THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT
OF BROADCASTING
IN ICELAND

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generous assistance, the quality of this research project would have suffered and the final product would be incomplete.

Navy Chief Thomas E. Jones was instrumental in providing information about the Navy Broadcast Service facility at Keflavik. His on site assistance as commander of NBS Keflavik insured that the story of the American influence on Icelandic broadcasting would be told. His continued support as head of inspection services at NBS headquarters in Washington, D.C., resolved many inconsistencies discovered in my earlier drafts.

Frequently, the Public Affairs Officer for the US Information Agency is not only a reliable source for information about broadcasting in the country in which he serves, but also one of the people most able to provide contacts about broadcasting in his host nation. Tom Martin, the USIA Public Affairs representative in Iceland is no exception. His working relationship with Icelanders from all walks of life benefitted me directly by opening doors for interviews with people who influence the character of Icelandic broadcasting.
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ABSTRACT

The history of Iceland and the development of broadcasting on the island nation are the focus of this study.

Research for this study was conducted in the United States, Sweden, and Iceland. Managers and staff of the Iceland State Broadcasting Service, a member of the program board, Navy Broadcasting Service personnel, and the public affairs officer for the US Embassy in Iceland were interviewed during a one-week stay in Reykjavik, Iceland.

Between 1925 and 1930, two privately-owned radio stations operated in Reykjavik and Akureyri, but scholars and opinion leaders opposed them, and the government created a state-run radio system. Control of the Iceland State Broadcasting Service (ISBS) was passed to the Minister of Culture and Education to ensure that the medium would supplement and enrich Icelandic life and culture. Icelandic radio remained virtually unchanged from 1930 until 1952, when American Forces at the
Keflavik NATO base were granted permission to operate an (AM) medium-wave transmitter.

The introduction of American radio programming to Iceland created formidable (if unintentional) competition for the state-run Icelandic radio system. In 1955, the Americans added television broadcasting to their entertainment programming from Keflavik, and a portion of the Icelandic population began watching and discussing American television programs.

Icelandic television followed the introduction of American television on the island by 11 years. Responding to public pressure to develop Icelandic television, the Minister of Culture and Education directed State Radio to formulate plans for a national television system. The first Icelandic television program, a newscast, was broadcast in 1966.

Today, the ISBS faces competition from home video recorders, cable television, and direct broadcast satellite programming. What effect, if any, this will have on Ríkisutvarp (ISBS) television is unclear. Undoubtedly, changes will be made in programming content and duration in order to maintain a large share of the television audience.
CHAPTER 1

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The world in which we live is becoming an increasingly global community. We may know more about an event on the other side of the world than about an event across town; today's technology provides instant communication links from one side of the world to the other. "Foreigners" are becoming less foreign and more familiar through telecommunication links as well as increased travel. This new sense of the "global village" encourages us to become more aware of how other people live and communicate.

Mass communication scholars strive to learn about communication systems around the world, but frequently find that their research is hampered by a lack of information. The absence of basic details about broadcasting in many countries prevents people who study or work in the field of international mass communication from gaining an understanding of how and why people of
another country use broadcasting in the ways they do. For most countries there is no one source similar to Broadcasting in Africa: A Continental Survey of Radio and Television, edited by Sidney Head (1974), Radio and Television Broadcasting on the European Continent, by Burton Paulu (1967), or Broadcasting in the Third World: Promise and Performance, by Elihu Katz and George Wedell (1977), to provide a descriptive history, in English, about broadcasting. However, several books have been published in recent years which provide new or greater information on broadcasting in countries not previously well documented. Three such books are Broadcasting in Asia and the Pacific: A Continental Survey of Radio and Television, edited by John Lent (1978), Broadcasting Around the World, by William McCavitt (1981), and Broadcasting in the Arab World: A Survey of Radio and Television in the Middle East, by Douglas Boyd (1982). More books of this nature are needed in order to close the information gap which currently exists.

In 1980, one of the requirements of a course in international and comparative broadcasting at the University of Delaware was to write a short paper on broadcasting in one of several countries suggested by the instructor. Iceland was one of those options, and this
writer selected it as the paper topic. This thesis is an expansion and development of that earlier paper.

Although Iceland's recorded history dates from the year 874 A.D., there is little about Iceland in books and journals and even less about Icelandic broadcasting. Perhaps Iceland is not well represented in the literature because it was ruled by Norway from 1262-1380, by Denmark from 1380-1918, and by an agreement or union between Denmark and Iceland from 1918-1944, and did not gain full independence until 1944 (Tomasson 1980). Curiosity about Iceland and especially about broadcasting in Iceland became the driving force in conducting this study.

Icelandic broadcasting is worthy of study for two main reasons: although Iceland has been called the first American republic by Stefansson (1945), it is neither American nor European but borrows the best of both for a mid-Atlantic style; and broadcasting directly reflects the cultural heritage of the country.

Iceland has been isolated from the rest of the world partly because of its geographic location and partly because of its own nationalist policies. The republic has maintained cultural homogeneity and resisted cultural diffusion by restricting immigration and foreign business and by promoting the written and spoken native
language. The successful maintenance of the language is evidenced by the Icelandic citizen's ability to read the written language of 1,000 years ago without difficulty.

Iceland's broadcast system is similar in some respects to that of other Scandinavian countries but also similar in others to American broadcasting. In many ways, Iceland resembles a country just developing broadcasting because of the relatively short broadcast day (three hours of television and 17 hours of radio) and the financial problems which face the organization. The small population of the country (234,980 people) limits the broadcasting authority's available audience, which in turn affects advertising rates and the cost of programming.

The difficulties which face the Iceland State Broadcasting Service (ISBS), Rikisutvarpid, are similar to those of any governmental agency. Money, or the lack of it, is believed to be the cause of many of the problems the ISBS faces, yet money is merely the obvious answer. Resistance of a firmly entrenched bureaucracy toward new ideas characterizes the generation gap between the young broadcasting employees, trained in Britain and America, and the older managers, schooled in the Icelandic tradition. This study will explain some of
the underlying difficulties plaguing Icelandic broadcasting.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to present an historical overview and analysis of the development of broadcasting, both radio and television, in Iceland. A US military installation on the island has performed an important role in the development of Icelandic broadcasting, and that role will also be discussed.

While Icelandic radio—Utvarp—is 50 years old, television broadcasting—Sjonvarp—is a relatively new phenomenon. Although television has been broadcast by the US military’s Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) [1] since 1955, Icelandic television did not begin until 1966. Rikisutvarpid’s slow development of television threatens the survival of the medium as a state-owned but independent broadcast service. New technology in the form of video cassettes and the promise of future direct broadcast satellites (DBS) [2] are already undermining the purpose of Icelandic Broadcasting as seen by the founding parents and guardians of the medium. Icelanders say they have the highest concentration per capita of home video recorders in the world; “many people have bought video equipment to
compensate for the uneven quality of local programming, or to extend viewing hours" (Hamar 1981). Although the ISBS still legally holds a monopoly on radio broadcasting, Icelanders can receive radio programs from the European continent, and the television monopoly may also succumb to foreign competition. Technology’s impact on the medium will be discussed in this study.

The presence of American forces on the Keflavik NATO base compounds Iceland’s broadcasting problems. The controversy over “foreign” troops in Iceland began 10 May 1940, when British troops occupied the country in an effort to secure the strategic island before the Germans could (Grondal 1971). The Icelandic Parliament, the Althing, arranged a defense agreement with the United States in the summer of 1941, and American forces have been there ever since. Iceland was one of the founding members of NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Nordal and Kristinsson 1975):

The North Atlantic Treaty was signed in 1949 by Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United States; Greece and Turkey joined in 1952, and West Germany in 1955.
The treaty unites Western Europe and North America in a commitment to consult together if the security of any one member is threatened, and to consider an armed attack against one as an attack against all, to be met by such action as each of them deems necessary, "including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area." (Air Force Magazine, December 1980, p. 75)

The American Forces Network (AFN) began broadcasting radio programs in 1952 on medium-wave—standard AM—and television programs in 1955. Although many of the radio programs and most of the television programs were, and continue to be, supplied by the American Forces Radio and Television Service, local programs, such as disc jockey shows on radio and the news and public affairs programs on television, are produced in the studios of the US Navy Broadcasting Service (NBS), Keflavik [3].

Although Icelandic radio started in 1930, the ISBS did not begin television transmissions until 1966. Only three hours of television programs were broadcast per day in 1982 [4]. Since 1975, AFRTS has broadcast radio programs only on the medium-wave (MW) band; all television and VHF-FM are transmitted through a community cable system on the NATO base [5]. The NBS station installed a new 250-watt radio transmitter and antenna in 1979. The signal is received in some portions of the
area extending from the south coast to the north coast of western Iceland. Reception reports have also been received from Finland, Norway, and Sweden, with at least one instance of a DX report from Italy. The NBS radio station continues to be a popular alternative to State Radio for the young people in the southwestern portion of Iceland, which is home to more than 50 percent of the 234,980 (1982) population. The reason for NBS’s popularity with the young Icelanders is said to be that the American station plays more popular music and has less "talk" programming than State Radio.

Related and Previous Research

Icelandic broadcasting has not been well documented in English language journals and books. The first studies were comparative in nature and were limited to the late 1960s, when television signals could reach about 60 percent of the population. In the middle of the 1970s, new research and a synthesis of research on Icelandic broadcasting were published. These studies concentrated mainly on the sociological effect of American television programs on the Icelandic people and the potential for cultural diffusion as reflected in the question: "Does viewing American programs correlate with a favorable impression of the United States?" (Payne and
Television station at Keflavik. Payne found that "U.S. TV has had a minimal effect in generating favorable attitudes about the U.S." (Payne and Peake 1977).

Swedish Radio's Audience and Programme Research Department sponsored two studies of Icelandic broadcasting in 1970 and 1971. They are *The Radio and TV Audience in Iceland: November 8-14 1970* and *Patterns of Radio Listening and TV Viewing in Iceland*, the latter conducted by Ulf Berg. The 1971 Berg study provided some statistical data related to the times when Icelanders listen to radio and watch television. The results of the Berg study are based on 546 diary responses from a sample of 839 people aged 14 to 79.

Icelandic broadcasting has been discussed briefly in journals, books, and other publications. Perhaps the earliest mention of Icelandic broadcasting in American publications is Charles Boland's brief *TV Guide* article in January 1958, dealing with the Icelanders' knowledge of American television programs. It reported that the people living in southwest Iceland were listening to the FM sound from the American Forces Television (AFT) programs. Boland discovered something that remains basically true today:
Icelanders love to listen in on American television programs, and later discuss them by the hour. But every Icelander is opposed to television on the little island. They feel it might have an undue influence on the coming generation. (Boland 1958)

Icelanders are still (publicly) concerned that watching too much television is bad for a person, and many believe that they watch too much TV, while at the same time they (privately) clamor for more of it (Boland 1958).

Two brief mentions of Icelandic television occur in trade journals: "Profile of Icelandic TV," by Jack Pitman, in Variety (1971); and "Iceland: Continuing Progress of Television Service," in the July 1969 EBU Review, by Andres Bjornsson, Director-General of Rikisutvarpid. Pitman provides a brief overview of the Icelandic television system, apparently from the viewpoint of one who has never seen Icelandic television or been to the country. The Bjornsson article describes in greater detail how television programming has been implemented and how far that effort has progressed since its inception. Neither of the two articles provides an overview of the broadcast system encompassing both radio and television.

The first, and perhaps only, work to describe more than just the bare facts of Icelandic radio and television is Walter Emery's National and

Atlantica & Iceland Review and News From Iceland are an English language magazine and newspaper. They provide features and news about Iceland for tourists visiting the country and subscribers around the world.

Four articles on Icelandic broadcasting have appeared in these publications since 1967: "The Coming of Television" (Schram 1967), outlining the new television system which began transmitting in 1966; "Focus on the Media" (Hamar 1975), primarily discussing the print media in Iceland but also including comments on radio and television; "Focus on Telecommunications for Iceland" (Hamar 1978), dealing with the recent construction of a satellite earth station and possibilities for its use; and "TV Watching: The Habit Took Hold Overnight, but Thursday is Off for Everyone" (Antonsson 1979), summarizing television from 1966 to 1979, with thoughts on the future of television in Iceland.

One article exclusively concerning television at the Keflavik NATO facility appeared in the base
newspaper, the *White Falcon*, in August 1964, nine years after the inception of television broadcasting there. The article, "The Voice of the North Atlantic," reviewed the mission and the background of the AFRTS unit now run by the Navy Broadcasting Service (NBS).


**Method**

Unlike researchers in disciplines where a complete data base is available, the communications historian recognizes the limitations of the data and seeks a "verisimilitude rather than objective truth [6]." (Smith 1981)

Gottschalk (1969) defines historical method as that process of critically examining and analyzing the records of the past. Using Gottschalk's definition as a point of departure, the communications historian utilizes
content and systems analysis to study the process of change over time. Naturally, the researcher will ask the questions who, what, when, where, why, and how. Also of interest are the ideas and the impulses which lead to particular decisions. Organizational financing should be studied because it affects the organization's operation and its ability to grow, develop, and expand. Since events do not take place in total isolation from the rest of the world, the transfer of ideas, methods, and technology is common. A researcher should observe and compare the organization to be studied with other models to see if the organization under study developed independently or as a result of the sharing of information. Finally, all of this takes place within a framework of conflicting interests, ideological considerations, and the internal politics of a country. All of the above should be considered as influencing this study.

Procedure and Organization

Literature, about broadcasting in Iceland, was searched in the United States, Sweden, and Iceland in order to develop questions to be asked during field study. Field work was conducted during the first week of February 1982 in Reykjavik and Keflavik, Iceland.
Interviews with personnel from State Radio and Television, members of the US Embassy staff, a member of the Icelandic Parliament, the US Navy Broadcasting Service, the public affairs staff of the Iceland Defense Force, and Icelandic citizens provided much of the data for this study. Both Icelandic and American radio and television were observed in order to make comparisons.

An informal set of questions was used in order to cover basic points such as financing, types of programs, control over programming and news content, and organizational control. The questions were modified over time to incorporate what was learned and to crosscheck answers given by other interviewees.

A principal source for this study is Rikisutvarpid, the Iceland State Broadcasting Service (ISBS). Much of the information about State Broadcasting and its history has been obtained from the ISBS. The foreign relations office of the ISBS supplied documents in English and Icelandic for this research.

Interviews were held with people at different levels of authority in Rikisutvarpid. The executive secretary to the Director-General of Rikisutvarpid is the foreign relations liaison and she coordinated the interviews with broadcast personnel. A series of
interviews was held with the financial director, the budget director, the program director for radio, and members of the technical and news staff.

Tom Martin, public affairs officer for the US Embassy to Iceland, helped to make many of the contacts with influential people regarding broadcasting in Iceland. Martin introduced me to Eidur Gudnason, a member of the Icelandic Parliament, who was on the program board for Rikisutvarpid and had attended the University of Delaware for a year on a foreign exchange program. Martin also suggested other contacts and leads.

The US Navy Broadcasting Service at the Keflavik base was visited in order to obtain firsthand information about the development of radio and television. The ISBS seemed reluctant to comment on the relationship of AFRTS to the authority, but some of the people at the Navy Broadcasting Service were willing to speculate about it. The primary contact with Navy Broadcasting was made with Chief Tom Jones, commander of the unit. Lieutenant Commander Mel Sundin, the Iceland Defense Force Public Affairs Officer, recommended contacting the Navy and Air Force historical records centers in Washington, D.C., since records are kept at the base for only three years.

Many Icelandic citizens were also interviewed
during the field work. Most Icelanders speak English
(English is taught as a second or third language from the
early grades in school) and were very willing to discuss
their broadcast system.

The headquarters for Navy Broadcasting in Crystal
City, Virginia, was visited several times after the
original field work in order to update information
concerning the numerous changes to broadcast operations
at their Keflavik detachment. The Embassy of Iceland, in
Washington, D.C., supplied this researcher with the name
of an Icelander, Orn Adalsteinsson, living in Wilmington,
Delaware, and he offered to translate the Icelandic
documents.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the history of
Iceland. An understanding of Iceland's past is essential
to the understanding of its present. The information is
a synthesis of several books on the subject, the most
notable of which are: Modern Iceland, by John C.
Griffiths (1969); Northern Sphinx: Iceland and the
Icelanders From the Settlement to the Present Day, by
Sigurdur A. Magnusson (1977); Daughter of Fire: A
Portrait of Iceland, by Katherine Scherman (1976);
Iceland: The First American Republic, by Richard F.
Tomasson (1980); and Iceland: 874-1974, a handbook on
Iceland published by the Central Bank of Iceland in
commemoration of the eleventh centenary of the settlement
of Iceland and edited by Dr. Johannes Nordal and Valdimar
Kristinsson of the Central Bank (1975).

