Vol. 5, No. 2

Royal Meteorological Society

THE WEATHER on TELEVISION

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CANADIAN BRANCH

25¢

VOL. 5 NO. 2

Published by

ROYAL METEOROLOGICAL SOCIETY, CANADIAN BRANCH

Copies of this publication at 25¢ each are obtainable by writing to:

The Secretary,
Royal Meteorological Society, Canadian Branch,
315 Bloor Street West,
Toronto 5, Ontario.

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by

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Meteorological Service of Canada

Presented at the regular meeting of
the Royal Meteorological Society,
Canadian Branch, Thursday, March 25, 1954.

THE WEATHER ON TELEVISION

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The weather on TV is a new thing for Canada. It has had so far a rather successful run. It is providing a new service to a substantial portion of the Canadian public, who seem to like it. It has enabled the Meteorological Service to mount an extremely rewarding and extremely powerful platform and to reap substantial benefits. These may be intangible; but, they are real enough. Recall that the good-will of a firm may fetch a higher price than its more solid assets.

A dissertation on the story of the past 18 months may then have some slight historical use, but it will also be of current value. The problems met and overcome, the lessons learned, may help others in Canada who are about to embark on the stormy airwaves. Very soon Canada will have 20 or 30 TV stations. These will reach out to most of our people. It would be wise to secure opportunity by the fetlock.

Decisions on policy will have to be made. Should the Meteorological Service go along with sponsored broadcasts? Should its own personnel participate amid the plugs? Should they be paid? And if so, how much? How many men can be spared for the exacting and time-consuming task? Can their TV work be considered an extension of their regular work? Should we cooperate with non-professionals who might want to purvey the weather via TV? Can an actor or professional announcer do a good job of selling the weather and the Meteorological Service? Should each station have equal access to our men and information? Should TV weather programs be regional rather than local? For any one program, should an individual or a team of forecasters carry the burden? These are some of the things to be decided.

Four parties are involved: the Meteorological Service, the weatherman, the station operator, the sponsor. It's a complex matter and I don't propose to propose any solutions. I have a lot of questions but few answers. But if I can describe the origin, development, nature and result of Canada's pioneer TV weather program, that at least may help others who are more qualified than I to dispense wisdom.

It must be admitted that the idea of weather on Canadian TV was not met with open arms. The vision of a successful presentation of weather on the screen did not meet with immediate approval. I can see why. To the program planner, thinking in terms of what John Doe would want to see in the living room, nothing could seem duller than the weather. Certainly on radio, that is the case. I refer of course to the daily forecast and not the weekly talks. I refer too to the average man and

not the dedicated. The former far outnumber the latter. Further, TV has to show something. The V is as important as the T. The producer, a layman, might well ask and did ask —what? He visualized it as a static thing. As in fact it could be —you have only to watch the weather forecast on TV as given just before sign off on CBLT, or even on WBEN. A disembodied voice speaks, and the screen shows a pretty dull cloud picture, or a pretty putrid animation advertizing Indian beer. Or you could do it like the BBC did — pre-drawn maps, current and prognostic, and a voice off-stage. Pre-drawn stuff is pretty dull and so is a voice without body.

The length of the weather also lay on his mind. On radio, a few moments suffice for the daily probs. For TV, would it be worthwhile devoting the elaborate and costly broadcasting equipment for these few moments, and it was in moments that the weather was visualized. No one dreamed it could hold interest beyond that bare minimum.

There was a further obstacle — the performer. I use the word advisedly for the V in TV demands more than a pleasant voice and a competent brain. It can, in fact, dispense with both, I know. But it does demand performance, the sine qua non of show business. The program planner could be pardoned for being fearful of the kind of weather-pedlar he would get. His thoughts turned automatically to the professional actor or announcer. Gen him up and we've got the right brew - a voice, a face, and a brain - even if only a temporarily transplanted one. There is a TV station that does indeed rely on this modern Frankenstein - with, I'm told, rather unhappy results. For you just can't beat the happy combination of qualities that bring together in the same person, expert or at least qualified performance, and a flair for showmanship. Cookery is pretty dull too, but combine it with Hans in the Kitchen and it lives and breathes with fiery nostrils.

