

Editorial

This issue carries the first of what promises to be an interesting column/forum from Steve Fruitman. He calls it *Islands in the Sand*, and, indeed, despite the concerns (even complaints) registered by several writers in a joint editorial in our issue 32.3, CBC, both One and Two, Alberta's CKUA, and a very few other points on various dials across the country are oases on an arid audio horizon.

Confession time—I myself was caught in the April Fool joke which Perrin Beatty and the *As It Happens* folks pulled this year; if you missed it, Beatty claimed that the Walt Disney company had come on board as a sort of corporate partner of CBC and would offer "tasteful" notices of their support at the end of radio programs. Unfortunately, I was suckered into this because the notion itself and the rhetoric Beatty used (whenever I hear the word *tasteful* these days, I expect the worst!) were so very close to what I've come to expect from the corporate, neo-conservative world. (Don't forget that Beatty was Mulroney's Minister of Defense.) Indeed, when a week later Beatty offered a genuine push for further sponsorship of CBC activities, it was difficult not to suppose that the earlier "joke" was an intentional

softening up of the public, if not in fact some sort of testing of the waters. Have you seen the cartoon of the calf bawling and saying that he's just found out where hamburger comes from? "You youngsters and your conspiracy theories!" his principal caregiver fumes. But sometimes the sky does fall—ask the dinosaurs or the folks from Pompeii. Or from Belgrade.

This might be an appropriate time to quote trombonist Rob McConnell, whom I heard recently on a CBC Two concert, on the difference between Canadians and Yanks. Americans say, "We're better than you." Canadians say, "You're better than we." I wonder if that line would have made the cut, had Disney sponsored the program? Or the CIBC, as far as that goes?

Steve Fruitman hosts *The Great North Wind* on CIUT-FM (89.5) in Toronto. He's appeared in the *Bulletin* from time to time in the past, and we're looking forward to more contributions from him. As you'll see, he hopes to make *Islands in the Sand* an interactive column—so we're looking forward to hearing from our readers, as well.

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