Chapter 3 presents the most notable aspects of
the history of radio broadcasting in Iceland. Few
details are available on radio history in the literature,
possibly because radio was more readily accepted than
television, but also possibly because television is more
glamorous to study than radio and that is where many
researchers have devoted their endeavors [7]. Chapter 4
discusses the history of Icelandic television and its
relationship to the American Forces Television broadcasts
from the Keflavik base. Chapter 5 addresses prospects
for the future of Icelandic television and gives
conclusions of the study.

Limitations of the Study

Much of the information for this study was
provided by the ISBS. A wealth of information is
available to a researcher who speaks Icelandic, since
many documents and newspapers are in Icelandic, a
language this researcher does not speak.
NOTES

1. The mission of the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) is to keep US military personnel and their dependents, overseas, informed on current events and news (WRTH 1982, p. 266). The words "Armed" and "American" have both been utilized by AFRTS and are used interchangeably in this study.

2. Direct Broadcast Satellites (DBS) will transmit radio and television programs from a satellite locked in a geostationary orbit 36,000 km (22,356 mi) above the equator. Several countries are experimenting with direct broadcast satellites. For example, Japan has been working with the Broadcast Satellite Experiment (BSE) since 1978 and has conducted a long series of experiments with 100-watt transponders (the satellite receiver/transmitter) and 1-meter receiving antennas (on the ground) (Endeavour, New Series Volume 5, No. 4, 1981).

3. The US Navy Broadcasting Service operates the AFRTS station at Keflavik since the US Navy operates the Keflavik NATO base for the Iceland Defense Force. NBS Keflavik is staffed by Air Force and Navy personnel who are responsible to a Navy detachment commander.

4. The number of hours of programming was obtained by observation and through the ISBS program guide, which is available in English.

5. After the general elections of 1974, discussions between the US government and that of Iceland were held concerning the 1951 defense agreement. Those talks resulted in the decisions that all military personnel be housed on the base and that television be provided by a cable television system.

7. One of the first works which addresses radio broadcasting at any great length is *International Radio Broadcasting: The Limits of the Limitless Medium*, by Donald R. Browne (1982).
CHAPTER 2

THE HISTORY OF ICELAND

Iceland has a homogeneity that few modern countries possess. Not only does it seem that everyone in the nation knows almost everyone else, but the Icelanders' present is clearly connected with a living past. As they speak of their history one has the sense that they are personally remembering: things that happened to ancestors many hundreds of years ago are related with immediacy, as if they had happened yesterday to relatives in the next county. (Scherman 1976, p. xi)

The Formation of Iceland

Iceland, a land of "fire and ice," is the third largest island in the Atlantic Ocean, after Greenland and the British Isles, and is slightly smaller than Kentucky. Two main theories explain the formation of Iceland. One describes Iceland as a subcontinent formed through volcanic activity about 50 million years ago. According to this theory, the land mass stretched from the west coast of Greenland to Scotland eroding over time to leave Iceland, the Faroes, the Hebrides, southern Greenland, and northern Ireland (Scherman 1976).

The second theory, proposed by several American
scientists [1], also describes Iceland as a land mass formed 50 to 60 million years ago through volcanic activity. However, these scientists believe the reason for the volcanic activity was that a ten-kilometer asteroid struck the earth astride the mid-Atlantic Ridge [2] and the volcanic activity which followed created the island (NOVA #806, March 10, 1981).

Centuries of violent geological action produced a mountainous landscape with many valleys and fjords. The rugged terrain and the resultant isolation of relatively hospitable areas cause problems in farming, traveling, and communicating between communities. Most of the habitable land in Iceland lies in the small fjords along the coast, in the upland valleys and plains, or on the coastal plains of the middle south, southwestern, or north central parts of the island.

The Origin of the Icelanders

There are many theories concerning the origin of the people who settled in Iceland, but no clear and distinct answer appears to stand out in the literature on the subject. Ari (Thorgilsson) the Learned (1067-1148) wrote in his Book of the Icelanders that the first settlers were Norwegian and came to Iceland in the year 870 A.D. Celts also settled in Iceland, and Ari
differentiates between Norse and Celtic cultures in his book (Guthmundsson 1967). However, the first settlers of Iceland in historical times were not Norsemen but Irish monks who fled Ireland in the sixth century to find a new haven and escape persecution and raids from the Norsemen (Scherman 1976). Since they were driven off the island by Nordic groups, probably the Norwegians, around 870 A.D., many scholars do not consider the Irish monks to be the first true settlers.

The Period of Settlement between 874 and 930 was the period of highest immigration to Iceland (Nordal and Kristinsson 1975). According to the Book of Settlements, written in the early twelfth century, "most of the settlers were Norwegians, with a minority of Irish and Scots" (Tomasson 1980). Although Icelandic laws were based on the law code of western Norway, the influence of Danish settlers cannot be ignored, according to Tomasson, because the Icelanders introduced a Danish form of government when they adopted a formal judicial and legal system.

Iceland is 800 km (500 mi) northwest of Scotland and 970 km (602 mi) west of Norway; "when the weather was good, the Icelanders could make it to Norway in four days, but seven or eight was more typical" sailing time
(Tomasson 1980). Because Iceland was relatively close to Europe and because Vikings were being forced out of Ireland and the British Isles, it was seen as a good place to move in order to obtain free land or to escape taxation by some of the group chieftains in Scandinavia (Njardvik 1978).

The first known settlers, the sixth-century Irish monks, sailed to Iceland searching for what the Greek explorer Pytheas of Marseilles [3] called the "farthest island of the ocean, lying between north and west, six days voyage beyond Britain" (Scherman 1976). While Pytheas' Thule is not believed to be Iceland by many of today's scholars, the monks sailing with Saint Brendan sought the island Pytheas had discovered around 300 B.C. According to Scherman, the monks discovered Greenland 288 km (180 mi) west of Iceland. Some scholars believe that Saint Brendan may have sailed to North America, but that has not been supported in literature or artifacts.

Icelander's Discover America

Leif, son of Erik the Red, sailed west from his father's settlement in southwest Greenland about 1001 A.D. to explore the wooded land that Bjarni Herjolfsson had sighted west and south of the Julianehaab settlements. Leif's first landfall was probably on
Baffin Island, which they called Helluland, or flat land. He sailed southwest to the wooded land (probably Labrador) that Herjolfsson had described and called it Markland, or forest land. Two additional sailing days to the southwest brought Eriksson to an island thought to be Belle Isle (Scherman 1976).

Belle Isle lies in the Atlantic Ocean at the mouth of the Strait of Belle Isle, which divides the Newfoundland mainland, Labrador, from the island. Leif apparently sailed from Belle Isle to Cape Bauld, on the island of Newfoundland, to stay the winter. There, at L'Anse aux Meadows, they discovered "grapes" growing wild [4], hence the name Vinland, or Vineland [5]. The Icelanders also found many natural resources needed in their settlements. Among these were said to be wild wheat and timber suitable for construction. Evidence of the explorers' visit has been uncovered at L'Anse aux Meadows, a national historical park in northern Newfoundland between St. Anthony and Cape Bauld (Ingstad 1969). Henry Wheaton (1831) claimed that it is possible that Leif explored as far south as Boston, but his theory has not been strongly supported in literature or physical findings [6].

Eriksson's discovery prompted Thorfinn Karlsefni,
a merchant from northern Iceland (and husband of Erik’s widowed daughter-in-law Gudrid), to sail to and settle in the area of White Bay, Newfoundland, around the year 1020 (Ingstad 1969). Apparently, Thorfinn hoped to export natural resources from Vinland to Iceland, but he and his companions were driven off the island by the North American natives after several years. Thorfinn and Gudrid’s return to Iceland signaled the end of the Icelanders’ North American settlements, but not the last voyages to Vinland and Markland. According to Scherman (1976), Icelanders and Greenlanders continued to sail to Newfoundland and Labrador into the fourteenth century to harvest timber, wheat, and “grapes.”

Development of the Icelandic Language

"Like English, Icelandic is a Germanic language, but unlike English it has changed very little since the ninth century," according to Icelandic, a “teach yourself book” (Glendening 1961). Comparative linguistic studies have shown Icelandic to be a modern derivative of Old Norse (a medieval language), which developed from a well defined subgroup of the North Germanic branch of the Indo-European languages (Nordal and Kristinsson 1975). The Nordic language is customarily divided into two groups: East and West. East Nordic includes Swedish and
Danish; West Nordic (Old Norse) consists of Norwegian, Faroese, and Icelandic. Many of the Icelandic peoples' ancestors came from Norway, and the Icelandic language is most closely related to Norwegian and Faroese [7]. However, modern Icelandic is not very similar to Norwegian today.

Icelandic is believed to have been uniform and free of major dialectical differences in the tenth century. Norwegian increasingly diverged from Icelandic after the fourteenth century because it changed rapidly, while Icelandic, whose speakers were far more isolated, was resistant to change (Nordal and Kristinsson 1975). Gjerset (1925) wrote in his History of Iceland that Norse underwent a development similar to that of English, but Icelandic maintained the older inflectional forms and other styles in the language, which kept it separate and distinct from its closest neighbors. Today, language "purity" is maintained by committees on language and by laws passed by the Parliament in much the same way that the "purity" of the French language is maintained in France.

Icelandic is spoken in very few countries other than the homeland, the United States, and Canada. Many Icelanders immigrated to North Dakota and Manitoba during
the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and continued to use their native language in addition to English (Nordal and Kristinsson 1975). The first Icelandic publications in North America were the monthlies *Kennarrin* [The teacher] and *Vinland*, published around the turn of the century in Minnesota, Minnesota (Bjornsson 1976). The *Logberg-Heimskringla*, a newspaper still published in Winnipeg, Canada [8], began as two weekly newspapers but merged in 1959 to form one weekly newspaper (Bessason 1975).

**The First Parliament**

The *Althing*, or General Assembly, was a body with judicial and legislative powers which existed in many north European countries prior to the settlement of Iceland. "The establishment of the Althing is one of the most significant events in Icelandic history, but our knowledge of how it came about is very vague," according to Njordur Njardvik in his history of Iceland, *Birth of a Nation: The Story of the Icelandic Commonwealth* (1973).

During the Settlement Period, 874 to 930 A.D., people from many countries immigrated to Iceland from countries with formal legal and judicial systems. During this time, Iceland had no formally organized system of
law and justice. Toward the end of the Settlement Period, discussions between local godar (leaders) and the settlers brought about an agreement that a national constitution was needed (Nordal and Kristinsson 1975).

In A.D. 930, the first General Assembly, the Althing, met on the famous site of Thingvellir, on the northern shore of the great lake, Ólafsvatn (now Thingvellavatn), and a common law was adopted for the whole country with the institution of a firmly based legislative and judicial organization. The code of law and the procedure were derived from a body of Norwegian law adapted to meet Icelandic conditions. (Nordal and Kristinsson 1975, pp. 34–35)

Thingvellir, the Plain of the Assembly, lies about 50 km (30 mi) east of Reykjavik in southwest Iceland and became the annual meeting place of the Icelandic people. The meetings, called things, built a national character and bound the nation together. After the first Althing was held in 930 A.D. at Thingvellir, representatives of the people would spend two weeks there (Scherman 1976). Parliamentary meetings were held at Thingvellir until 1800, when the Althing was abolished because of Danish pressure. Reestablished in 1845, the Althing was moved to Reykjavik because the original site, the public meadows at Thingvellir, was sinking below ground water level and becoming a marsh (Bjornsson 1981–82).

The formation of the Althing marked the beginning
of the Free State Period, 930 to 1263, in which 39
godar controlled local power. The godar were
usually the largest land owners or the earliest settlers,
and their descendants retained power as local chieftains,
settling disputes and levying taxes (Nordal and
Kristinsson 1975). Three local godar supervised a
local assembly; there were 13 local things and one
Althing.

In 1272, the legal code was revised, 10 years
after Iceland had sworn allegiance to the king of Norway.
The revised code, known as the Jarnsida Code, was the
first of many legal codes in Iceland after the union with
Norway. The 1281 Jonsbok Code superseded the Jarnsida
Code, and Icelandic courts used this until 1732, when
they were forced by the king to follow Danish-Norwegian
rules to govern court procedure. This marked the
beginning of the Danish period, so called because of the
Danish rules used, which ended with Home Rule in 1904
(Nordal and Kristinsson 1975). Icelanders revised their
constitution and legal structure during Home Rule and
used a mixture of rules and codes dating from the 1281
Jonsbok Code. Ecclesiastical laws were not part of the
formal law code but were the legal system of the state
church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, which influences
Icelandic law and the actions of Icelanders to this day.
The Lutheran Church came into being when the kings of Scandinavia threw out the Roman Catholic Church in an effort to consolidate their power after the Protestant Reformation took place on the European continent.

The Althing, too, was changed and modified by foreign rulers until the Icelanders themselves regained control of their country in 1944. The General Assembly (Althing), begun in 930 A.D., with both judicial and legislative power, declined gradually in influence as it gave formal assent to the power of the king of Denmark in 1662; surrendered legislative functions in 1700; and gave up judicial power in 1732. The Danish government finally abolished it in 1800. The Parliament (Althing) regained some power from the Danish crown over matters concerning Iceland when it was reestablished as a consultative assembly in 1845. Denmark granted Iceland home rule in 1904, and a minister resident of Iceland was made a member of the Danish cabinet. By the Act of Union of 1918, Denmark recognized Iceland as a sovereign state in union with Denmark. A new Icelandic constitution was ratified in 1920, and all men 25 or older not on public assistance were given the right to vote in 1925. The right to vote was extended to women in 1925, to all people 21 or older in 1934, and to everyone over age 20 in 1970. The Union of 1918 was due for renewal or
termination in 1943; the Icelanders terminated it. On 17 June 1944, the Icelandic people approved a revised constitution, and the republic was reborn (Nordal and Kristinsson 1975).

Today, Iceland has a constitutional republican government in which the Althing holds legislative power similar to that of the British parliamentary system. The Althing no longer has judicial power; a supreme court, district courts, and special courts now handle the judicial function once held by the godar in the things. The Prime Minister is the head of government, and the president is the chief of state. In 1980, the Icelanders elected Vigdis Finnbogadottir as their country's first female president.

**Rule by Norway and Denmark**

Although Iceland's cultural and economic ties to Norway were close, it was politically independent until the middle of the twelfth century, when demands by the king of Norway that Iceland pay him taxes became unavoidable (Larsen 1948). Icelanders had, for the most part, been considered to be of Norwegian ancestry, and, since the population of Iceland was one quarter of the population of Norway, adding Iceland to the tax base of Haakon IV Haakonsson, the Old, would make him a much more
powerful ruler, better able to stand up to the powerful church leaders (Larsen 1948).

Iceland was in no position to resist Haakon. The Icelandic fleet had deteriorated over the years, and Iceland increasingly depended upon foreign vessels for trade. Conflict within Iceland, some of which had been deliberately stirred up by Haakon, had also weakened the resolve and strength of the Icelanders to oppose the Norwegian crown's efforts to exact taxes. Icelandic chieftains fought among themselves and with the church for power, and their quarreling prevented them from working together to keep the country free of external control. A voluntary agreement was reached between the Icelanders and Haakon in 1262, in which Iceland recognized him as king and paid him taxes in return for trade. Unfortunately for Iceland, the union hastened the economic decline of the country because "the expensive bureaucratic government increased the financial burden of the poor" (Larsen 1948).