These then were some of the barriers to hurdle. There were helpful precedents. The Americans had a number of TV weather shows:- Youle on Camel Caravan; Fidler on Garroway's Today; Showalter and later Bollay in L.A. — and others. The Canadians had plenty to draw on from their experience with pilot briefings, particularly from mass briefings at Air Force stations. It was known that the presentation of weather with visual aids was feasible, and could be made vital and interesting. It remained to convince the program planner.

He, in turn, even when convinced, or at least less unconvinced, had to find a slot for the weather. This problem is quite different on radio. You have a small booth, a mike, and a single operator at the controls and you have merely to insert the voice at the given moment in front of the given mike and the weather is done. But on TV you have to allot studio space and time, not only for the show but for the rehearsal. For no TV program, however small, can be successful without the trying, time-consuming and costly business of familiarizing the crew with the nature of the program. Each night, no matter how repetitive, the gargantuan cameras have to be lined up, shifted, and chalked into position; electricians have to set up their aces, deuces and scoops; sound men have to position the boom, take levels and keep

mike shadows off the face; stage hands have to lift and tug the sets and props. All this takes money — about $600 an hour, to be imprecise. There are the men and women in the control room - the producer, the producer's assistant, the technical producer, the video men (one per camera), the audio men. On the floor, the cameramen, the boommen, lighting crew, stage hands, studio director. Before the show hits the tower antenna, it goes from studio floor to control room, to master control room, to transmitter control room. There is the coordinating producer, sound and sight technicians, booth announcer, telecine operator, kine man. And lots more. At each stage there is a crew of experts to guide the electrons on their way. And if the output is electrical, the input is financial.

It follows that TV is a costly business and whereas on radio, weather can appear unsponsored, in TV, most stations will have to find some sponsor to foot the bill. It also follows that TV programs are feasible only in quanta of 15 minutes. Anything less is uneconomic.

It was not surprising then that the first Canadian TV weather broadcast began as part of a puppet show. In the producer's eyes, this had several advantages. Puppets were a proven TV attraction; the weather pill would thus be chocolate-coated; separately, the weather and puppets would be hard put to fill a 15 minute slot; together they would eke it out. Further, it was a nice tidy way to start the evening schedule. Lastly, performer's pay in such a show was minimal - believe me. Finally, the planner found to his surprise he could generate interest by playing the puppets off against the weatherman, by contrasting a flesh-and-blood man of science (in the popular eye at any rate) with a pseudo-scientific blowhard of paper-mache. A certain interplay developed and a certain conflict. This horsing around seemed to catch the public's fancy and contributed in large measure to the success of this first weather show, which was called "Let's See".

"Let's See" allowed the weatherman to develop a badly needed sense of showmanship, an appreciation of the art of performing, and above all, it allowed him to appear in the public eye not as a delphic oracle but as an ordinary mortal. The public found it refreshing to see that weather forecasts are made by men and not by gods. They entered this on the right side of the ledger. This was a useful asset to draw on when forecasts went sour. A frank admission, a candid apology and an honest attempt to probe the causes -- these found a ready response in the viewer. Many a letter was received from those whose sympathy and understanding were there enlisted.

"Let's See" appeared every night in the week, including all Saturdays, Sundays and holidays for four long months. Each night the fertile brain of the producer devised a new situation or story line involving conflict and interplay between puppet and weatherman. This put a severe strain on the latter's resources, mental and physical. Just in time, the weekly stint was reduced by one night — Sunday. And so it went on for another two months - six nights a week.

