with a right of veto within Audiofina) 54.6%
OPFI Paribas 10.4%
Compagnie des Compteurs 12.5%
Hachette 16.0%
Diverse 6.5%

Télévision-Monte-Carlo
Europe 1-Images et Son 54%
(French state via Sofirad has 35.2% of the shares and 46.8% of the votes in Europe 1)
Publicis-Regie-Presse 20%
Principality of Monaco 18.5%
Others 7.5%

Télé-Luxembourg
Distribution of shares the same as for RTL.

Figures given as at February 1977.
Appendix 12.iii
Regional broadcasting stations
### Pirate Radios (summer 1978)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Stations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Paris and Paris region | Radio Verte  
                      | Radio Bastille  
                      | Radio Abesses Echo  
                      | Radio 100  
                      | Radio Onz'debrouille  
                      | Radio Génération 2000  
                      | Radio Fil rose  
                      | Radio Libre Paris  
                      | Radio Dedalus  
                      | Radio Noctiluque  
                      | Radio Goyave  
                      | Les Radiotéteuses  
                      | Radio Roquette  
                      | Radio Squatt  
                      | Radio Lezard  
                      | Radio Evangile  
                      | Radio 93  
                      | Radio Aventure  
                      | Action Banlieue Sud  
                      | Radio Alternative 78  
                      | Radio BF 15  
                      | Radio Zone  
                      | Radio Corbeil  
                      | Radio Star  |
| Lille               | Radio Beau Délire  
                      | Radio Libre Sortie de Secours  
                      | Qu'elle-était-verte ma radio  
                      | Radio libre 59  |
| Nord                | Radio Campus  
                      | Radio Calamine  
                      | Radio Detrakes  
                      | Radio Uylenspiegel  |
| Seine Maritime      | France Radio Club  |
| Nantes             | Radio Libre 44  |

Table 12.iv
### Pirate Radios (summer 1978) (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Station Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Côtes-du-Nord</td>
<td>Radio Tregor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brest</td>
<td>Radio Frankle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finistère</td>
<td>Radio Cornouailles 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haute Saône</td>
<td>Radio Horizon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haut et Bas Rhin</td>
<td>Radio Verte Fessenheim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haut Rhin</td>
<td>La voix des travailleurs immigrés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strasbourg</td>
<td>Radio Bérénice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belfort</td>
<td>Radio Ondes Rouges</td>
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<td>Besançon</td>
<td>Radio Charly</td>
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<td>Radio 25</td>
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<td>Grenoble</td>
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<td>Savoie</td>
<td>Alpes Radio</td>
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<td>Lyon</td>
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<td>Radio Canut</td>
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<td>Radio Joufflu</td>
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<td>Alternatives 63</td>
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<td>Drôme</td>
<td>Stéréo 26</td>
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<td>Valence</td>
<td>Radio La Meduse</td>
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<td>Nîmes</td>
<td>Radio Nîmes</td>
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<td>Gard</td>
<td>Radio Fil à Soie</td>
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<td>Radio Circus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Stations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montpellier</td>
<td>Radio Fil Bleu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radio Méditerranée 2000</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Radio Soleil</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L'Echo des Garrigues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beziers</td>
<td>Radio Verte Beziers</td>
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<td>Radio Pomarède</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hérault</td>
<td>Hérault Tribune</td>
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<td>Marseille</td>
<td>Radio Vous</td>
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<td>Radio Printemps</td>
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<td>Cassis</td>
<td>Cassis Musique</td>
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<td>Cannes</td>
<td>Radio Riviera</td>
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<td>Landes</td>
<td>Radio Adour Navarre</td>
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<td>Bayonne</td>
<td>Radio Gascogne</td>
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<td>Radio Basque</td>
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<td>Lourdes</td>
<td>L'Essor Bigourdan</td>
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<td>Perpignan</td>
<td>Radio Par La Racine</td>
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<td>Radio 66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hautes Pyrénées</td>
<td>Coopérative Nature et Vie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toulouse</td>
<td>Radio Occitania</td>
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<td>Radio Libre Toulouse</td>
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<td>Radio Barbe Rouge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agen</td>
<td>Radio 47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tarn-et-Garonne</td>
<td>Radio Steward</td>
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<td>Bordeaux</td>
<td>Radio Oxygène</td>
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<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Station</td>
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<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gironde</td>
<td>Radio Bordeaux</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toulon</td>
<td>Radio Atol 103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy</td>
<td>Radio Mirabelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jura</td>
<td>Radio Lacuson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corsica</td>
<td>Radio Corsica Una</td>
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<tr>
<td>La Mayenne</td>
<td>Radiogene 53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essone</td>
<td>Radio Massipal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radio Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Val d'Oise</td>
<td>Radio 95</td>
</tr>
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</table>
1978 legislation to enforce the state monopoly

May 18 Government bill published. (Journal Officiel, Documents Assemblée Nationale, no. 250.)