This 1262 covenant between the Althing and the king of Norway established the union between the Icelandic people and the ruler of Norway, a union which passed control of Iceland from the Norwegian crown to that of Denmark in 1380 (Oakley 1972). Iceland's destiny
The Icelandic trade alone flourished, and the Icelanders undoubtedly suffered from the exclusion of foreign merchants from their shores, being often, in spite of the government's attempts to prevent abuse, forced to pay high prices for shoddy imports. (Oakley 1972, p. 111)

Thus, Iceland was in an untenable economic position, a condition which continued to deteriorate for several hundred years. The country had become less and less self-sufficient and depended more and more on external markets between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries. Farming had become less viable as a way of life as world temperatures had begun to cool in the fourteenth century, with the lowest temperatures in the eighteenth century (Scherman 1976). Icelanders turned to the sea and fishing to bolster their economy, since the European merchants paid well for Icelandic fish products. Fishing very quickly became the sole income source for many of the islanders, and a disaster in the fishing industry meant economic hardship and starvation for many of the country's people. In 1602, a non-natural disaster struck Iceland in the form of the Danish trade monopoly, which brought severe economic poverty to the country.

An impoverished economy was only one result of the trading monopoly imposed by the Danish crown. Another was that Iceland was literally left out of
economic and industrial development for hundreds of years, with some effects still seen today (Nordal and Kristinsson 1975). Denmark used Iceland as England used the American colonies—to bolster their own industrial revolution. Iceland, like America, was seen as a market for the "mother" country's finished goods, and Denmark had no intention of developing industry on the island and losing a "foreign" market for their domestic goods.

There is no indication in the literature that the Danish crown intended to change its moneymaking policy regarding Iceland, but many policies were revised in the 1780s, apparently as a result of an act of nature. In 1783, the Laki craters, a 30 km (20 mi) long fissure system in south central Iceland, erupted, spewing lava, sulphur dioxide, and dust containing fluorine over much of the island and surrounding ocean. Because of the eruption, 20 percent of the population perished, animals died from eating poisoned plants and grass, and the fish moved out of the island's polluted waters to where fishermen could not reach them because of the dust clouds obscuring the ocean (Scherman 1976). The Danes wanted to evacuate Iceland, but the Icelanders hung on to their island, opposing what they felt would be serfdom in Juteland, Denmark and started to move toward recovery and independence.
Surprisingly, following the eruption, Iceland’s economy improved because its people actively pushed for a better life. Skuli Magnusson (1711-1794), the economic affairs official during the middle of the eighteenth century, provided much of the initiative and fought many of the political battles for his country. Skuli built a woolen mill in Reykjavik about the middle of the eighteenth century with financial help from the Danish government. Clashes between Skuli and the monopolists ensued, which led to the end of the monopoly in 1787. Jon Eiriksson pushed for agricultural and postal improvements between 1770 and 1780, and Jon Sigurdsson pushed for the restoration of the Althing around 1843 (Nordal and Kristinsson 1973).

Denmark granted Iceland a new constitution in 1848, and free trade was established in 1854 (Scherman 1976). King Christian IX gave Iceland a new, more powerful constitution on his visit in 1874, commemorating the thousandth anniversary of the Icelandic settlement (Nordal and Kristinsson 1975).

After the 1874 constitution, advances continued throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. The Althing began a process of modifying the constitution, subject to Danish approval,
in 1881. Iceland achieved a form of limited home rule in 1904 and a union with Denmark in 1918, in which they shared a common sovereign. Icelanders controlled most of their own affairs, but Denmark managed most of Iceland's foreign relations until invaded by the Germans in April 1940. Almost by default, Iceland had to take full control of its affairs, and the taste of total control of their destiny increased the desire for independence. The Icelanders terminated the union with Denmark when it was due for renewal and formally asserted their independence at Thingvellir, 17 June 1944 (Nordal and Kristinsson 1975).

Modern Iceland

Today, the Republic of Iceland reflects post-World War II development in the vast number of new homes built of domestic concrete and heated with geothermal hot water. While these cosmetic effects are quickly seen, many of the problems of post-war growth are not as evident. Several areas effectively reflect post-World War II development and growing pains: the political structure, economy, industry, transportation and communication, and culture.

The political structure of Iceland was complicated in early 1983, when a member of the Social
Democratic Party formed the Social Democratic Federation. This development gives Iceland five political parties: the Independence Party (conservative); the Progressive Party (moderate or center); the Social Democratic Party (right, but some center or just left of center); the Peoples Alliance (left or communist); and the Social Democratic Federation, which is not clearly defined but appears conservative in nature (NFI February 1983).

A women’s slate was also formed in an attempt to get more women in the Parliament and provide them with a voice in the law-making body of the country. The Women’s Slate’s political persuasion is not clearly defined in mid 1983.

General elections were held 23 April 1983, and resulted in a shift in the control of the Parliament. The May 1983 edition of *News from Iceland* reported the following:

<table>
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<th>Party Control of the Althing</th>
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<tr>
<td>Independence Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Progressive Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peoples Alliance</td>
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<td>Social Democrats</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soc.Demo. Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women’s Slate</td>
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Because of the wide distribution of the seats in the General Assembly, a coalition government had to be formed. A coalition between the Progressive Party and the Independence Party was formed and took office 26 May
1983 (NFI June 1983). One of the new government's most important and most difficult tasks will be to bring the economy and inflation (almost 100 percent annually in mid 1983) under control.

The government is composed of a parliament with a prime minister as the head of government and a president as the head of state. Local government consists of 23 counties, 215 parishes, and 14 incorporated towns. A Supreme Court and 29 lower courts represent the judicial portion of the governmental system.

Political involvement in economic matters has been blamed for many of today's financial problems in Iceland. In the United States, economists and politicians (both liberal and conservative) cannot agree on the nature of the nation's economic problems or their remedies. There are similar disagreements between Icelandic economists and politicians about their economy. Some of the reasons for the slow recovery of the sluggish economy are: a staunch resistance to foreign non-government-controlled investment; poor economic policies; a balance of trade deficit; and dependence upon fishing as the major industry of the country. One example of resistance to foreign capital occurred in September 1982. The People's Alliance Party forced a
veto of a $20 to $50 million gift from the United States that would have replaced the aging air terminal at Keflavik International Airport and upgraded facilities used by aircraft. While the main objection of the People's Alliance was that the facility is used by the American Defense Force (NFI October 1982), they gained support because it is apparently unIcelandic (and perhaps offends the national pride) to accept that kind of gift. A suitable arrangement was eventually forged between the two governments, and Iceland formally accepted the monetary gift during the American Vice-President's (George Bush) 1983 visit to the country.

Taxation in Iceland frequently doubles or triples the factory price of consumer goods, and taxes levied are not always recovered because of poor collection methods. Two types of taxes are levied: direct and indirect.

Direct taxes, such as an income tax, are applied to the previous year's income with indexed tax brackets, and account for 19 percent of treasury revenues (Eggertsson 1982). However, collecting one year's taxes based on the previous year's income has created many problems especially during a recession. So far, Iceland has been unable to enact a scheme to tax income utilizing a withholding system like that of the United States.
Such a taxation scheme has been proposed but not accepted in the Althing.

Indirect methods of taxation bring approximately 35 percent of total government revenue to the treasury. The most visible form of indirect taxation is seen in the sales tax and import levies, which affect the cost of a very large percentage of industrial and consumer goods. Difficulties in collecting the indirect taxes have caused the government to take measures in 1982 to insure that the taxes levied are received. The Treasury has considered reintroducing the value-added tax, common in many European countries, but the lack of success of the value-added tax in western Europe may cause it to be defeated in the Icelandic Parliament (Eggertsson 1982).

The Treasury's need for capital was highlighted in May 1982, when the government lowered auto levies because of slow car sales and lower revenue from imports. Per capita, Iceland has the fifth highest private automobile ownership in the world (NFI March 1983), and lower levies will save consumers five to 18 percent on the cost of a new car. In June 1982, reduced levies brought the cost of an American-built Ford Granada down five percent, to $21,340, and a Dodge Omni to $17,830 (NFI June 1982). In the United States, "fully
loaddm Granadas and Omnis were $10,000 and $8,000 respectively.

Iceland’s major economic woe is that the entire economy is at the mercy of the price of fish and the size of the catch. The February 1983 News from Iceland reports a “Krona Devaluation in the Wake of New Fish Prices.” In the two years since Iceland began using new krona (100 old kronur = 1 new krona), the value of the American dollar has increased 200 percent in terms of kronur. Smaller fish catches forced the Gross National Income to decline about four percent in 1982. The inflation rate rose from 46 percent in 1981 to 60 percent in 1982, and, by the elections in the spring of 1983, had reached a level of 100 percent (per annum). The high rate of inflation is caused by a balance-of-trade deficit, excessive foreign borrowing, and the fact that wages are tied to prices. For more than 10 years, Iceland’s exports have fallen behind the value of imports (Nordic Statistics Yearbook 1981). This siphons kronur out of the country and creates other economic problems. Although Iceland has a very high standard of living, the nation just does not have enough capital to finance new industrial ventures from its own banks. Therefore, it must borrow from foreign banks what it cannot supply itself, a practice which becomes more and
more expensive as the lenders currencies become stronger in terms of kronur. The new government stopped all pay raises in an effort to reduce inflation to around 40 percent by the end of 1983, but a small fish catch could push inflation higher in 1984.

In 1979, there was a trade deficit of $38.8 million ($828.5 million imported versus $789.7 million exported) and $71.3 million in 1980 ($1,000.8 million imported versus $929.5 million exported) [9]. Although the import deficit has been a problem for years, no good solutions have yet been proposed or implemented to reduce the flow of krona out of the country. Iceland could, for example, develop and use more domestic products and sell more domestically produced goods abroad.

One of the greatest import deficits occurs in dealing with the Soviet Union. In 1979, Iceland imported in excess of $92.5 million in goods from the USSR ($95.5 million in 1980), more than any other country, but exported only $30.6 million to the Soviet Union ($49.8 million in 1980). Even more significant is the fact that Iceland has bought most of its petroleum products from the USSR for the last 25 years and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. While Iceland enjoys a steady supply of oil, it is not always the cheapest,
since the Soviet price is based on the Rotterdam spot market and cheaper oil could be purchased from both OPEC and non-OPEC nations in early 1983 [10].

The government of Iceland has taken steps to try to sell more fish to the Soviets, and increased sales of $34 million were announced in early 1983. Iceland's best export market in 1979 was to the United States with $221 million in sales, but sales to America declined by $20.5 million in 1980 (Nordic Statistics Yearbooks 1980, 1981).

Since Iceland is importing more than it is exporting, it must borrow from foreign banks in order to finance new construction, modernization, or the purchase of material not indigenous to the island. Several of Iceland's industrial firms, like the State Fertilizer Plant at Guðunes, are saddled with debts to foreign banks which they cannot easily pay (NFI March 1983). Repayment problems are caused by the worldwide recession and the appreciation of the foreign currency in which the lien is paid. No end to this problem is seen in the short term, since Iceland must modernize but does not appear to have all of the necessary capital to do so.

The Icelanders placed themselves in a severe economic bind when they tied wages to prices, especially
since they had no control over prices of foreign goods, which increase as the value of the krona decreases. Very little incentive has existed to stop inflation because wages increased proportionally with costs. In late 1983, the new government froze wages at their current level in an attempt to control or reduce inflation. There is strong resistance to raising prices to their natural (supply and demand) level or to a level which adequately covers costs and produces profit. An example of this is shown in the resistance against increasing the price of electricity in Reykjavik. If the National Power Company increases its electric price, wages must increase across the country. This wage-price spiral has broad implications, one of which is the inability of the State Broadcasting Company, Rikisutvarpid, to obtain sufficient funds to run the broadcast system. This will be discussed in a later chapter.

The largest industry in Iceland is the fishing industry. It can be realistically stated that the nation's survival depends upon the seas. For this reason, Iceland imposed a 200-mile fisheries limit around the nation in the early 1970s and was determined to take on the large British naval ships, if necessary, to enforce the limit. Iceland has stiff competition in the world fishing industry but was able to export fish
products worth $479.2 million in 1979 and $587 million in 1980. Their advantage in the field seems to be that, since the economy of the entire nation depends upon fishing, they will constantly modernize and test new methods to keep a high level of efficiency and quality in order to be competitive in their foreign markets. The location of Iceland in the midst of very fertile fishing waters also benefits the fishing industry because its ships do not have to travel far in order to catch the fish and return them to port.

Iceland has not fully exploited the world market for fish and fish products, but therein lies the other extreme of the problem--overfishing. One of the reasons Iceland imposed the fishing ban was the destruction, by overfishing, of entire fish breeding areas around the island. Entire species of fish have been ruled "off limits" for the industry until the levels of fish have returned to normal. One of the greatest potentials for Iceland's export fish market and relief from the problems of overfishing (at least in one species of fish) is in the development of salmon-breeding farms. Geothermal energy operates seawater pumps and heats water to the optimum breeding temperature year round. This new technology is expected to bring in $1 million during 1984 (NFI June 1983).
Fishing, though most important, is not the only source of income. Tourism in Iceland continues to provide good cash flow into the country. In 1982, 72,686 visitors were logged through customs, 29 percent from West Germany. Tourism is advantageous for many reasons, two of which are the large number of wool products which people purchase and the fact that the most common method of entering the country is on an Icelandic airline like Icelandair, which carried 159,700 people on its transatlantic routes in 1982 (NFI May 1983).

Wool has long been a domestic resource utilized to the maximum. Icelandic wool sweaters are famous for their beauty, softness, and warmth. Many visitors purchase more than one Icelandic wool sweater when visiting the island. One important advantage of the wool industry is that it does not rely on imported materials. Most of the steps in the process of producing wool and wool garments take place in Iceland [11].

Iceland, devoid of all but a few indigenous natural resources, has abundant hydroelectric and geothermal energy waiting to be tapped. The nation has taken steps to exploit the more than 21,000-gigawatt hydroelectric potential with a large-scale dam building program (Nordal and Kristinsson 1975). Hydroelectric
plants have been constructed at Burfell, Sigalda, and Hrauneyjafoss, north of Mt. Hekla on the Thjorsa (News from Iceland 1982, 1983). In spite of these plants' capacity of 659 megawatts (NFI January 1983), they tap only 15 percent of the exploitable hydroelectric sources on the island. Iceland has also developed more than 23 megawatts of geothermally produced electricity, and the diatomite plant at Lake Myvatn is powered by this form of energy (NFI October 1982).

Since Iceland has few natural resources but has an educated work force and abundant hydroelectric potential, the government has encouraged industry to locate on the island. It has been quite successful in this respect, having brought a Swiss-owned aluminum smelter to the country as well as the diatomite plant and a ferrosilicon smelter. There have been occasional negotiations with a Finnish oil refinery to locate a small plant in the country, which would help reduce Iceland's dependence on foreign refined oil products, especially if oil reserves are discovered near Jan Mayen Island; because of international agreements concerning natural resources there, Iceland would share in that discovery.

The difficulty of transportation in Iceland has
limited communication for many hundreds of years. The annual gathering of the Althing was as much a reunion as a governmental process. Historically, the Icelandic horse was used to transport people from one part of the island to the other. Since most of the population lived near the coast, some found sailing around the island was far easier than attempting to cross the interior, but only in good weather.

Today, communication is as instant as picking up a telephone. Most houses have a telephone (475 per 1000 population versus 837 per 1000 USA population) [12]. Transportation has become much easier; the options have increased from ship and the Icelandic pony to aircraft, cars, and four-wheel-drive vehicles. However, Iceland has never developed a railroad system, and most roads are dirt or gravel and subject to portions suddenly disappearing because of geological action. Nevertheless, Icelanders frequently travel to other parts of the country. Icelandair, the national airline, carried more than 221,300 people on domestic flights to the more than 100 airfields on the mainland and the Westmann Islands during 1982 (NFI May 1983).

Icelandic culture spans more than 1000 years, years during which the Icelanders preserved Scandinavian
history through stories from the days of the Vikings to current times. Icelanders gave the *eddas* and *sagas* to the world. Their additions to literature have been many; Halldor Laxness was honored in 1955 with the Nobel Prize for Literature. A strong literary heritage is evidenced by the literacy rate of 99.9 percent. Icelandic cultural and literary heritage continues to be the basis of disagreements among scholars about the effects of radio and television on the country's people today.