The weather part of "Let's See" averaged 5 minutes a night. The basic props comprised: monthly charts for temperature, precipitation and sunshine; three sliding-panel maps; and a glass thermometer, 6 feet high. By raising and lowering a hot-water bottle behind the set, a stage hand caused the liquid in the tube to rise and fall to the correct readings. Thus were recorded the low and high for the day. This thermometer gimmick was a good one. Many a child thru "Let's See" got his first lessons in thermometry and basic instrumentation. Trouble was — the glass broke. A plastic one was substituted and filled with colored water. Trouble was — the colour stained the tube indelibly. So, after 4 months, the thermometer was junked and never used again. I miss it.

The first map used was made of glass — heavy plate, frosted on the rear side. It was beautiful but it was a pain in everyone's neck. The treasurer — because it cost $60. The stage hands — because it was a terror to move around safely. The electrician — because it could not be lit properly, rear or front; the weatherman — because no suitable marker could be found. China markers, ordinary crayon, Hazel Bishop lipstick, felt pens and even blood were used — nothing worked. Then one day it fell to pieces. No one missed it. Not even the stage hand who deliberately pushed his foot thru it. The next map was made of paper — the ordinary meteorological base chart. Each night before the show, the map's geography was heavily marked in with felt pen and the time this took was a serious drain. The trouble apart from this was that the map was too small; especially the part of most interest to viewers, the Southern Ontario ploughshare. For a time a special paper map of Southern Ontario was used, but it proved a nuisance and was soon discarded. The next step was to wood. Four large plywood panels were made — about 4' X 5' and put on horizontal slides to facilitate rapid change from one to the other. One panel had a map of the continent, one of the Great Lakes area, and a third of Southern Ontario only. The fourth was used as a blackboard. Ordinary flat oil paint was used, in black and shades of gray, to obtain best contrast. Chalk and brush completed the props but there were hitches here too. The grain and brush marks captured chalk dust which dimmed the contrast and made the washing of the maps a nightly chore. The maps were heavy and, not resting on roller bearings, were hard to move. Lack of rear support made them floppy and noisy. And the drafting being secondrate, violence was done to the politics. The meteorology, at times, suffered a like fate. White chalk was standard, but for a time black chalk was used to distinguish data in time. For example, minima were black, maxima white; yesterday's fronts were black, today's white. It sounded pretty good - until you went to rub off the black chalk and found it irremovable. Plastic sheets were used to try to move fronts, etc. across the map. Fine - but the sheet caught the lights and hot spots flickered all over the screen. A white rope was strung across the map and some pretty good frontal waves were made to move across the land, but you needed four arms to do it justice. Besides, only stable waves were demonstrable. Nature seems to find it easier. Whipping back and forth among the sliding maps was great fun and mightily impressive - until one night on the air, one of the maps fell right out and

left a neat large hole 4' X 5'. A large pad of paper nearby was used to write up the forecast. The graphs were used to tot up the daily temperature, precipitation and sunshine averages through the month and were mighty handy and veddy educational.

The weather was designed to build to a climax. The day's records were talked and entered, the current temperature humidity, cloud, wind and weather were noted; the weather round and about the city and district were noted on the map of the Great Lakes. The map was swished away and the picture broadened on a continental scale. This led unerringly to the next day's weather which was explained and then written up.

For a time, two extra services were given. On a map of Southern Ontario, the state of the highways was pictured. And in summer the forest fire situation was reported. These two valuable supplementary services were made possible by the warm cooperation of the appropriate provincial departments. The forestry people phoned the latest reports daily, and on Saturdays and holidays direct to the house. The highways people phoned current weather in three times a day and sent up by runner the latest teletype reports and press releases once a day.

All this information and the weather too were compressed into an average 5 minutes. This matter of time was a constant bugbear. The trouble was twofold - there was not enough time to deal with all the weather at hand; and the time allotted varied from night to night depending on the larger exigencies of the whole show. The lack of a script made it impossible to edit cleanly and often the time allotted to weather was not known till the last minute, often not till the show was already on the air.