June 1 Rapport fait au nom de la commission des affaires culturelles ... par Michel Péricard. (Journal Officiel, Documents Assemblée Nationale, no. 315.)

June 7 Debate in the National Assembly. (Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, June 8 1978.)

June 13 Bill goes to the Senate. (Journal Officiel, Documents Sénat, no. 404.)

June 21 Rapport fait au nom de la commission des affaires culturelles ... par Henri Caillavet. (Journal Officiel, Documents Sénat, no. 460.)

June 23 Debate in the Senate. (Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Sénat, June 24 1978.)

June 23 Bill goes to the Commission mixte paritaire. (Journal Officiel, Documents Assemblée Nationale, no. 462.)


June 27 Debate in the National Assembly. (Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Assemblée Nationale, June 28 1978.)

June 27 Debate in the Senate. (Journal Officiel, Débats Parlementaires Sénat, June 28 1978.)


Table 12.v
Radio stations belonging to the Fédération nationale des radios libres non commerciales 1978

Paris and Paris region
Abbesse Echo
Radio Aventure
Radio Cortizone
Radio Dedalus
Radio Fil qui chante
Radio Flip
Radio Gennevilliers
Radio Libre Banlieue Sud
Radio 93
Radio Rocket
Radioteuses
Viking 99
Radio Libre Paris
Radio les Raduzes

Provinces
Radio Sortie de Secours (Lille)
Radio Soleil (Montpellier)
Radio Quimper
Radio Oxygène (Bordeaux)
Radio Fil à Soi (Ales)
Radio Clapas (Montpellier)
Radio Canut Guignol (Villeurbane)
Radio Canut Guignol (Venissieux)
Radio Canut Guignol (15uest Lyonnais)
Radio Barbe Rouge (Toulouse)
Radio 25 (Besançon)

Source: Undated bulletin of the Fédération des radio libres non commerciales.