Literature is not the only cultural aspect of modern Iceland, but many other areas of cultural importance were slow to develop. Music and theater are recent additions. Although some Icelandic modern music composers have been recognized outside the country, most of the people who produce music or dramas are not well known abroad because their work is primarily targeted towards a domestic audience. Two theaters and a symphony orchestra are supported in the Reykjavik area alone. It should be noted that the young people are very interested in the American and British popular music. Little popular music is played on State Radio, and the young people who live in southwest Iceland frequently listen to the American Forces Radio medium-wave station at Keflavik [13]. The fact that so many people listen to the
American Forces station is an embarrassment to the Icelandic intellectuals and they complain loudly about the "American presence." Frequently, letters appear in Morgunbladid, the conservative-liberal morning newspaper, complaining that the city busses in Reykjavik play the American Forces station from Keflavik instead of State Radio.

Education has always been important to the Icelanders. Although it was not made compulsory until 1907, there has been a high degree of literacy since 1800. Most education is public and free, and students who graduate from the gymnasium (roughly the equivalent of one-to-two years of university study in the USA), about the age of 20, can go on to the "high school," the University of Iceland which was founded in 1911. The importance of culture and education to the Icelandic society is evident in the numerous libraries, archives, museums, galleries, and theaters in the country.

Religion in Iceland reflects the cultural heritage, and can be divided into four developmental phases: Pre-Christianity; acceptance of Christianity (1000 A.D.) and the Roman Catholic Church; the Protestant Reformation (in 1550, when the Danish King forced the
Evangelical Lutheran Church on the Icelanders); and the modern era of religious toleration. It is estimated that 95 percent of the people belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church, three percent to other Protestant and to Roman Catholic churches, and the remainder are not affiliated. The constitutionally established Evangelical Lutheran Church, like churches in many European countries, levies a tax on all taxpayers to provide income for the church. The tax collected from people who dissociate themselves from the Lutheran Church is given to the University. The church continues to be influential; opposition to beer containing alcohol and to competition from radio and television during church services are obvious examples of its ability to influence legislation and behavior.

Recent cultural developments include radio, television, and the cinema. Icelandic radio has been in homes since 1930. It was first seen as a means to transmit news, weather, and entertainment to the islanders. The use of radio as an entertainment medium disturbed Icelandic scholars, who feared that the people would no longer want to read, a fear amplified with the coming of television. In spite of this concern, State Radio commenced television broadcasting eleven years after American television programming was available to
the southwest portion of Iceland. This development created the need for domestic programs, and an industry to produce movies for Icelandic television and the Icelandic cinema was created. The Icelandic movie industry produces some two or three motion pictures and a lesser number of documentaries (for television) each year.

Eleven hundred years of history, development, and growth provide the foundation for the ideology, psychology, and philosophy guiding radio and television today. State Radio and Television's history, development, ideology, and future are inextricably tied to this past.
NOTES

1. Walter Alvarez, Associate Professor, Department of Geology and Geophysics, University of California, Berkeley; Dr. Luis W. Alvarez, Professor Emeritus of Physics, Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory, University of California, Berkeley, and recipient of the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1968; and Dr. Fred Whipple, Director Emeritus, Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

2. The Mid-Atlantic Ridge is the 20,921 km (13,000 mi) long underwater mountain range of the 75,639 km (47,000 mi) long system of tectonic plate boundaries around the world.

3. Marseilles was a Greek colony in the third century B.C. and was also known as Massalia.

4. In 1624, William Alexander mentioned a kind of red-wine berry that he had discovered on Nova Scotia. Ingstad (1969) says that these were probably wild currants or squash berries or *Viburnum pauciflorum*, very tasty red berries which are larger than European currants. They are found in abundant quantities in Newfoundland and are used to make wine. Ingstad dismisses the possibility that these berries were actually grapes because the northern limit for wild grapes is approximately 42 degrees north latitude along the Atlantic coast, which is in Massachusetts. Grapes do grow further north in the interior of the country (Ingstad 1969).

5. Vinland can also mean "grassland" if the long "i" is written as a short "i." The Swedish philologist Sven Soderberg has advanced the theory that the prefix "vin" is the Old Norse word for "grazingland" or "meadow," as in today's Norwegian names like Vinas and Vinje, according to Ingstad (1969).

6. The controversy over how far south the Vikings explored has been fueled by the discovery of anthracite
coal in some of the Greenland settlements. This type of coal could not have come from Greenland, Iceland, or Norwegian settlements of the day; it is, however, found in readily available surface coal deposits along the Rhode Island coast, according to Ingstad (1969). For more information on the Viking settlement at L’Anse aux Meadows, see Anne Stein Ingstad’s (wife of Helge) (1977) The Discovery of a Norse Settlement in America, Excavations at L’Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland, 1961-1968.

7. Faroese is the principal language of the Faroe Islands, a possession (technically) of Denmark with home rule. (US State Department background notes, October 1981)

8. The Icelandic language Logberg-Heimskringla continues to be published, according to the 1983 edition of Ulrich’s International Periodicals Directory.

9. A complete breakdown of imports and exports is reported in the annual Nordic Statistics Yearbook, with the figures shown here coming from the 1980 and 1981 editions.

10. The sharp rise in the price of oil in recent years has hit Iceland especially hard. The price of oil rose about 120 percent between 1978 and 1979 but decreased somewhat in late 1982 and early 1983. When an OPEC price reduction conflict began, the Soviets said that they would not be undersold and set their price at $1 below OPEC. Mexico did undersell the Soviets; they lowered their price to $3 below the official OPEC price.

11. The primary enemy of the sheep industry is nature itself. After the 1980 eruption of Mt. Hekla, 440 adult sheep had to be slaughtered and disposed of in 1982 because of fluorine poisoning.

12. Three figures are available for the USA. The 1980 census reported a household penetration rate of 570 per 1000, the World Factbook, produced by the CIA, reported a rate of 740 per 1000 population, and the May 1983 issue of InterMedia reported 837 per 1000 population.

13. Personal contact with Icelandic young people aged 14 to 30 revealed this information.
CHAPTER 3

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RADIO IN ICELAND

From the very beginning, it was with...the importance of the written word, the book, that the programming of the broadcasting service was planned, or more accurately, it was based on the literary heritage of the nation. (Bjornsson 1970)

Iceland, isolated from the rest of the world by the surrounding Atlantic Ocean, found itself no longer so remote in 1906, when a submarine cable was laid connecting the country to Europe. This intrusion into the country’s isolation was tolerated because the telephone and telegraph were seen as necessary and beneficial means of communication. Wireless communication, primarily ship-to-shore, was also considered worthwhile because it provided necessary information about weather and other important news to ships at sea. None of these methods of communication involved the public as the intended receiver and therefore presented little threat to the distinct cultural identity of Iceland. However, the advent of "commercial" broadcasting in the United States and the United Kingdom led to a change in the status quo
concerning radio in Iceland.

Tuesday, 2 November 1920, was election night in the United States, and Westinghouse, a manufacturer of radio equipment, began an experiment to find out if a mass audience existed for news, information, and entertainment programming. Their Pittsburgh amateur radiotelephone station—8XK—went on the air that night as radio station KDKA, transmitting the election results, and broadcasting to the American public began (Head 1976). Two years later, on 14 November 1922, the British Broadcasting Company commenced operations from its London studio and also broadcast election returns during the first transmissions (Briggs 1961). It is quite probable that Iceland was influenced by the fact that radio broadcasting to the public was occurring on both sides of the ocean. The introduction of radio to Iceland is not recorded in the literature, but several possibilities for its introduction exist. Since Icelanders are avid travelers, they probably were introduced to radio in their traveling to North America and Europe. For those who did not travel, letters from relatives abroad probably contained information about the new entertainment medium—radio. Also, members of the fishing fleet who worked the waters off England, Canada, or the United States probably became familiar with the
medium as a result of working in an area where the radio signals were prevalent. For these and other reasons, an environment existed which allowed two commercial radio stations to be licensed and to operate from 1925 to 1930; one station operated in Reykjavik and the other in Akureyri.

Some Icelandic scholars and opinion leaders apparently believed that the presence of a private radio station in Reykjavik threatened literacy and Icelandic culture. The argument was made that radio (and later television) would end people's desire to read because "radio was supposed to make listeners into some sort of 'consumers' who would sit back and let themselves be robbed of their creative power" (Bjornsson 1970). In addition, it was believed that broadcasting to the public would interfere with maritime use of radio; similar concerns (probably based on a poor understanding of the radio spectrum) had been voiced in the United States and the United Kingdom when broadcasting began. Consequently, pressure to control broadcasting was placed on the Parliament in the late 1920s. The increased pressure for legislation came about after the introduction of private radio stations in Reykjavik and Akureyri, even though they reached only a small part of the population during their four-year life (Bjornsson
In 1927, the Althing appointed a committee to propose a broadcasting law for state operation of a broadcasting service. The Radio Council determined the first goals of Rikisutvarpid, the Iceland State Broadcast Service (ISBS), and an act governing the establishment and operation of such a service was passed in 1928. Because of Iceland's union with Denmark, the act had to be ratified by the Danish king. He did so 19 May 1930, and the sole right to broadcast to the public passed into the hands of the government, controlled by the Ministry of Labor via the ISBS. In 1934, a revised broadcasting act passed control of radio to the Ministry of Education and Culture. This appears to be consistent with the ideals set forth by the radio council concerning the purpose of broadcasting. The ISBS programming has been dominated by national cultural emphasis since that time.

**Organization**

Currently, radio is one of three distinct operating groups within the ISBS [1], and the director of the radio group reports to the Director-General of Rikisutvarpid, who is responsible to the Minister of Education. Although the director of radio controls activities within his branch of Rikisutvarpid, there is a
relationship, through the Director-General, to the program board and its program policies. The program board works directly with the Director-General in developing broadcast standards and guidelines for radio and television. The board is so influential that its opposition to a program surely means that it will not air. Unlike the broadcast standards boards of the American networks which are composed of organizational employees, Iceland’s national program board is composed of members of the public according to their political party affiliation. The fact that the people who sit on the board are appointed by the Parliament adds a note of politics to its activities, but, according to some of the Icelanders interviewed for this study, it ensures that all political ideologies are represented. In 1981, the membership of the board was composed of two members of the Parliament, a former government minister of industry, a teacher, an editor, a meteorologist, and an architect.

The radio division is subdivided into the main office and five departments: programming, radio theater, news, music, and technical. Some sharing of information, staff, and technical expertise between the radio and television divisions of the ISBS exists, but, with the two divisions operating from buildings several kilometers apart, it is very difficult to reduce program production
cost because of the physical separation of the facilities. The physical separation also reduces the amount of cooperation between the two divisions (about 230 people worked for the Iceland State Broadcasting Service in 1982). The problems associated with the separation of the facilities should be eliminated after the new broadcasting house is completed (around September 1984) because all of State Radio and Television will operate from the same building.

Financing

"Broadcasting is a costly business" (Coddington 1959).

For any business to operate, capital financing must be arranged, and the ISBS is no exception. Generally, two major systems of financing the operation of a broadcast system existed in the world in 1930, and the methods used by the American and British broadcasters exemplify them best. In the USA broadcasting was seen as a business, while in the UK it was seen as a public trust operated as a monopoly licensed by the government. Commercial broadcasters in the United States sold air time for advertisements, while the British government monopoly operated with funds derived from a licence fee on receivers.
In countries where broadcasting is a monopoly, listeners are usually required to take out a receiving licence for which a fee is payable. This fee is frequently collected by postal authorities, as the original holders of the monopoly of wireless telegraphy. (Coddington 1959, p. 45)

The ISBS, a monopoly, opted to utilize a modified British system. In 1930, there were about 450 radio receivers in Iceland, even though no domestic service yet existed. A licence fee of 30 kronur per year was imposed to help finance the independent Rikisutvarpid (Bjornsson 1970), and more than 13,000 kronur were collected through the postal system.

A licence fee is beneficial to a broadcast service because the money collected is directly proportional to the number of receivers operated by the public. In the early years of a broadcast system, this method of financing provides a rapid infusion of funds to the system, and this in fact occurred in Iceland. During the first year of broadcasting, the number of receivers increased from 450 to 3880, which corresponded to an 862 percent increase in licence fee revenue (from 13,500 to 116,400 kronur). The long-term disadvantage to an annual licence fee is that eventually a country becomes saturated with receivers, and this form of revenue reaches a steady state. Licence fees are not easily
increased, especially in countries, like Iceland, where wages are tied to the cost-of-living index. Because wages in Iceland increase proportionally as living costs increase, there is a strong resistance by the Parliament, the government, employers, and the public to a rise in the cost of living. Unfortunately for Rikisutvarpid, one of the few costs-of-living the government can control is the annual licence fee for State Radio and Television. Talk of increasing the annual licence fee, 396 kronur for radio only (about $20) in 1983, brings a flood of letters to the newspapers in Iceland just as similar talk by the BBC brings letters of complaint to British newspapers; other sources of revenue must be found [2].

Since Iceland's population in 1930 was predominantly rural and about half of what it was in 1970, a licence fee alone could not fund a state broadcast system (Bjornsson 1970), which was required by law to be independent and received no subsidy from the Althing. The ISBS monopolized the sales and service of radios to provide revenue; one serious disadvantage of its sales and service monopoly was that while labor costs continued to rise, income steadily decreased because of better set design and a saturation of receivers in the market. This is probably one of the reasons why the sales and service monopoly was eventually ended.
Advertising was introduced in 1932 as an additional method to help fund the ISBS. This system of financing has been adopted by many government monopoly broadcasters (Codding 1959), but, today, Iceland remains the only Scandinavian country to utilize this revenue scheme. There are stringent controls on advertising: no programs are permitted a commercial sponsor; the right to censor advertising material is exercised by the radio authority; and medicine, cigarettes, and alcoholic beverages may not be advertised. Because radio maintains a position of impartiality, propaganda and biased comparisons between commodities or articles for sale are forbidden, as are notices about the contents of political papers and meetings of political organizations (Nordal and Kristinsson 1975).

Advertisements are run six times a day in blocks of about 15 minutes (there are no minimum or maximum lengths to the advertising blocks). All advertisements are read by an announcer, and there are no musical "jingles" to accompany the text on the main channel. The new radio channel featuring popular music will have pre-produced advertising messages. The use of advertising as a form of revenue appears to have been prudent, since the sales and service monopoly was
eventually dropped and licence fee revenue could not be increased when needed because of its effect on the cost-of-living index.

It is interesting to note that some of Rikisutvarpid's advertising revenue is derived from the sale of paid death notices (Griffiths 1969). Although Icelanders are avid readers of their six daily newspapers, death notices are read on radio because the country is so small that the people know most of the other inhabitants, and the advertisements let people in remote parts of the island and in the fishing fleet know who has died. This practice annoys many of the young Icelanders who were interviewed during the field study. They said that they would rather listen to music than the several minutes of death notices which are read at the end of the advertising block before the noon and evening news programs.

The radio division's income and expenses for 1981, as listed in the ISBS yearbook, are subdivided as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RADIO DIVISION 1981 BALANCE SHEET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INCOME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.305 million kronur ($6.378 million)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53.61% Advertising, less sales tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.40% Licence Fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.99% Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| EXPENSES                        |
| 42.235 million kronur ($5.175 million) |
| 16.8% Music                     |
| 35.2% Symphony Orchestra        |
| 20.0% Royalties                 |
| 12.9% Program Department (literature, etc.) |
| 12.6% Technical                 |
| 11.0% New Building Fund         |
| 10.2% Office Operations         |
| 8.4% News                       |
| 7.5% Overhead Paid by the Radio Division |
| 6.9% Depreciation               |
| 6.4% Network Systems Transmission |
| 3.9% Talent and Actors          |
| 3.4% Advertising Department      |

Source: 1981 Rikisutvarpid yearbook

There is a 155 percent tax on new transmission and production equipment which inhibits modernization because it more than doubles the purchase price of modern equipment. The technical staff has maintained obsolete equipment in a remarkable fashion, and in fact, prefer some of their antique audio equipment to the new kinds of equipment which would replace it. The Parliamentary requirement that 10 percent of the annual revenue be put aside for a building fund has helped Rikisutvarpid obtain
the capital to build a new broadcasting house.

Construction on the new facility began in the summer of 1978 and is scheduled for completion by September 1984 (NFI June 1983). The ISBS also supports the symphony orchestra of Iceland, which is the largest expenditure (about 35 percent) of the Music Department’s budget.