The manner of putting in "Let's See" was this: The producer and puppeteer would meet in the mid-afternoon to plan the story for at least that evening and if possible for a further period. When things went well, a story line could be evolved on which a series of incidents could be strung for several nights, but when wells of inspiration ran dry, the episode was improvised from hunger. The weatherman was not consulted and did not know till he arrived what was wanted of him. A hasty, half-baked rehearsal of 15 minutes just before broadcast time and the show was aired for better or worse. That it was more often for better than not, was a tribute to the fertile imagination of the fey producer. All this by way of explaining why the weather was not allotted a fixed length of time on all broadcasts.

On the other hand, there were many occasions when a disproportionate share of the 15 minutes was devoted to weather. This was done to permit the display of instruments, or the discussion of some aspect of the weather service in general. In the course of time, all the main instruments were shown, explained and demonstrated in action. With the willing help of the Instrument Services, Head Office, we introduced to many the sling psychrometer, barograph, radiosonde transmitter and recorder, pilot balloon, theodolite, all

types of thermometers, anemometers, rain and snow gauges, and what not. An appeal was made for metropolitan voluntary climatic observers and some were recruited. An appeal was made for meteorologist-applicants. Whether this brought results I do not know, but if not, it shows the class of viewers who watched, not us, but Buffalo.

Astronomical data was also doled out in small measure; explanations of eclipses, standard time, sunspots and the seasons were given. The times of sunrise and sunset were frequently indicated. A graph of sunrise and sunset was shown. A map of the average snowfall in the Toronto area was shown and explained, based on a study by M. K. Thomas. Graphs showing the average monthly annual snowfall in Toronto were a standard feature during the snow season. All of this was facilitated by the willing assistance of the climatological services and by the official observers at Head Office. It was also possible to go into such detail because the broadcast was going out over one station only, CBLT, Toronto. When the program went to Ottawa and then to Montreal and then to Kitchener, such detailed treatment became impossible in the allotted time, which instead of expanding proportionately, actually shrank for a long period of time and then returned to its original 5 minutes and no more.

The headaches of putting on a TV weather are many and the aspirins are few. It is difficult enough to nerve oneself to face the beady eyes of the camera; to work in front of a crowd; to memorize the data at the last minute and under all kinds of adverse premises; to cope with changing allotment of time; to try to get variety in subject matter and presentation; to integrate the spoken word with the drawn line. The ordinary strain of TV common to all performers is more than enough to terrify the professional, let alone the amateur. It is an axiom that of all the entertainment media, TV is by far the hardest to work in. But the weatherman has an additional and heavy cross to bear --- the forecast that goes sour. To face the camera the night after a bust forecast is not pleasant. One cannot ignore it, or laugh it off, or be glib about it. You have to admit and explain and you have to do it without looking like a fool. It's hard to succeed and in trying to, the wear and tear on the nerves is debilitating. But you do have the great advantage that you can show the reasons for a failure. You can make the weather come alive and you can enlist your audience's understanding, from which comes sympathy and support. It is one of the great rewards of TV — never have so many friends been won for the weather service in so short a time by so few and at so little cost.

When the weather began to go via microwave relay to Ottawa, Montreal and Kitchener, new problems arose, not alone revolving about matters of time. True, to do justice to all areas in 5 minutes meant that the intensive treatment formerly permitted for Toronto alone went into discard. No longer was climatic data graphed or even noted; current values were ignored; even a detailed discussion of past weather was curtailed. In place of that, a broader and more general approach was necessary. But even more pressing was the need to reconcile the forecasts for the two adjacent districts.

On, what seems to be in retrospect, many an occasion, the forecasts for Southern Ontario differed from those of the Ottawa-Montreal area, even though the general analysis was similar. It was all you could do to go from your story on what was happening to what you expected would happen and make it jibe with the actual forecasts. The trouble would have been alleviated if discussion with the Montreal office were possible. But this was precluded by lack of time and by the high price of trunk line tolls. The result was you could only fall back on generalities or do some agile double talk in glossing over the discrepancies. But this was mere stop gap stuff. The next day your sins were laid bare for all to see. The weather had shown you up. Several occasions this past winter point this up. In each case a stormy area approaching was forecast to give some kind of weather in Southern Ontario, but not for Eastern Ontario or Southwestern Quebec. It did and how it did — and lessons were not learned.