Table 12.vi
## Interviews

*(in chronological order)*

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title and Additional Information</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cayrol, Roland</td>
<td>Lecturer at the Institut d'Études Politiques and writer on the French mass media.</td>
<td>14/10/1976 and 12/7/1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souchon, Michel</td>
<td>Member of the research staff at INA</td>
<td>27/10/1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemerle, Michel</td>
<td>President of the Union Nationale des syndicats de journalistes</td>
<td>28/10/1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Béraud, Didier</td>
<td>Technical adviser to the director of the regions, FR3</td>
<td>29/11/1976</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durand, Jacques</td>
<td>Deputy director of the CEO</td>
<td>30/11/1976</td>
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<tr>
<td>D'Arcy, Jean</td>
<td>Member of the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel and former director of television at the RTF.</td>
<td>3/12/1976 and 19/9/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lefèbvre, Bruno</td>
<td>Consultant and writer on the mass media.</td>
<td>11/1/1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locatelli, Jean-Pierre</td>
<td>Assistant to Maurice Séveno, Socialist party spokesman for broadcasting</td>
<td>14/1/1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cazile, Nicole</td>
<td>Audience research service, TF1</td>
<td>19/1/1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigeat, Henri</td>
<td>Deputy director general of Agence France-Presse</td>
<td>21/1/1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Tac, Joel</td>
<td>Deputy, member of the Parliamentary Delegation for broadcasting, rapporteur spécial of the National Assembly finance committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting and rapporteur of the Le Tac report, 1972.</td>
<td>25/1/1977 (27/1/1977) and 13/6/1979 (14/6/1979)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baudouin, Denis</td>
<td>Chairman of SOFIRAD</td>
<td>25/1/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boinvilliers, Jean</td>
<td>Deputy, Chairman of the Parliament-Delegation for broadcasting and member of the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel.</td>
<td>26/1/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rémont, Françoise</td>
<td>Production secretary at France-Culture</td>
<td>26/1/1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conte, Arthur</td>
<td>Former Président Directeur Général of the ORTF.</td>
<td>28/1/1977 and 19/6/1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position/Role</td>
<td>Date</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>Martinet, Gilles</td>
<td>National secretary of the Socialist party</td>
<td>7/2/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colé, Gérard</td>
<td>Secretary of the Comité pour le respect du droit à l'information radio-télévisée (Committee set up by the parties of the Union of the Left to monitor news programming).</td>
<td>7/2/1977</td>
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<td>7/9/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbot, Jacques</td>
<td>General secretary of the Syndicat National des Journalistes.</td>
<td>10/2/1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leroy, Georges</td>
<td>Former director of news at Radio Europe no.1 and former director of news at A2.</td>
<td>11/2/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14/2/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balle, Francis</td>
<td>Director of the Institut Francais de Presse and writer on the mass media.</td>
<td>17/2/1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbin, Danielle</td>
<td>Assistant national secretary, SNRT-CGT, FR3.</td>
<td>21/2/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rochet, Jacques</td>
<td>Member of the national bureau, SURT-CFDT, SFP.</td>
<td>24/2/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Costa, Gilbert</td>
<td>Member of the national bureau, SURT-CFDT, Radio-France.</td>
<td>28/2/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Favre, Jean</td>
<td>Member of the national bureau, SURT-CFDT, A2.</td>
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<td>17/6/1977</td>
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<td>Siégel, Maurice</td>
<td>Former director-general of Radio Europe 1</td>
<td>15/3/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dubois-Dumée, Jean-Pierre</td>
<td>Member of the Quality Committee and director general of Télérama</td>
<td>16/3/1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cavada, Jean-Marie</td>
<td>Former news editor at A2 and producer of the current affairs programme C'est-à-dire.</td>
<td>25/3/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dutoit, Christian</td>
<td>Former member of Desgraupes' editorial team at the ORTF and former member of A2's news staff (technical editor of news).</td>
<td>25/4/1977</td>
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<td>Peyré, Paul</td>
<td>Director of external relations, A2.</td>
<td>27/4/1977</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Commercial Director, RFP-TF1</td>
<td>27/4/1977</td>
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<td>Representative of the SNRT-CGT, A2</td>
<td>2/5/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mousset, Jean</td>
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<td>2/5/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furbeyre, Jacqueline</td>
<td>Deputy director in charge of personnel, A2</td>
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<td>Schaeffer, Pierre</td>
<td>Author, member of the Quality Committee and of the Haut Conseil de l'Audiodvisuel, and former director of research at the ORTF.</td>
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<td>Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guy, Christian</td>
<td>Former member of Desgraupes' news staff at the ORTF and former news editor at A2</td>
<td>5/5/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arnstam, Pierre-Henri</td>
<td>Former member of Desgraupes' news staff, journalist at A2, representative of the CFDT-journalistes</td>
<td>9/5/1977 and 17/9/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lalet, Jean-François</td>
<td>Responsible for control of advertising, A2</td>
<td>11/5/1977</td>
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<td>Savelli, Mirette</td>
<td>Responsible for programme schedules, A2</td>
<td>17/5/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cublier, Jean-Michel</td>
<td>Lecturer at Paris I, engaged on research on the content of French television news programmes.</td>
<td>17/5/1977</td>
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<td>Someritis, Richard</td>
<td>Representative of the SNJ, A2</td>
<td>20/5/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guibert, Edouard</td>
<td>Former general secretary of the ORTF section of the Syndicat National des Journalistes</td>
<td>31/5/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Billy, Maurice</td>