**Transmitters and Frequencies**

The combination of a mountainous terrain and a mandate to reach all citizens with a good quality broadcast signal presented a formidable obstacle for Rikisutvarpid. The use of long-wave frequencies for broadcasting, common in Europe but not in Africa or the Americas (where they are used for navigation), provides good quality signals because groundwaves propagate well in a small area. The first radio transmitter, a 16-kilowatt (kW) Marconi long-wave unit (LW is 148.5 to 238.5 kHz), was installed in 1929 (Bjornsson 1970). While the broadcasts were technically well received across most of the country during the early years of State Broadcasting, there were some problems. Radio energy tends to be attenuated or absorbed by the volcanic soil conditions found in Iceland, and this negates the advantage of LW frequencies: good ground-wave signal transmission. The obvious answer to the problem of poor
signal quality is to boost the output power of the
transmitter, and, in 1938, the ISBS bought additional
transmission equipment, increasing the total transmitter
power to 100 kW (50 kW effective radiated power).

Unfortunately for Iceland, many of the other 36
long-wave broadcasters in Europe operate transmitters up
to 2,000 kW in power. The result of so many high power
stations was an ever increasing level of interference on
the few LW frequencies available (13 channels at 10 kHz
spacing).

New developments in broadcast equipment and a
better understanding of the frequency spectrum made
additional channels possible. The medium-wave—standard
AM—band, long in use in the United States, became the
next portion of the radio spectrum to be fully utilized
in Europe. Iceland purchased one long-wave and two
medium-wave (MW is 520 to 1606.5 kHz with 108 channels
at 10 kHz spacing [3]) transmitters in 1951 and installed
relay stations at: Eidar (LW), in the eastern part of the
country; Hofn (MW), on the southeast coast; and
Skjaldarvik (MW), near Akureyri in the north (Bjornsson
1970). Special telephone relays were added in areas of
extremely poor reception, and today the ISBS operates two
long-wave and 10 medium-wave transmitters (ISBS 1982).
Partly because of the potential for interference on the continent and the limited area they need to cover, seven of the medium-wave units are rated at only 2 watts each.

The problem with European frequency allocations [4] prevented Rikisutvarpid from adding transmitters in the MW band. While an intelligible signal might not be received on the continent from a low power transmitter on a high medium-wave frequency, the nighttime sky waves can reach the continent and interfere with local broadcasts there [5]. Clearly, the ISBS was at a standstill in developing a network of transmitters to reach 100 percent of the population. The hope for the future lay in frequency modulated radio, according to Andres Bjornsson, Rikisutvarpid’s Director-General. Frequency Modulated radio (FM is 88.1 to 107.9 MHz with 99 channels at 200 kHz spacing) was slow to catch on in the USA and the UK, and it was an economic risk for a country like Iceland to implement a VHF (Very High Frequency) service because it required radios with expanded frequency capability which necessitates purchase of new receivers [6]. The advantage of VHF–FM is that it is a line-of-sight transmission, less prone to interference than Amplitude Modulated (AM) radio, but the disadvantage of FM on VHF is that many transmitters are required to establish a national network because of the line-of-sight nature of
the signal. In Iceland’s case, the VHF-FM stations literally almost ring the island with 35 transmitters. The most powerful FM stations are the 10-kW unit on Vestmannaeyjar, an island just south of the mainland and north of Surtsey, which is the home of a major portion of the fishing fleet, and a 12.5-kW unit at Gagnheidi in east Iceland (ISBS 1982). In addition, there are 24 stations rated at 100 watts or less, with the five-watt transmitter at Vik being the least powerful FM unit.

From the two LW and two MW transmitters of the 1940s, the number of transmitters has been increased by 8 MW and 35 VHF-FM units by the ISBS. As of 1983, the FM radio network had not been completed and may not be until 1986. In early 1983, only the southwest portion of the country (determined by a line drawn from Hvalnes on the southeast coast to Hvammstangi in the central northwest) was capable of stereo FM radio. In spite of the capability of the FM network, the system is used only to rebroadcast the main program. Because of the lack of transmission lines, signals are relayed from transmitter to transmitter through the use of receiver-transmitters, with the receiver set to the last station and the transmitter set to a new frequency. There is a slight lag in the signal at the far end of the line as opposed to the signal received direct, as on LW, from Reykjavik.
In spite of poor signal quality and limited program content, Icelandic radio continues to be popular, and there are about 314 receivers per 1000 population (Basic Statistics of Iceland 1980).

Iceland provides minimal short-wave (2 to 30 MHz) service to its seamen via a 10-kW AM/SSB transmitter [7]. The signal can be received on the island, and, since it is a simulcast of the main evening news program (of one-and-one-half hours), it could also qualify as a domestic short-wave service.

Programming

Rikisutvarpid's programming has been criticized by different groups, which say that their needs are not being met. This is understandable since the makeup of the population has changed in 50 years and the ISBS has operated only one radio service regardless of the station frequency. Many Icelanders, especially younger Icelanders, have said that they prefer to listen to more American and British music; the ISBS initiated a popular music radio service in November 1983 in an effort to serve the needs of the people who prefer music to talk.

Before the first transmission from the ISBS, a radio council to select and develop programs had been
formed by a well known scholar, a representative of the University of Iceland, a musician, and a cultural representative (Bjornsson 1970). The council’s influence was very strong in the early days of radio broadcasting but is much more relaxed today.

The first Icelandic radio program, 20 December 1930, was a 45-minute event. Bjornsson (1970) reports that the Reykjavik Orchestra played for five minutes, followed by two five-minute speeches, 15 minutes of more music, and five minutes of news, concluding with the national anthem. In the first four years, radio was on the air for an average of four hours and 15 minutes a day. From 1935 to 1945, the average was five hours per day; in 1946 an additional hour was added; and by 1950 almost eight hours of programs were aired daily. In 1981, the average daily broadcast was 16.96 hours (70.67 percent of available time versus 3.13 percent of available time in 1930).

The kinds of programs to be aired were decided by the council in 1930 and have not changed much in type in 50 years. The spoken word is central to Icelandic culture and is the basis of Rikisutvarpid’s programming; music has always been considered international and second in importance to the spoken word (Bjornsson 1970). In the
late 1930s, the ISBS began broadcasting issues programs, Sunday church services (Evangelical Lutheran), and readings of novels and plays (Bjornsson 1970). According to Bjornsson, the spoken word is the trademark of radio broadcasting, and the goal of Rikisutvarpid was and is to protect and strengthen the common heritage—the Icelandic language. This is evident in political debates, especially before elections, which are broadcast on radio. Bjornsson (1970) claims, and personal interviews confirm, that Icelanders are great conversationalists and value the ability to discuss an issue. Radio provides a natural medium to include a greater number of people in the communication process.

The first broadcast, 20 December 1930, was live, as were all programs until 1934, when Rikisutvarpid began experiments with recording equipment. The first recorded program originated at the hot spring Geysir and was transmitted via shortwave to North America (Bjornsson 1970).

Although the broadcast day was only four to five hours long in the 1930s, the new medium gained popularity rapidly. There were 40 times as many receivers in 1940 (18,261) as in 1930 (450) (Bjornsson 1970); based on population and the number of radios, there was an average
of one receiver for every seven people. The ISBS programs were available in most communities, and important broadcasts, like parliamentary debates, could be shared by many members of the community [8].

While the ISBS reduced power output from its transmitters for security reasons at the outset of World War II, it did not significantly curtail the number of hours of broadcasting. By 1945, 25 percent of the population owned a radio, and Rikisutvarpid increased programming time to an average of six hours per day (Bjornsson 1970). Magnetic tape recorders, long used in secret by Hitler’s Propaganda Ministry, replaced wax disc recording equipment and revolutionized the recording and archiving of programs, resulting in greater fidelity. The use of magnetic tape allowed a greater degree of flexibility in programming and significantly reduced the number of live broadcasts. Another advantage of recording programs was the ability to rebroadcast the show at a later time. This kind of flexibility was reflected in an increase of total broadcast time to about eight hours per day in 1950.

In the past the ISBS has drawn criticism over its program content from conservatives and liberals, young and old, and workers and intellectuals. As long as State
Broadcasting remained a monopoly, it did not have to change much in order to survive, but the monopoly was broken in 1951, when the Iceland Defense Force was given permission to broadcast on the medium-wave band for the morale and welfare of the personnel stationed at Keflavik. Rikisutvarpid, which broadcast in Icelandic, appears to have responded to the English language competition (though they will deny it), because for the first time music balanced the spoken word in 1957 (Bjornsson 1970).

The young Icelanders' desire for popular music increased with the development of the transistor, because low cost radios changed listening habits. By 1969, there were 61,600 receivers in the country. The large family radio was soon superseded by the individual transistor radio, accelerating the change from family or group listening to personal listening.

The broadcast day has not grown much since 1969 when it averaged 16.5 hours (per day). By 1981, the broadcast day had been extended just one-half hour longer, but the number of receivers has grown steadily since 1969 to about 68,311 in 1981. The breakdown of radio programs for 1981, by type and percentage (as reported in the ISBS yearbook), is:
Two of the most popular programs on ISBS radio are the two-hour morning news and information program (aired from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m.) and the evening news, which is broadcast during the dinner hour (7 p.m. to 8 p.m.). Icelanders say that these programs are so popular because they can be easily listened to while they prepare to go to work or eat a meal. Some of the Icelanders interviewed said that the popularity of the evening news program on radio is so great that television does not come on the air until it concludes at 8 p.m.

The 1971 Berg study found that most citizens have access to a radio and that about 86 percent of the population use their radios during the week. That figure increases to 90 percent on Thursdays, when there is no
television. About 60 percent of the population listen to radio every day of the week from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and Monday through Friday from 6:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.. Berg reported that, the most popular time for listening during the week was in the evening, but it would seem improbable that in 1983, fully two thirds of the population would listen to radio at night. Color television and home video recorders were not in as many homes in 1971 as in 1983. Berg found that the rural population tended to be more of a radio consumer than the people who lived in Reykjavik.

American Forces Radio in Iceland

Many countries have had to reconsider their national radio programs in the face of frequently unwanted and quite often illegal competition. Iceland has, for more than 20 years, had to consider serious (legal) competition from an American Forces radio station in Keflavik. The staff of the ISBS say that they do not compete with the Americans, but the ability of more than 60 percent of the population to receive the American radio program must have had some influence on Rikisutvarpid's programming. One example of a similar influence effecting program content is reflected in the BBC's program changes brought about because of
competition which it could not control. Because of the effect of pirate radio stations broadcasting from off the coast of the United Kingdom and Radio Luxembourç's broadcasts from the continent, the British Parliament authorized competitive broadcasting there. When the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) lost its monopoly to broadcast in the United Kingdom, it found that it had to change its programming to keep listeners.

Pressure from Icelanders, especially young Icelanders, for more music seems to have had some effect on State Radio; a popular music radio service commenced broadcasting in November 1983. Light music and various forms of entertainment were to be the fare of the new channel.

On May 26, 1942, the AFRS was officially established with the mission of providing program services, shortwave programming and equipment for overseas areas. It was designed to give servicemen a touch of home and to combat Axis Sally and Tokyo Rose. At the height of the AFRS overseas operation in 1945, there were approximately 300 radio stations scattered throughout the world....in 1949, only 60 AFRS stations were in operation. (1982 AFRTS Factsheet)

Since 4 July 1943, members of the United States military stationed overseas have been served by the Armed Forces Radio Service (also known as the American Forces Radio Service). Its first studios were in the
To run so large a complex, several thousand American military and Department of Defense personnel (3,300 in 1976 with total American population at more than 5,000) have been stationed at the base since 1951 (Hamar 1977). Because the Armed Forces Radio Service (AFRS) provided US military personnel stationed in Europe (as well as in the Pacific area) with a "touch of home," broadcasting in Iceland was seen as a normal extension of the information and entertainment service provided to troops on the continent (NBS 1982).

The 1951 Defense Agreement provided a framework for many executive agreements between the IDF commander and Iceland's Foreign Minister. One example of such an agreement is the assignment of radio frequencies for air traffic control. The IDF requested radio channels, which were subsequently assigned by the Icelandic Post, Telephone, and Telegraph (PTT). When the IDF commander wanted to establish an American Forces Radio station, he consulted with the Foreign Minister. An executive implementation of the 1951 Defense Agreement, through a formal exchange of letters between the IDF commander and Iceland's Foreign Minister, is considered to be the basis of all broadcast operations on the island since that time (1977 NBS message). The ISBS issued a licence to the IDF.
broadcast unit, and the PTT assigned the frequency (NBS 1977). The AFRS built studios in a quonset hut on the Keflavik NATO Base, installed a transmitter and antenna, and commenced operations 1 May 1952, with a 250-watt transmitter signal on 1485 kHz (Jones 1982). The US Air Force operated the broadcast facilities from 1952 to 1961, when the Navy took over operations of much of the station and much of the Keflavik facility.

**Organization of NBS, Keflavik**

The Navy Broadcasting Station at Keflavik resembles many small radio stations in the USA, with a staff of 21 people, including two Icelandic engineers. Every member of the broadcasting unit performs each major task associated with running a radio station. While formal assignments to duty positions are made and people work in their particular jobs, their duty positions are not permanent but are rotated every couple of months to ensure complete training of all members of the broadcast unit. This concept is somewhat different from what one might expect; normally a disc jockey (DJ) is a DJ and a news person is a news person, but, at the Keflavik Navy Broadcast Station (NBS), everyone is a broadcast journalist and must be trained in all areas of the job specialty (Jones 1982) [9].
The personnel assigned to Detachment Eight of the Navy Broadcast Service (NBS Keflavik includes Air Force personnel) report to the Officer in Charge (OIC) of the unit. Because of the two roles in which he serves, the detachment OIC has a dual chain of command. In one role, he serves as the OIC of the Navy Broadcasting Unit and reports to the Operations Ashore Officer in the Operations Department of Headquarters NBS, Washington, D.C. In the second, he also serves as the collateral duty Public Affairs Officer (PAO) for the US Naval Station, Keflavik, in matters concerning Navy public affairs. The OIC of NBS Keflavik is independent of the US Naval Station commander and the IDF commander in matters regarding broadcasting. Because the OIC of NBS is also the naval station’s PAO, he has the opportunity and the facilities to provide the Navy and IDF commanders with all the benefits a chief executive enjoys when he owns the local newspaper, radio, and television stations. Thus, he may successfully resist any efforts by installation commanders to tamper with broadcast programming or policy because the independence of the AFRTS system from local commanders is guaranteed by the service chiefs of information and public affairs and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs [10].
The primary mission of NBS Keflavik is to distribute command information, or information relating to military business, the secondary mission is to disseminate news and information, and the tertiary mission is to entertain.

**Financing NBS Keflavik**

Funding for broadcasting at Keflavik comes from the Defense Department in several ways. The programs produced by or for the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) are funded through Department of Defense channels. While the Air Force contributes some of the personnel at the Keflavik facility (and pays their salary), funds to operate the station come from the Department of the Navy (Jones 1983).

One expenditure not faced by most AFRTS locations is payment of royalties to the musicians' associations. Many of the associations have waived the royalties for American Forces Radio. This is not the case in Iceland, where the American station, playing American-produced records for an American audience, must pay $28,000 every three years to the Icelandic STEF. The Samband Tonskala og Eigenda Fluntingsrettar, or Icelandic Association of Music Composers, is the local agent of ASCAP, the American Society of Composers, Authors, and
Publishers. Rikisutvarpid, the Iceland State Broadcast Service (ISBS), also pays a percentage of their collected licence fee to the STEF. In 1981, the ISBS paid 1.051 million kronur ($128,783 based on the 31 December 1981 exchange rate) to the STEF. This represents about 5.35 percent of the radio licence fee, or about 2.27 percent of the ISBS radio division's total income.

NBS Transmitters and Frequencies

The AFRS station has operated a 250-watt transmitter on 1485 kHz since 1952, when the Icelandic PTT assigned the frequency. For several years prior to 1968, three isolated radar and communication stations at Hofn, Rockville, and Grindavik retransmitted the signal relayed from Keflavik by a tropospheric scatter radio link on a 10-watt, 1400 kHz transmitter. Several changes in the system occurred between 1969 and 1979. There was pressure from Icelandic groups to reduce the power of or eliminate the NBS television signal (see chapter 4) during discussions concerning the continuance or withdrawal of the IDF agreement in 1974. The negotiations brought about an improvement in radio service on the NATO facility because a cable television system was installed which expanded "broadcast" opportunities for NBS Keflavik. The Navy continued to broadcast on 1485 kHz
and retransmitted the AM signal over the cable on a VHF-FM frequency. In addition to the AM signal repeat, NBS added a stereo "easy listening" music channel with automated equipment and a monaural AFRTS "News From Washington" feed. Possibilities for future development of radio on the cable are limited only by equipment, money, and the imagination of the people stationed at Keflavik.