There were other discrepancies to cope with. The daily telephone briefing was indispensable in getting at the thinking of the forecaster. Forecasters differ of course in experience and ability and from some you can get a great deal more than others. Some are more cooperative than others; some understand your problems better and some understand the weather better. But on more than one occasion you find the briefing disclosed a hiatus between analysis and forecast. A day has been sunny and 40 degrees with a northwest wind. The next day promises to be cloudy with a southeast wind, with a low approaching. Yet the forecast is for 40 degrees. Desire for continuity with the previous forecast is one reason. But it may also have been inertia, or lack of time to think it thru.

Another aspect was disclosed. In order to get a picture of the flow of the weather thru the next day, it was often necessary to query the day after. Yet it was surprising to note how often the forecaster's thinking ended smack-dab with the time of the current prog. You felt that by forgetting the minutiae of the prog and thinking in larger terms of the broad scale movement of weather beyond the valid period, that you could do a better job of public forecasting. The American F.P.1.'s and M.F.A.M.'s were most helpful in this way.

It goes without saying that televising weather is not a one-man job. The cooperation of the heads of the Department of Transport and of the Meteorological Division is vital and close liaison with the responsible district forecast offices is essential. This goes beyond the securing of formal consent and approval; the whole hearted and willing cooperation of a large number of individuals must be guaranteed on a day to day basis. Merely to list the officers and other personnel involved without assigning relative importance will give some idea of the range of contact: the Deputy Minister, the Director of Air Services; the Controller and Senipr Assistant Controller; the Superintendent of Public Weather; the officers in charge at Malton, Dorval, Rockcliffe; the duty forecasters at Malton, Dorval, Rockcliffe; the meteorologist in charge at Hamilton; the teletypists and meteorological assistants at Head Office. This omits the special assistance rendered by the teletype superintendent and supervisor; the

climatologists; research meteorologists; the meteorologists and technicians in the instrument services; and of course the basic data and forecasts supplied by the entire Weather Service. The whole is greater than the part, and the meteorologist who televises the weather is a very small part of the whole.

It takes about two hours to prepare the material for a five-minute weather program on TV. This includes a cursory scanning of the airways reports and plotted but unanalyzed surface chart; a closer look at the analyzed charts (ozalided 0930Z and facsimilized 1530Z); the teletype forecasts and other data; a telephone briefing; compiling and organizing the data and memorizing it.

It is surprising how well you think you know your weather but how fast it drains away the moment the camera's baleful glare is upon you. Many people have expressed wonder at the facility with which a list of facts are remembered. They have wondered aloud and in print if prompters are used, such as a script or map or card to look at. There are no prompters of any sort. One cannot compress all the data you want to transmit in 5 minutes and hope to catch it on the fly in any coherent fashion. Even if you could, it would ring false. The camera quickly registers insincerity or artificiality; what goes over best in TV is not the memorized phrase but the line spoken straight from the mind and heart.

In the earlier days, every inaccuracy in the forecast was keenly felt and an explanation was given. Later it became obvious that this was overdoing it. Latterly, only major errors are explained, or even referred to. If we wanted to ignore even these, there are the other members of the program, who are not backward in chivvying. But this is a two-edged sword. The public has responded in many a letter by defending the weatherman and taking to task the tormentor. They feel, by and large, that an accurate and useful service is rendered, a service moreover which is not available in quite the same vivid way on any other medium. It is more graphic than radio and more up to date than the newspaper. Pilots have stated that they find it useful on days off to keep in touch; sailors, farmers, businessmen and others have based their decisions on the TV weather. The service extends across the border, where residents of upstate New York and upper Vermont have frequently expressed fervent appreciation. This reverse lend-lease should be suitably acknowledged in the American Weather Bureau budget.