<td>Member of the national bureau, SURT-CFDT, TF1</td>
<td>13/6/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barre, Michel</td>
<td>Deputy general secretary of the FR3 section, SNJ, and member of the national bureau, SNJ.</td>
<td>14/6/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manier, Stéphane</td>
<td>Journalist, TF1 representative of the CFDT-journalistes, TF1</td>
<td>16/6/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michaud, Roger</td>
<td>General secretary of the news department, FO. Trade union observer during the meetings of the Journalists' Reallocation Committee, autumn 1974.</td>
<td>20/6/1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thibau, Jacques</td>
<td>Former deputy director of television at the ORTF and writer on the French mass media. Author of Une télévision pour tous les français and La télévision, le pouvoir et l'argent.</td>
<td>21/6/1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thierry Guillot-Sestier</td>
<td>Press officer of the UDF</td>
<td>20/6/1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>André Diligent</td>
<td>General secretary of the CDS, former Senator, former rapporteur spécial of the Senate finance committee's annual budgetary report on the ORTF and rapporteur of the Diligent reports, 1968 and 1972.</td>
<td>21/6/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bertrand Cousin</td>
<td>Director of the chairman's cabinet, FR3</td>
<td>29/6/1979 and 11/7/1979</td>
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<td>Barrère, Denise</td>
<td>Public relations officer, Radio France</td>
<td>2/7/1979</td>
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<td>M. Duruflé</td>
<td>Director of the cabinet of Jacques Chaban-Delmas</td>
<td>3/7/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arnaud, Jean-Loup</td>
<td>Member of the central management, FR3 and former member of Rossi's cabinet, autumn 1974.</td>
<td>3/7/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>M. Gasser</td>
<td>Deputy director of the Senate cultural affairs committee</td>
<td>9/7/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long, Marceau</td>
<td>General secretary to the Prime Minister and former Président Directeur Général de l'ORTF.</td>
<td>10/7/1979</td>
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<td>Ralite, Jack</td>
<td>Deputy, member of the Parliamentary Delegation for broadcasting and Communist party spokesman on broadcasting.</td>
<td>10/7/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pouillard, Denys</td>
<td>Assistant to Henri Caillavet, Senator, rapporteur of the Senate cultural affairs committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting and rapporteur of the Caillavet report, 1978</td>
<td>12/7/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blin, Bernard</td>
<td>Member of the management, TFI</td>
<td>12/7/1979</td>
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<td>L'Ollivier, Paul</td>
<td>Member of the management, Radio France</td>
<td>13/7/1979</td>
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<td>Kalaydjian, Albert</td>
<td>Service Juridique et Technique de l'Information</td>
<td>13/7/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mme. Tourillon</td>
<td>Secretary of the Quality Committee</td>
<td>13/7/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>M. Cordier</td>
<td>Journalist, (television page of L'Humanité)</td>
<td>16/7/1979</td>
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<td>Mme. Mairal-Bernard</td>
<td>Public relations officer, SIP</td>
<td>16/7/1979</td>
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<td>Caron, René</td>
<td>General secretary of the TFI news staff.</td>
<td>18/7/1979</td>
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<td>Fabius, Laurent</td>
<td>Socialist Party spokesman</td>
<td>19/7/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vaurs, Roger</td>
<td>Former member of the cabinet of Chaban-Delmas responsible for broadcasting policy (1969-1972).</td>
<td>19/7/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
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<td>Mme. Fournieret</td>
<td>Secretary of the Haut Conseil de l'Audiovisuel.</td>
<td>20/7/1979</td>
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<td>Borvo, Pierre</td>
<td>Service Juridique et Technique de l'Information</td>
<td>20/7/1979</td>
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<td>Copin, Noel</td>
<td>Head of the Politics desk, A2</td>
<td>23/7/1979</td>
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<td>Longuet, Gérard</td>
<td>Deputy, member of the board of governors, TF1.</td>
<td>6/9/1979</td>
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<td>de Tarlé, Antoine</td>
<td>Administrator, National Assembly</td>
<td>8/9/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desgroues, Pierre</td>
<td>Journalist, former director of news on channel one at the ORTF</td>
<td>10/9/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Favre, Jean</td>
<td>Member of the board of governors, A2 and representative of the SURT-CFDT.</td>
<td>10/9/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluzel, Jean</td>
<td>Senator, rapporteur spécial of the Senate finance committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting and rapporteur of the Cluzel report, 1979.</td>
<td>11/9/1979</td>
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<td>Suffert, Georges</td>
<td>Journalist, Le Point</td>
<td>11/9/1979</td>
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<td>Perier, Jean-Claude</td>
<td>Conseiller d'Etat, Vice-chairman of the Staff Reallocation Committee and former chairman of the Quality Committee</td>
<td>13/9/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rosset, Jean-Loup</td>
<td>Secretary to the board of governors, TF1</td>
<td>14/9/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>M. Mougey</td>
<td>Service Juridique et Technique de l'Information</td>
<td>17/9/1979</td>
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<td>Reynaud, Geneviève</td>
<td>Member of the management, Radio France</td>
<td>18/9/1979</td>
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<td>Carat, Jacques</td>
<td>Senator, member of the board of governors, Radio France.</td>
<td>18/9/1979</td>
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<td>Jullian, Marcel</td>
<td>Former chairman of A2</td>
<td>19/9/1979</td>
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<td>Mme. Stefanaggi</td>
<td>Former member of the Liquidation Service of the ORTF</td>
<td>19/9/1979</td>
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<td>Estève, Daniel</td>
<td>Journalist, representative of CFDT-journalistes, A2</td>
<td>20/9/1979</td>
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<td>de Préaumont, Jean</td>
<td>Deputy, rapporteur of the National Assembly cultural affairs committee's annual budgetary report on broadcasting.</td>
<td>21/9/1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marchand, Jean-Pierre</td>
<td>TV producer</td>
<td>25/9/1979</td>
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le Point
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