The three remote communication and radar sites transmitted the relayed AM radio program on a 1400 kHz carrier current system until 1979, when Hofn and Keflavik received new equipment. Since the summer of 1979, Keflavik has operated a new 250-watt transmitter and antenna system, and Hofn has also broadcast on 1485 kHz via a 10-watt transmitter. The Hofn site has the capability to produce local programming for the personnel stationed there; the Keflavik unit has one studio on the air 24 hours a day, one production studio, and a news studio.

**NBS Programming**

A quick glance at the NBS radio schedule would lead one to believe that entertainment, news and general information, and command (or military) information are the order of priorities for the station; actually, just
Keflavik, 82 percent of the respondents said they listen to the AM service at some time during the day. The survey asked to what extent different kinds of programs are preferred. A five-point Likert scale was used with five (5) equal to maximum and one (1) equal to minimum preference. Of the respondents who answered five (5) on the survey, a list of programs and listeners' preference by type are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RADIO PROGRAM CATEGORIES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top 100</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oldies</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy Listening</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Rock</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazz</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soul</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Band</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NBS - Keflavik

Specific programs usually have an audience which regularly listens to that program; the NBS survey for AFRTS programs reveals no exception. The Keflavik survey showed that the music program *American Top 40* is the most regularly listened-to program, and the midnight-to-6 AM programs are heard by fewer people. Survey respondents said they listened to the following 24
programs on a regular basis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POPULAR RADIO PROGRAMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>American Top 40</strong> (with Casey Kasem) (music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Charlie Tuna</strong> (Los Angeles DJ) (music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paul Harvey</strong> (news and information)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Golden Days of Radio</strong> (drama)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wolfman Jack</strong> (music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Swap Shop</strong> (local information)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gene Price</strong> (Country and Western music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roger Carroll</strong> (Los Angeles DJ) (music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Things Considered</strong> (NPR) (talk &amp; news)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dick Clark’s Music Machine</strong> (music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jim Pewter</strong> (oldies music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Don Tracy</strong> (soul music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Humble Harvey’s National Album Countdown</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mary Turner</strong> (rock music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Robert W. Morgan-Special of the Week</strong> (talk)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religious</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tom Campbell’s Playback</strong> (new and recent hits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roland Bynum</strong> (black music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Soul Survey</strong> (music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carmen Dragon</strong> (light classical music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bill Stewart’s- And All That Jazz</strong> (music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Swinging Years</strong> (big band music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Harry Newman</strong> (country music)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Navy Broadcasting Service - Keflavik

Roger Carroll and the Special of the Week were not on the AFRTS Program schedule in early 1983 but could be in the future because AFRTS, operating out of Los Angeles, changes programs every 13 weeks. American Top 40, one of the most popular programs with both the American and Icelandic "shadow" audiences, is aired from 1 to 5 P.M. Saturdays and again after midnight Sunday morning. AFRTS provides programs like Mary Helen Barro and Gene C.
Marusti, which are directed toward the Spanish-speaking members of the military, but these programs are not as popular in Iceland because of the low Hispanic population and because the programs originate in Los Angeles and tend to be Mexican in their orientation. Although the Mexican flavor of the programs qualify them as Hispanic, they miss the Puerto Rican and Philippine audience [11].

The difference between AFN and ISBS radio is striking. Navy Broadcasting and AFRTS must serve the varied interests of the members of the US military, and this necessitates a popular format. The ISBS, on the other hand, is determined to preserve the cultural heritage of Iceland, which requires resisting a popular format. Thus, radio began the cross-cultural clash between the American and Icelandic mass media, a struggle which was to be renewed with the advent of American television in Iceland.
NOTES

1. The three divisions of the ISBS are Radio, Television, and Finance.

2. One of the proposals by the new coalition government is to end the system whereby wages are increased as prices increase. The proposal is sure to be resisted in the Parliament. The annual licence fee was increased in 1983, and the 1984 World Radio TV Handbook reported that the fee for a radio only licence is 750 kronur (about $27).

3. Recent advancements in AM radio technology have made stereo AM available. The new technology has also made it possible for AM radio to be broadcast on a 9-kHz channel width instead of 10-kHz channel spacing. This technology will be utilized in Europe because it will increase the total number of MW channels from 108 to 120. Broadcasters in the USA have opposed the proposals to reduce the bandwidth and increase the number of channels. They say that their station identity is tied to their operating frequency (like 66 WNBC in New York City, 610 WIP in Philadelphia, and 1260 WNRK in Newark, Delaware) and that a change in frequency will cause them to loose some audience identification with the station.

4. The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) allocates radio frequencies in Europe. The ITU was established in 1865 as the International Telegraph Union. Since 1947, the International Telecommunications Union has been the specialized agency of the United Nations dealing with telecommunications (Paulu 1967). See George A. Codding’s (1972) The International Telecommunications Union, an Experiment in International Cooperation for a complete history. In 1948, seven of the 32 countries, including Iceland, represented at the Copenhagen Conference refused to sign the agreement on long-and medium-wave allocations because they said their requirements were not fully met (Codding 1959). Today, Iceland shares some long and medium-wave frequencies with broadcasters on the European continent.
5. See page 44, table 5 of the 1983 World Radio TV Handbook for an example and further explanation.

6. The move to FM radio was a big gamble in Iceland because FM offered no new program service to the country. Its sole advantage was better reception of the same programs heard on long and medium wave frequencies. The first two FM transmitters went on-the-air in 1961, and 19 transmitters have been placed in operation since then. Improvements have been made in the FM Stereo network, and the 1984 World Radio TV Handbook reported that 20 of 21 FM transmitters can broadcast stereo signals. Six FM transmitters carry the "second program," the popular music channel.

7. Most of the world’s international radio broadcasters still utilize AM transmissions. The AM signal can be received on SSB (single side band) receivers because the SSB signal has two side bands, an upper and a lower, which ride an AM carrier. Proposals have been made in the World Administrative Radio Conference (WARC) for all international broadcasters to switch from AM to SSB in their broadcasts. This would decrease interference, increase the number of frequencies available for use in the International Broadcast Band, and increase the efficiency of each transmitter (125 watts of SSB = 1000 watts of AM).

8. The concept of sharing access to radios is not new. Of course, many families listened to radio together, but it was not uncommon for people in a community to sit and listen to the radio together. An example of this is cited in Douglas A. Boyd’s (1982) Broadcasting in the Arab World. Boyd said that Egyptian merchants bought radios as a popular attraction for restaurants and coffee houses. It is not known whether this occurred in Iceland, but it is almost certain that radio listening was shared among people in a community (given the Icelanders’ custom of visiting each other’s homes).

9. The military members of the Navy Broadcasting unit at Keflavik receive a more rounded training than many of their counterparts at larger installations. This is due partly to the management philosophy of the unit commander and partly to the fact that NBS Keflavik is a small installation and everyone must pitch in to get the job done. Because any member of the unit might be called upon to work on a broadcast related task outside of their
normal duties, each must be trained in all related areas.

10. There were some problems in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the stations in Vietnam and Europe. The problems of censorship received national attention in Time magazine, Journalism Quarterly, and the Journal of Broadcasting. See Donald R. Browne's (1982) International Radio Broadcasting: The Limits of the Limitless Medium. On November 11, 1983, NBC News reported that the American Military in South Korea censors news reports which are seen as critical to the Korean government and does not allow them to air on American Forces radio or television there.

11. The Navy Hispanic population includes people from the Philippines, and they are not targeted for Spanish-oriented programs by AFRTS.
Experiments with television (or "radio with pictures," as some people called it) began in the United States in the 1920s. The early laboratory systems were quite crude by today's standards; they were composed of mechanical moving parts instead of today's electronic television components. The picture quality of the systems based on the 1884 Nipkow scanning wheel was severely limited because only 60 lines could be produced on the screen (Head 1976).

Many scientists in the United States believed that an all-electronic system would be developed with greater resolution than mechanical systems could ever produce (Head 1976), and it was toward the development of such an electronic system that most of the research was devoted. A 525-line electronic system eventually became the American standard for monochrome and later color television. In 1936, the British Broadcasting Corporation introduced a 405-line, low resolution
monochrome system for use in the United Kingdom. After
the development of color television, the BBC added a
625-line (PAL) system (in 1964) with the intention of
phasing out the 405-line monochrome format [1].

The problems with electronic systems were finally
resolved, and the Radio Corporation of America (RCA)
demonstrated an electronic television system at the 1939
World’s Fair in New York City (Head 1976). Although the
growth of television was impeded by World War II, better
electronic systems and programs evolved after the war’s
end. The development of radar systems and the
advancement of radar technology during the war
provided a quantum leap in the electronics industry,
which benefitted television directly.

Iceland, which had been left out of the
Industrial Revolution, was also left out of the
development of television. Iceland did not have the
resources, money, or, most importantly, the interest to
develop a national television system. In fact,
Icelanders resisted the introduction of the medium
into their country because they feared it would change
their culture. The Americans who were stationed at the
Keflavik NATO base (as members of the Iceland Defense
Force) introduced television to the island. Since the
Americans were the first television broadcasters in the country, it is important to explore the U.S. Military’s role in first introducing the medium to Iceland.

U.S. Military Television Operations

American Forces Radio set a precedent both on the European continent and in Iceland with their broadcasts to servicemen stationed there. A second precedent, with even greater political and social implications, came with the advent of Armed Forces Television in the early 1950s. The Air Force’s Strategic Air Command (SAC) developed the concept of a military-operated television transmitter. The command first operated a television station in December 1953 with a low-power transmitter in northeast Maine, at the isolated Limestone Air Force Base (White Falcon 1964). Because Limestone Air Force Base, later renamed Loring AFB, was so far away from the more populous areas of the country, the Air Force provided a television service for its personnel (and their families) stationed there. The television service provided entertainment and helped the people at Loring AFB keep pace with events happening in their hometowns and across the country. The Armed Forces Television Service (AFTS) developed from the Air Force idea and was first used at remote Alaskan military installations and then at
military bases overseas. "Within three years, more than 20 television stations were placed on the air in widely scattered points around the world" (1982 AFRTS Factsheet). The addition of television to operations of the Armed Forces Radio Service necessitated changing the organization's name. In 1954, the AFRS was renamed the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (also known as the American Forces Radio and Television Service).

Today, AFRTS provides service to more than one million American military members and their families through 750 stations in 53 countries and US territories and trusts (1982 AFRTS Factsheet).

Because television was a logical development in broadcasting in the USA, it was also seen as the next development in broadcasting to military personnel stationed outside the United States. AFRTS began the process of bringing television to servicemen overseas in the early 1950s, and, since the American Forces Radio Service (AFRS) operated a radio station in Iceland, television was the next step in the evolution of broadcasting there.

AFRTS--An 11-year Television Monopoly

What began as a service to the American military and civilian personnel stationed at the Keflavik base of
the Iceland Defense Force turned into an 11-year television monopoly on the island. In spite of the technical complications, necessitating modification of receivers to be used in Iceland, many sets were purchased in order to watch the American programs (Grondal 1971). The number of television receivers purchased by Icelanders is not precisely recorded in the literature, but perhaps as many as 8,000 had been sold in the country prior to 1964 (Antonsson 1979). Still, the very presence of American television angered many of the Icelandic intellectuals and scholars of the day; they felt that television would destroy 1100 years of tradition and reduce or eliminate Icelanders' love of books.

American Forces television in Iceland had its beginnings with a letter from the commander of the Iceland Defense Force (IDF) to the foreign minister of Iceland on 15 February 1954 (Hafstein). In that letter, the commander stated that the defense force was planning to introduce a television system and that it should help to keep the servicemen on the installation (Hafstein). Apparently, the Icelanders were embarrassed by the necessity for and the presence of American military forces on their island. Also, there were occasional problems between the American servicemen and Icelandic
men over their "dating" Icelandic women, and providing some of the comforts of home was seen as one means of reducing tensions. Subsequent government approval of television led to the first telecast, on 17 March 1955, of an American program (Jones 1982).

Icelandic Views of American Television

In the 1950s, Iceland had no television system and most Icelanders did not own a television set. In spite of this, a small group of intellectuals, scholars, and political leaders opposed the broadcast of American television on the island. One reason for the opposition was that Reykjavik, the capital of the country and a major urban and industrial area, is only 56 kilometers (35 miles) from Keflavik. Since the television signal was expected to be receivable 80 kilometers (50 mi) from the Keflavik base, it would be available to most of the Reykjanes Peninsula, where more than half of the country's population lives. The defense force commander agreed to install a directional antenna which could be used to beam the signal from the landward side of the installation out to sea. This, he said, would preclude the reception of the American television signal in the capital, Reykjavik (Hafstein).

Although some Icelandic leaders were against the
introduction of American television to Iceland, the radio
director at the Iceland State Broadcasting Service
(Rikisutvarpid, or ISBS) did not oppose it. He, in
fact, suggested that the ISBS should use the services of
the American Forces in order to begin programming
immediately. Vilhjalmur Gislason (radio director from
1953 to 1967) also suggested that the ISBS utilize the
American equipment (Hafstein). Hafstein quotes part of
Minister:

If we look above the political point of view, I
cannot but see this as an outstanding
opportunity to establish television in Iceland,
with a similar system so that the Defense Force
would transmit two to three hours per day and
Rikisutvarpid one hour per day, and the
television audience receive a daily three to
four hours of programs. It should therefore be
considered to give permission to AFRS TV only
under the conditions that the Defense Force
would lend Rikisutvarpid television equipment;
either free admission to, and use of the
television station, or also, equipment for a TV
studio in Reykjavik.

However, the director’s idea went no further, and
the Americans began broadcasting their signal 17 March
1955. The American personnel had access to electrical
line voltage and frequency identical to that in the
United States, and this precluded the necessity for them
to modify their sets. The Icelanders, being the
resourceful people they are, picked up the FM sound from
the American television transmission (Boland 1958); "as a result, much of the population has become devoted to the medium—even without the [visual] message," Boland (1958) said. Later, they purchased and modified American sets in order to see the programs.

The growth in the number of television receivers tuned to the American signal was exemplified by the increasing number of television antennas being erected in Reykjavik. Since Iceland did not have a national television system between 1955 and 1966, it was evident that Icelanders were watching American television programs. The depth of the conflict between what the Icelanders believe is good for themselves and what is good for the nation is reflected in Boland's (1958) article. He said that the Icelanders were concerned that television would be a harmful influence (the nationalistic opinion), but they privately clamored for more of it.

For several years, letters from the Iceland Defense Force requesting an increase in the television transmitter power and letters from the Foreign Ministry concerning the type of antenna to be used to broadcast the signal were circulated among the IDF, the PTT (post, telephone and telegraph authority), and the Foreign
Ministry. The basic premise of the AFRTS broadcasters was that the 50-watt television transmitter was old and needed to be replaced and the minimum power with which they could operate new equipment was 250 watts. The Foreign Minister granted a power increase 13 March 1961. In November 1961, the Icelandic Foreign Ministry sent the Iceland Defense Force commander a letter which said that the former restrictions were moot because the signal was receivable in Reykjavik with a good television set and antenna (Hafstein) [4].

Political controversy over the American station actually began two years earlier in 1959 when "two communist members of the Althing tabled a draft resolution ordering the government to end the radio and television activities on the American base immediately" (Grondal 1971) [5]. The controversy grew after the Americans were permitted to increase the power of their transmissions from the base. In 1962, Thorarinn Thorarinsson, a member of Iceland’s Progressive Party, asked the Foreign Minister if, in fact, the newspaper reports were true that the Americans had been allowed to increase their power from 50 to 250 watts. Gudmundur I. Gudmundsson, the foreign minister, admitted that this was true, and he was immediately attacked in the Parliament for having allowed a foreign nation to
monopolize television broadcasting in the country (Grondal 1971). Thousands of Icelanders had purchased television sets to watch the American station, and the intellectuals saw this as a threat to their culture and national heritage (Grondal 1971).