Children particularly have evinced a keen interest and liking for the weather on TV. Potential meteorologists may be among them - and potent ones too I hope. Youngsters from two and a half up are cited as never missing the weather; others as drawing on walls; and this influence extends to the animal world, cats in particular. Several have so attested.

But in addition to the inherent interest in weather that people hold by virtue of their calling or training, for the vast mass of the general John Q., one must rely on selling the weather night after night. As a press comment stated some time ago "TV is new and the weather is an old old

opening gambit. Kings and cabbages can dispose of the weather in five seconds. Why then take 5 minutes?". To "sell" the weather, a little showmanship is required. As one viewer stated, "we want more ham and less starch". This means that pre-drawn maps or preplotted data should be avoided like the plague. It is wiser to start with a blank map and a head full of data than the reverse. The "action" or "life" lies in drawing and talking, with heavy stress on drawing. Speech should have specific reference to the drawing. Vague gestures in the general direction of places mentioned are not only useless but boring. Name a place and slap a hunk of chalk on the spot. Cite a temperature and mark it up. Recall a wind and put it on in white or black. Use bold strokes. Nothing repels like wishy-washy chalking. TV weather must be an animated chalk talk. Gesture with your face and body and limbs; charge the voice with restrained emotion; joke and kibitz and leaven the loaf. In short, to use Jarvis Jargon, "project" and "give out".

It is not likely that weather will be televised in Canada as a separate program of its own, unless of course, it is sponsored as such. Therefore, what weather is linked to becomes highly important. Experience has shown that the original linkage of weather and puppets served a useful purpose in sugar-coating the pill. Many people were sucked in to look at it, because they really wanted to see a brace of marionettes. Children too were painlessly initiated into meteorology and soon became among its most ardent fans. But a not inconsiderable number of adults found it painful to sit thru the preliminary puppetry in order to get what they really wanted - the weather. Pressure was exerted to divorce the, to some, incompatible partners in this strange and morganatic marriage. At about this time the CBC was casting about for a news show. It seemed a natural to unite the two - news and weather. Thus was born the present program called Tabloid. It has since become phenomenally successful. Many a viewer has volunteered the information that he first became a CBLT viewer via Tabloid. There is no program quite like it in format and content anywhere on this continent. The nearest relative is Dave Garroway's Today, out of New York, but it is so heavily loaded with commercialism as to be but a parody of a good news show and the weather on Today is equally grotesque and primitive. Incidentally you may be amused to learn that a TV news program played no part in the original thinking of the CBC planners. It was felt that news on TV would be static and of no interest. It turned out that the diametric opposite was the case. Tabloid has undergone a number of basic changes, the most important of which is that its original raison d'etre, the news, is now on a program of its own. Tabloid is now weather plus interviews and seems to be quite able to stand on these two alone.

The advantages are mutual and inter-locking. The weather is a strong part of Tabloid and Tabloid as a whole enhances the weather. It does so because it plays it up, features it, to use show biz lingo, and personalizes the weatherman as a member of the Tabloid team. This matter of developing the weatherman as a "personality" contributes greatly to the public response to televised weather. The medium brings the performer right into the living room; you see rather more of him in close-up than you do of anyone but your

immediate family; you get to know the nuances of every move and every word. It is uncanny. He becomes like one of the family. Numbers of viewers have so testified. There has grown up among a large number of viewers what might be called the Tabloid habit. It tears them from their meals or it brings their meals into the living room; it postpones their dishwashing and their gardening; it splits the family into warring camps. It makes us a host of dedicated friends, and it makes us a number of bitter enemies. Fortunately, the latter are few.

From all of this, the weather service cannot help but benefit. The advantages of showing the weather are marked. The public gains a keen appreciation of the complexities confronting the forecaster. They can see where his pitfalls lie and their sympathy can be enlisted. From disinterested neutrals they become passionate partisans. Some go so far as to wait for the weather only and then switch the show out. So far about 500 TV weathers have gone out over the air. At any one time more than 100,000 people view the show. All told, I daresay several million people have watched the weather on television. This is a tremendous audience which cannot be ignored. The Meteorological Division has a great opportunity to reach out to even greater numbers via the new stations that will be opening up in the next few months across Canada.

It seems then that the fewer obstacles we erect between them and us, the better it will be for all concerned. Although conditions may vary in each area, a logical policy would include these principles:-

We should do all we can to see to it that one of our men does the weather on TV. He will be best fitted to sell the weather and the weather service to the public in a way no professional performer can do.

We should do all we can to select our best men and to facilitate his work in every way. His TV work should be considered an extension and an important part of his normal duties.

We should try to get our men on every single TV station Canada will have. If this means appearing in a sponsored show, this should not prevent us from presenting the weather to the public using one of our own men. With suitable safeguards, we should avail ourselves of this marvelous new medium to spread our gospel far and wide using our own clergy and not allow it to go into the hands of the laity by default. If we can give better service by a local program even if sponsored as opposed to an unsponsored regional program, we should support the local program wholeheartedly.

TV is built around personalities and we should do all we can to personalize the weather and the weatherman. For this reason, it would be preferable to assign one meteorologist rather than a team of meteorologists to a TV weather program.

Payment for the meteorologist's service should be a matter between the station, the sponsor and the weatherman. Every incentive, financial and administrative, should be proffered to achieve the main aim — reaching the largest number of people with the best men we've got for the supreme purpose of making the weather come alive in the living room.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In what has gone before, the emphasis has necessarily been placed on the importance of TV to the weather service. It would be remiss not to mention the reverse effect. The popularity of the weather on Canadian television has been a marked asset to the CBC. Letters are on file stating that it was the weather that first attracted the viewers to CBLT, and played a part in winning their general support of the station's programming. Some go so far as to state that they watch the weather only and then switch to other sights and sounds. These are in the minority, I hope, because Tabloid is an excellent program. The advantages of having a good presentation of weather on television are beneficial to both parties and is a point not to be overlooked in program planning for any station.

The writer desires to record his personal appreciation of the warm support given him by numerous officials and employees of the CBC. That the station manager, the program director, the chief producer, and many others, were instrumental in setting up and carrying forward the presentation of weather on TV is self-evident. The willing and friendly cooperation of the skilled technicians and studio crew was a major factor in whatever success TV weather has had. Chief credit for the tone and quality of the weather program must go to the talented men, primarily responsible for the day-to-day production of, initially, Let's See (1st 6 months) and, latterly, Tabloid (next 12 months). Norman Campbell, who later was successful in guiding such major programs on the network as After Hours, Show Time and the Big Revue, was the principal producer of Let's See. Ross McLean, supervising producer of public affairs television programs, was the original producer of Tabloid and is still its guiding genius. The help of these men is gratefully acknowledged.

DISCUSSION

The following points were raised by members of the audience: How would a District Office handle requests from more than one TV station in the area? How would requests be handled from stations in areas where no forecast office is located? What would be the result of two or more sponsors wanting a weather program on the same TV station? How long would one meteorologist be able to shoulder the load of a TV weather program, in contrast to a team of meteorologists? Should the Meteorological Service create a demand for its services (in this instance, for TV weather programs), or encourage the demand, or wait for the stations and sponsors to come to the Service?

Members of the audience participated in the discussion, upholding differing viewpoints. The thinking of some may be paraphrased as follows: The Meteorological Service is working at capacity; any further large demands on its time and personnel would be hard to satisfy; thus, steps to encourage a demand for its services should be avoided. It was suggested that ex-meteorologists, persons who had once worked for the weather service, particularly in wartime, should be considered for the role of TV weather broadcasters. The thinking of others may be paraphrased as follows: TV offers the weather service a chance to display its wares and win a large and favourable audience; every effort should be made to take advantage of this opportunity. Problems would arise, but with a favourable positive attitude, the problems would be solved. It boils down to deciding which would loom larger: the difficulties or the advantages.