In March of 1964, sixty prominent intellectuals signed an appeal which they sent to the Althing:

We the undersigned Althing voters believe that in many ways it is dangerous, as well as dishonourable for the Icelanders as a civilized, independent nation, to permit a foreign state to operate a television station in this country, reaching more than half the population. We believe that the establishment and operation of Icelandic television is such an expensive and difficult task for such a small nation that it is necessary to allow it to develop according to the desire and ability of the people, but that it not be forced forward in an unnatural manner.

For the above mentioned reasons we hereby appeal to the Althing to see to it that the permission to operate a foreign television station at the Keflavik airport be immediately conditioned on the limitation of transmission to the base alone. (Grondal 1971, p.72)

According to Grondal, most of the signatories to the appeal were writers, educators, artists, doctors, union leaders, and scientists. Their request carried a great deal of weight since none of them was a communist [6] or an opponent to Iceland’s membership in NATO or the defense force. Their primary objections to American television were that Icelandic children might become
"Americanized" [7] through the powerful medium of television and that permission for a foreign government to operate a television transmitter was inconsistent with Icelandic sovereignty (Grondal 1971).

Although the members of a community often listen to opinion leaders and people of high standing, they don’t always agree with the opinion of those leaders. A majority of the people (14,680 citizens) living on the Reykjanes peninsula from Keflavik to Reykjavik disagreed with the intellectuals, opposed the letter from the sixty opinion leaders, and petitioned the Parliament with the following letter:

We the undersigned appeal to the Althing that it see to it that all those who want to and are able to receive television transmissions, wherever they come from, shall have an unlimited right and full freedom to do so.

We protest strongly any limitations which may be attempted in this field, for example by blocking the transmissions of the Keflavik television station. (Grondal 1971, p.73)

Grondal emphasizes that the basic philosophy of this argument was one of freedom. In this case, the argument was that Icelanders should have the freedom to receive television signals from anywhere that they could, just as they already were permitted to do with radio. According to Grondal (1971), satellite television was already in the discussion stage in the middle 1960s, and there was a
fear that the government would attempt to restrict access to that type of signal. This concern about satellite television, rather than lessening, has become part of a greater public concern over the influx of television programs by way of satellite, cable, video cassette or disc players into Icelandic homes.

In the early 1970s, the United States and Icelandic governments began the process of renegotiating the 1951 mutual defense treaty (whereby the United States protects Iceland and operates NATO facilities on the island). Many non-defense issues created problems during the talks for a continuation agreement. Not the least of these was the presence of US military personnel off the installation and the status of the American radio and television stations. The Icelandic government wanted to decrease its dependence on the large sums of American capital spent in the country on housing, food, and transportation. One stipulation for signing a new agreement was that living quarters (barracks and family units) be built on the NATO base in sufficient numbers to house all American personnel on the installation (some 3,300 in 1974). At the same time, the Icelandic negotiators pressed for an end to the American television station's operation at Keflavik. Since all of the American contingent would be housed on the base, a
closed-cable television system could be installed in lieu of a broadcast system. The United States accepted this and a continuation agreement was signed 22 October 1974.

Since the Navy Broadcasting Service began using a closed cable television system in 1975, and turned off the base transmitter in 1977, there has not been a reason for controversy about the television station. There are occasional complaints about the American forces radio being played on the Reykjavik city busses, but such complaints do not create as much public discussion as did American television. In recent years the greatest controversy is solely an Icelandic problem because it concerns the installation of cable in new developments and apartment buildings and the rampant growth of home video recorders on the island. All of this must be to the American military and State Department’s liking if it helps keep them out of the Reykjavik newspapers.

Programming at NBS Keflavík

The American Forces Television Service (AFTS) unit at Keflavík was one of the first members of AFTS when it was new in the 1950s. In the early years, films of US commercial network television programs were sent from the American Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) in Los Angeles to Keflavík, and they provided
most of the programming. While the vast majority of the programming has continued to be AFRTS-derived, the talent and capability to produce locally originated programs has expanded over the years as the number of personnel and the quality of their training has increased. In addition to producing local newscasts at noon, 6, and 11 p.m., public affairs and special events programs have been regularly produced in recent years.

In the 8 August 1964 edition of the Keflavik base newspaper, the *White Falcon*, the Navy Broadcast Station is highlighted in the story titled "The Voice of the North Atlantic." It outlines the operation of the station, reports that most of the programs are on films supplied by AFRTS-LA, and says that local live programs are limited because experienced personnel are not available. Nevertheless, in spite of the lack of trained technicians, many local programs have been produced. In the early 1960s, a 15-minute simulcast of the news was broadcast over radio and television at 7 and 11 p.m. each day; a weekly Chaplain's Corner program and monthly Navy band program were also aired. Live interview programs have also been produced, but apparently not on a regular basis. Six men staffed the NBS facility in 1964, but they lacked the ability to produce programs with the limited capability of the few pieces of monochrome
equipment in the studios. They operated the single channel station for 18 hours per day Monday through Friday, 10 hours on Saturday, and 8 hours on Sunday. The basic operation of the broadcasting station changed very little from 1960, when new equipment (a 500-watt transmitter and a 31-decibel gain antenna) had been installed, until 1974 with the introduction of the community cable television system.

**U.S. Cable Television at Keflavik**

The US Navy began installing a closed cable system for the Keflavik NATO base in 1974. The construction took several years to complete and encompassed the laying of 40-to-50 miles of cable on the installation. The (television) broadcast signal was turned off in 1977 after the cable connections were made to all major areas of the base (Jonsson 1982).

The Icelandic request for an end to the television transmissions actually did the Americans a favor. As long as the Keflavik unit was broadcasting, it was limited to one channel, but the introduction of a cable system increased the NBS unit's capability by a factor of more than 12. NBS Keflavik could cablecast 12 channels of television and a full spectrum of FM radio without opposition by the Icelanders, without the need to
apply for further permits, and without regard for program content or hours of operation which conflicted with the norms, mores, culture, or laws of the Icelandic people. In addition, the use of cablecasting (opposed to broadcasting) prevents misunderstandings, based on cultural differences, from occurring as a result of accidental programming interface.

Thus, the installation of the cable television system provided NBS Keflavik with the opportunity to transmit more program options to the residents of the facility. Three FM radio channels and three television channels were added over the period of several years to the production output of the NBS studio. One channel provided constant weather information (vital in a wind-and-rain-swept place like the Reykjanes Peninsula) with the FM stereo radio program as audio. Another channel was reserved for entertainment programs. Many programs such as Sesame Street, Donahue, Ryan's Hope, General Hospital, Dynasty, Happy Days, Hill Street Blues, and Vegas were on video tape or film provided by AFRTS-LA. One additional channel provided community information with the AM radio sound and was also used to show movies. In the evening or on Saturdays, it was possible to have two program choices on the NBS cable. The base did not send the ISBS television program on the
cable because of the lack of an agreement with Rikisutvarpid and because of the potential problems concerning licence fees.

NBS Keflavik Joins AFRTS Satellite Network

Technological improvements in the field of communication, especially satellite technology, provided the American Forces Radio and Television Service with the opportunity to transmit more timely news, information, and entertainment programming to its facilities around the world. AFRTS beamed the first live satellite event to field stations in 1971. Continued experimentation with satellite technology provided the basis of a three-phase satellite development schedule. Phase III, which necessitates obtaining host nation agreements and construction of an earth station (or stations) began about 1980 (1982 AFRTS Factsheet). The Navy Broadcast Station at Keflavik was quick to utilize the Satellite Network's (SATNET) capability. During February 1982, negotiations for the construction of a satellite earth station at Skyggnir (by Ulfarsfell in Mosfellssveit) began between the U.S. Government and the Republic of Iceland. A separate satellite dish for the American Forces unit was necessary for three reasons: to reduce political tension and controversy; to eliminate paying
the PTT the high cost of renting time on their earth station; and to allow real-time use of the AFRTS satellite schedule.

Controversy over the American's use of the PTT's earth station developed after the Navy Broadcast Service at Keflavik rented the Icelandic INTELSAT downlink on two occasions in December 1981 in order to show football playoff games. The American's use of the earth station caused quite a stir in the Icelandic press. One of the most visible forms of the controversy was in the form of an editorial cartoon in Morgunbladid showing the American troops watching satellite television and the Icelandic people being denied satellite TV [8].

Apparently, the ISBS could not afford to utilize the satellite system, but the Americans could and were using the PTT's 30-meter satellite dish to provide live programming for their own cable system (and therefore embarrassed the Icelanders for being unable to afford the cost of operating the downlink). NBS Keflavik paid $19.50 a minute to the Icelandic PTT for the INTELSAT downlink for the two football playoffs (NBS Keflavik). The high cost of renting time from the PTT prohibited NBS use of the downlink on anything but special occasions. Construction of an American-owned earth station would
eliminate the high cost of renting time from the Icelandic Post Telephone and Telegraph Administration (PTT).

The American Forces Radio and Television Service now operates a real-time satellite program schedule on the Department of Defense Communication Satellite (in support of the DoD internal information program). The construction of a 13-meter dish next to the Icelandic PTT's earth station would allow NBS Keflavik to utilize the programs on the satellite on a real-time and continual basis. Both NBS Keflavik and AFRTS-LA would save money and time because their use of the DoD satellite eliminates the need to ship so many films and videotapes through the mail or on jets from New York to Iceland. Eventually, even radio programs that are now sent to broadcasters in the field on records (vinyl discs) may be transmitted on the SATNET system (NBS Keflavik 1982).

After an agreement was reached on the AFRTS satellite earth station, construction was begun in 1982 and completed in 1983. The 24-hour satellite service was officially started on 2 May 1983. With the introduction of the satellite service, the newscasters at NBS Keflavik
no longer had to await the weekly shipment of *ABC World News Tonight* and UPI's Television News Service. The people at Keflavik could watch *ABC World News Tonight* at 11:30 each evening and *NBC Nightly News* at midnight. In addition, Cable News Network (CNN) programming is run whenever no other program is transmitted over the satellite. An example of the satellite schedule is included below. Note that there is an eight-hour difference between Los Angeles, where the programs originate on the satellite, and Keflavik, where NBS must video tape the programs for later transmission or show them live. The Universal Coordinated Time (UTC) system is utilized in the table (UTC is also commonly referred to as Greenwich Time and is the time utilized in Iceland).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SATNET SCHEDULE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily (Mon-Sun) sign on, schedules, advisories, 1430 and color bars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC Today Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN Take Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN continues at the end of the above programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRTS Advisories, Armed Forces Digest, Paul Harvey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC World News Tonight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC Nightly News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN continues, or night sports and specials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacNeil/Lehrer Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN Sports Tonight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tonight Show (NBC) with Johnny Carson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC Nightline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN 30-Minute News, Weather and Sports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sign off followed by CNN feed. Users must remove 0630 advertisements.

Source: AFRTS SATNET Program Schedule, 24 April 1983

Some of the time between 1930 and 2300 (UTC) is filled with additional programs such as Solid Gold and Entertainment This Week. The actual number and type of program included in this segment changes according to the AFRTS master program schedule.
The weekend SATNET schedule is filled with Cable News Network programs, sports, and specials. The NBC and ABC evening news programs are transmitted at 2330 on Saturday and Sunday respectively. The NBC news program Monitor (called First Camera after 18 September 1983) and This Week with David Brinkley were also in the satellite program schedule for the weekend.

**NBS Cable Increases Local Program Options**

The installation of the cable television system on the NATO installation increased NBS Keflavik's capability through the advantages which a cable system inherently provides. The cable allows two-way interaction from any point of the base which is wired. One example of the implementation of this capability was the Marine Corps anniversary ball at the base Officer's Club. NBS Keflavik set up television equipment in the club and cablecast the program to the Naval Air Station community. Another example of the broadcaster's use of the cable was a radio/telethon for the Navy Relief and Air Force Assistance Funds. The programs were transmitted via cable from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. for five days. The electronic newsgathering equipment from the station was used in support of the radio/telethon, and $22,000 was raised from 3,800 people for the funds.
The Navy Broadcasting Service's 1982 television schedule included the following programs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NBS KEFLAVIK PROGRAM OPTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Omni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quincy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The F.B.I.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaking Away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mork and Mindy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad News Bears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second City TV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-2-1 Contact (C.T.W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonder Woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayberry RFD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Muppet Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Waltons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flamingo Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incredible Hulk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walter Cronkite's Universe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Tyler Moore Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV's Censored Bloopers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too Close for Comfort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenspeed and Brownshoe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of these programs are older, syndicated shows, but some of the programs may be in the same year or the year immediately following the current year depending on agreements between the program's owner and AFRTS. NBS
Keflavik conducted a survey of its viewers and found that comedy programs, movies, and news are the kinds of programming that the respondents said they preferred. The programs which received a five (5), meaning maximum preference, on the one-to-five (1 to 5) point Likert scale survey are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM PREFERENCE SURVEY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comedy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NBS Keflavik

NBS Keflavik operates several television channels; a weather channel and a community bulletin board channel are operated 24 hours per day; and in 1982, two entertainment channels operated 16 to 20 hours per day with an average of 12 hours of "soaps" broadcast each day. An additional channel for training has been added by NBS Keflavik for local use (Jones 1982).
The Quest for Icelandic Television

Eight years after the introduction of American television in Iceland, the Icelandic government decided to study the possibility of starting a domestic television service.

In 1963 the Icelandic Minister of Education appointed a commission for the specific purpose of launching television in Iceland. The commission, which consisted of the director-general of the Iceland State Broadcasting Service and members of the Radio Council, submitted a detailed plan for television in our country. (Bjornsson 1969)

The Minister of Education and Culture asked the Television Committee (commission) to provide an estimate of start-up and distribution costs, to provide detailed plans of operation and program control, and to examine the potential for educational (in-school) utilization of the medium. Especially important to the minister were estimates on cost of operation and suggestions for financing a television service (Television Committee Report, March 1964).

The committee reported that there were enormous obstacles to overcome prior to commencing operation of a television service. To begin with, no buildings in Reykjavik were appropriate for a television studio, and, furthermore, the cost of modifying an existing building could be 75 percent of the cost of building a new
facility. In 1963, it would cost 8 million kronur ($500,000) to build a 4,000-cubic-meter building, the smallest size that the committee believed was suitable. An additional 2 million kronur ($125,000) would be needed to build the facility to a television studio's requirements. Studio equipment was another matter; since, in 1963, no film or television studios existed in Iceland, all of the equipment would have to be imported. There were not even facilities to develop motion picture film on the island. The committee recommended against buying video equipment in the beginning in order to save money (Television Committee Report, March 1964).

The committee worked with the Post Telegraph and Telecommunications (PTT) engineers on the technical requirements for transmitting the signal across the country. The PTT suggested installing a 5,000-watt transmitter on the Skalafell mountain because a road to the top and an electric line were already in place. The 5-kW transmitter would cover the Reykjanes peninsula with a good broadcast signal (note that transmitters five to 25 times as powerful are normal in the United States). This installation would be beneficial to the PTT also because they could share the access road and facility maintenance costs to each of the jointly run transmitter sites. Construction of roads in Iceland is an expensive
proposition, a proposition not made less expensive for the PTT and the ISBS by the requirement for transmitters to be located in out-of-the-way places. Usually, wherever the PTT had to install a telephone translator because of poor signal quality, the ISBS also had to install a low power television transmitter because of poor television signal quality.

One reason for the purchase of relatively low power stations to serve as main relay stations was cost. The committee estimated that five 5-kW transmitters would be needed to serve as main relay stations. The report said that the purchase price for one 5-kW transmitter was 8.5 to 9.5 million kronur ($530,000 to $590,000) [9], or 42.5 to 47.5 million kronur ($2.65 to $2.96 million) for all of the 5,000-watt units. If accepted, the entire transmission scheme would cost 180 million kronur ($11.25 million) over five to seven years (Television Committee Report, March 1964).

The greatest expenditure for the television service (excluding program costs) would be in the area of wages. The salaries for 30 staff members of the television service were estimated at 4.5 million kronur ($280,000) for 1966, half of the 9 million kronur ($560,000) fixed expenditure budget for the year. The
committee estimated that fixed costs would rise 1.5 million kronur ($93,750) per year. The fixed expenditures do not include program costs, and the committee recommended a 10 million kronur ($625,000) budget for the first year and surmised that program costs would rise to 22 million kronur ($1.375 million) in 1972, without increasing the total number of hours television was on the air.

**Television Financed from Three Sources**

The committee estimated that 224 million kronur ($14 million) would have to be spent between 1964 and 1972 in order to bring television to Iceland and keep it running. To finance such an operation, the committee recommended that income be derived from television licences [10], advertising, and a levy on the import or assembly of television sets. It suggested an annual licence fee of at least 1,500 kronur ($93.75). Although the fee was more expensive than in many other Scandinavian countries, it was roughly equivalent (percentage wise) to the radio rate compared with other Scandinavian countries (*Television Committee Report, March 1964*). Since the committee estimated that there were 2,500 television sets already in Iceland in 1963, it recommended that they immediately be licensed [10]
because the ISBS would realize a quick 3.75 million kronur ($230,000) for the television service. If 3,000 sets were imported in 1964, then an additional 4.5 million kronur ($280,000) would be received. The committee also recognized that there were possibly hundreds of unlicensed sets in the country. If there were really between 7,000 and 8,000 television receivers already in Iceland (Antonsson 1979), the ISBS could realize a windfall licence income of as much as 3.75 million kronur ($230,000) if all of the sets were licensed. The committee estimated that 27,000 television sets (61 percent of all households) would be in use by 1972, which would bring 40.5 million kronur ($2.53 million) to the ISBS. An initial 1000 kronur ($62.50) would be collected with the first licence as a starting fee. The starting fee was expected to net 27 million kronur ($1.68 million) by 1972.

In many capitalistic countries, advertising on radio and television is seen as an unnecessary evil. However, Iceland saw the need for advertising revenue to help finance their broadcast operation. The entire country has less than 250,000 people, and Icelanders knew that they could not finance television from annual licence fees alone. The success of advertising on state radio made it easier to accept the idea of advertising on
state television. The television committee recommended from the beginning that advertising be run in a block and that programs be commercial-free. It estimated that 13.5 million kronur ($840,000) per year would be gained through advertising by 1972.

The import levy on television sets would bring a substantial amount of income into the television fund. The tax on receivers brought into Iceland was 80 percent of the cost of the set; the cost of a good television set in Europe was reported to be about 5,500 kronur ($343.75); and the import duty on such a set would bring 4,400 kronur ($275) to the treasury. The committee estimated that 116.6 million kronur ($7.28 million) would be received between 1964 and 1972 from the importation of televisions to the country (Television Committee Report, March 1964).

The committee projected that 407.4 million kronur ($25.46 million) would be brought in as revenue, 224 million kronur ($14 million) spent, and 183.4 million ($11.46 million) left available to pay taxes and set aside money for the construction of a new broadcasting house. Considering that all of the sets in use in Iceland in 1963 were 525-line standard or 625-line converted to 525, the state would realize income (through
the sales and service monopoly) from the conversion of those sets to the 625-line standard to be used by the Iceland State Broadcasting Service.

The recommendation by the television committee that television programs come on the air at 8 p.m. for two to three hours per evening set the standard which has been utilized to the present. The committee indirectly recommended that television news not compete with radio news (6:45 to 8 p.m.) when it suggested that television programs begin at 8 p.m. Television may be limited to three hours per night for years to come because there is a strong belief that it cannot compete with radio. Since most Icelanders do not arrive home until 6 p.m., they are not ready to watch television; they usually listen to the radio news and "magazine" program during their dinner. The television program schedule is expanded three days per week, Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday, but takes an intermission during the national radio news Sunday and Wednesday evenings.

The committee recommended that no less than 40 percent of the news, advertisements and programs be of Icelandic origin. It also suggested that interviews, discussions, quiz programs, children's programs, simple musical programs, special events, and simple plays should
be used to develop Icelandic programming, and this has been done. Many of the people involved in the early stages of television had high ideals for educational television programming from Rikisutvarpid (ISBS 1982). Today, very little educational television programming is produced by the Iceland State Broadcasting Service (ISBS) but the reasons for this are not clear.

Icelandic Television Begins

The first transmission took place on 30th September 1966. At that time, approximately 100,000 Icelanders, or half the country’s population, could watch television. In the beginning there were programs on two evenings each week only, but on 1st September 1967 the service was expanded to six days a week. (Bjornsson 1969)

Icelandic television was on the air, but just barely. In addition to having only a few hours of programming each broadcast day, television could not compete with radio, was off the air on Thursdays, and shut down each July for one month of vacation. It could not begin its broadcast day much before 8 p.m. because of the popular belief that Icelanders would not watch television programs during the traditional evening meal time. No television programming, not even news, is broadcast on Thursdays. The popular explanation has been that Icelandic societies could meet on that day and have
no competition, but a better explanation for a "dark" day is insufficient financing and staffing at Rikisutvarpid. Several explanations are given for television being off the air during the month of July. Some Icelanders say that it is to give them a break from television; ISBS engineers say that it allows maintenance on the equipment; still others at the broadcast authority say that the real reasons are lack of funds and trained personnel. In some sections of Rikisutvarpid, if one person takes a vacation there is no one left to do that person's job. Also, the authority saves money on operations and programming, especially programming since the ISBS does not rerun programs as is done by broadcasters in the United States. Jack Pitman provides another possibility why television is not seen for an entire month:

Comes the short summer in Iceland, just below the Artic Circle, and the state-run television service takes its cue from most of the country's 250,000 populace, who scamper off to the shore or the mountains. With daylight virtually round the clock, Icelandic video also takes a holiday—staying dark the whole month of July, a paid vacation for staffers. (Pitman 1971)

The public pressed the Parliament to add television on Thursdays and during the month of July. The elderly, especially shut-ins, said that they depend upon television as a form of entertainment; they claimed that it was unfair to people who are essentially imobile
to shut off the television service. In 1983, Rikisutvarpid responded to public pressure and included the month of July in its television schedule, the first major expansion of service in 15 years. Thursdays, however, are still dark.

Icelandic Television Today

Although the Icelandic television service of 1983 closely resembles that of 1966, it has changed and grown through the years. The administrative staff has expanded from a few untrained personnel of the early years to that of a well organized and trained branch of the ISBS. Rikisutvarpid's limited income restricts growth and development in domestic programming, technical improvements, and expansion of the television service. Now that the television transmission network is almost totally in place, the technical staff can purchase some new studio equipment to replace components which have been used for more than 10 years. Although Icelandic television has broadcast imported programs in color since about 1975, much of its electronic hardware is older monochrome equipment. New programs are being produced and purchased for ISBS television in spite of limited facilities and funds. While there are many problems which need to be solved, Rikisutvarpid has made progress
toward becoming a modern broadcasting organization.

Administration of Icelandic Television

The administration of the television division is similar to that of radio; a director, responsible to the director-general of the ISBS, is in charge of the division. The television division director maintains over-all control of the main office staff, the news and information program department, the arts and entertainment program department, the technical department, and the set design department. Since the finance division controls all budgetary matters, the television director and his staff work closely with the division on all matters of income, payments, advertising, and budget. Rikisutvarpid had 230 people working in the radio, television, and finance departments (combined) in 1982.

The Television Budget

Sjonvarp (television) is now financed by income from two main sources, advertising and licence fees. Television advertising runs for up to 12 minutes each evening after the news and between programs. Usually, there are three or four blocks of advertisements in an evening. The commercials are presented in two
basic forms, film or slides. The films are generally not high quality, and frequently show their age because of dim colors and scratchy pictures. Slides show a basic product while text is read (in a voice over). While this can be a relatively inexpensive means of advertising, the quality of the advertisement is degraded by a screen which blacks out between slides (the ISBS had only one slide projector for commercials). Additional revenue could be derived from adding an additional block of advertising between programs in the evening.

Since other sources of revenue are required to make ISBS television viable (and competitive with home video and the not to distant direct broadcast satellites), Icelanders might look to raising the licence fee. At the beginning of 1983, the annual radio and television (combined) licence fee was 1,232 kronur ($74.62) for monochrome and 1,551 kronur ($93.94) for color. Rikisutvarpid requested, and was granted, an increase for the second half of the year. The new annual rate is 1,848 kronur ($66.38) for monochrome and 2,326.50 ($83.57) for color. The Iceland State Broadcasting Service annually requests a licence fee increase, but, because the increase is normally less than the inflation rate, does not receive a real increase in the licence fee rate. In 1983, the government granted Rikisutvarpid a 67
percent increase in the licence fee. The rate increase was less than Iceland's annual inflation rate. At the end of 1982, there were 47,177 color licences and 14,544 monochrome licences (61,721 total), a number which has changed little over the last several years (WRTH 1983) [11].

Since the number of licences is constant and revenue from licensing is actually decreasing (because of the inflation rate), Rikisutvarpid must develop additional revenue sources in order to grow and expand. Redirecting the customs tariff on television sets from the treasury to the ISBS might help television’s bleak financial picture. Historically, the import levy has been given to State Broadcasting, but in 1980, the customs duty on imported television sets was lost. Because of a Parliamentary "stroke of the pen," the law requiring the Althing to pass on the import duty to the ISBS was changed. The loss of this income is no small matter; the duty in 1978, 1979, and 1980 was 5.9, 3.4, and 0.45 million (new) kronur ($2,169,000, $963,000, and $94,000). The ISBS does not know if the duty will be restored.
TELEVISION BALANCE SHEET

INCOME

67.330 million kronur ($9.274 million)
66.13% Licence Fee
29.50% Advertising (less 23% sales tax)
2.24% Customs Duty
2.13% Other Income

EXPENSES

68.234 million kronur ($9.401 million)
10.92% Art and Entertainment Department
19.47% Wages and Overhead
37.08% Foreign Programs and Film
0.54% Domestic Programs (not in house produced)
10.81% News and Educational (documentary) Program Dept
12.03% Domestic Programs
10.69% Foreign Programs
38.55% Wages and Overhead
14.73 Technical Department
54.10% Videotape Staff, Field and Studio
36.51% Film Staff, Field and Studio
7.72% Network Operations
5.18% Film Production
50.64% Other Expenses
41.03% Depreciation
18.87% New Building Fund
4.24% Interest on Loans

Source: 1981 Rikisutvarpid Yearbook

The Iceland State Broadcasting Service received 1.505 million kronur ($207,500) from Customs Duty in 1981, but the yearbook did not explain why the money appeared as income. The money may have been collected in 1980 but not given to Rikisutvarpid until 1981.
Icelandic Television's Technical Operation

Icelandic television utilizes the European 625-line PAL (B) system in its television transmissions [12]. There are nine main transmitting stations on the island and 118 low power repeaters (NRTH 1984). Of the main stations, the most powerful transmitter radiates 1100 kW; the repeaters' radiated power varies from 100 milliwatts to 5 kW (ISBS 1982). The main transmitters receive and transmit the signal in the same way as the radio receiver/transmitters. The nine main units feed the low power repeaters (or translators), which in turn send the rebroadcast signal to areas which either cannot receive the main signal at all or receive it marginally.

Icelandic television went on the air 30 September 1966 with a monochrome (black and white) signal. The first color television programs were imported and were aired 24 October 1975. On 30 September 1977, eleven years after the first black and white Icelandic television newscast, Rikisutvarpid broadcast its first news program in color. The first Icelandic news film (for export) was produced 11 August of the following year, and the ISBS used the INTELSAT earth station for the first time 20 September 1981 with the coverage of an Icelandic shipwreck. The next technological advancement
for the ISBS was to have been with Icelandic cooperation in the NORDSAT Direct Broadcast Satellite. Unfortunately for Iceland, the failure of the Nordic Council of Ministers to reach an agreement acceptable to all governments has apparently ended development of a Scandinavian DBS system. Although Iceland is well suited for DBS technology because of its mountainous terrain and isolated hamlets, the development of an Icelandic Direct Broadcast Satellite system in the near future is not probable because of the high cost of such systems and Rikisutvarpid's lack of funds.

**Programming at Rikisutvarpid**

Rikisutvarpid regularly imports television programs for its program schedule. The cost of the program varies according to its age (older programs are usually less expensive than first year programs). The ISBS limits itself to an $8-per-minute cost. If a program is more expensive than that, then the broadcast service waits a year for the cost to come down. In 1982, there was a great public outcry because *Dallas* would not be in the program schedule for one year while Rikisutvarpid waited for the cost of the program to decrease. Since program costs are very high for Iceland, the ISBS shares programming with other Nordic countries.
This cooperation among the Nordic countries allows many high quality programs to appear on Scandinavian television systems. Because of its small population (234,980), Iceland benefits tremendously from the arrangement: it receives the shared programs at minimal cost and has a market for its own programming outside of the country. Icelandic television theater is one type of program the ISBS has exported to other Nordic countries. The ISBS frequently obtains and broadcasts many British series such as *Brideshead Revisited* because they are perceived to be the kind of programming best suited to the spirit of Icelandic television. The following list represents some of Rikisutvarpid's foreign program selection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPORTED PROGRAMS BROADCAST BY ISBS TELEVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kojak (USA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>M.A.S.H. (USA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soccer (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmos (USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas (USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelley (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paganini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I, Claudius</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Against the Wind</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Muppet Show</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Rendez-vous en noir</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Return of the Saint</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Edward and Mrs. Simpson</em> (BBC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Little House on the Prairie</em> (USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Mary Tyler Moore Show</em> (USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Making of James Bond</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rikisutvarpid frequently purchases and runs American and British "Mini-Series" programming. A short list of such programs includes: *Centennial; Wheels; Holocaust; From Here to Eternity; Roots; Against the Wind; and Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*. Although the average broadcast day is only three hours long, the ISBS has a voracious appetite for programming. One reason that so many programs are required is that Rikisutvarpid does not repeat programs like the American broadcasting networks.

The ISBS purchases programming from many countries to fill their requirements. Listed below are 18 countries from which the authority purchased programs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percent by year—1976-81</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>37.3: 43.6: 41.3: 39.1: 36.6: 39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>29.6: 22.4: 25.4: 23.7: 32.6: 27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>5.5: 8.0: 6.5: 5.2: 4.5: 5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>0.9: 5.2: 3.7: 5.3: 4.2: 3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Germany</td>
<td>2.5: 3.1: 4.2: 4.1: 4.3: 3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>3.2: 3.4: 3.5: 3.1: 2.4: 2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>4.1: 2.4: 1.7: 3.0: 3.6: 2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
<td>0.6: 1.3: 1.0: 0.6: 4.7: 1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>4.5: 1.9: 2.0: 2.4: 1.2: 1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>2.8: 4.2: 1.6: 2.2: 1.2: 2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>3.1: 0.8: 1.1: 2.1: 1.5: 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>---: ---: 3.6: ---: ---: ---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>---: ---: 0.3: 2.2: 0.3: ---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>---: ---: 0.6: 1.2: 0.9: 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1.5: 0.7: 0.2: 1.6: 0.8: 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>---: ---: 0.3: 1.0: 0.3: ---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czechoslovakia</td>
<td>2.1: 0.8: 0.3: 1.0: 0.9: 1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>---: ---: 0.3: 0.4: 1.0: ---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>---: ---: ---: ---: ---: 1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other countries</td>
<td>2.3: 2.2: 2.1: 1.8: 1.4: 3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Iceland State Broadcasting Service

Although the ISBS purchases programs from many countries, they are not always shown on Icelandic television in their original language. Dubbing Icelandic audio into some kinds of foreign programs is quite common and preferred to subtitling. Generally, Icelandic replaces the foreign language whenever there is one voice narrating a program. For instance, nature programs usually have only one speaker, and the Icelanders supplement the foreign text with Icelandic. Drama is not
dubbed. If Icelandic is added to dramatic programming, it is usually in subtitles. The practice appears to be used most often with programs in a language not spoken by many Icelanders. Neither English nor Scandinavian (language) drama were observed to be subtitled. A French program was observed (during the field study) to have captions.

The ISBS has a problem similar to that of AFN Europe in obtaining current feature films for broadcast on television. It is extremely expensive to purchase the broadcast rights to current films. Also, they are frequently the sole property of one agent or broadcasting company, or have not been released to television. When AFN TV-Guide asked the directors of AFN Europe about the shortage of excellent or blockbuster films, the directors explained:

Mostly those blockbusters are bought for a number of runs for a really horrendous amount of money for the exclusive use of one network. They just aren't available—at any price—to AFN or any other network. For example, "Gone With the Wind" and "Wizard of OZ" are the exclusive property of one stateside network and aren't for sale at any price. (AFN Europe)

The authority does attempt to purchase recently released feature films, but usually has to wait for the price to decrease before they can purchase broadcast rights to them. By not running current feature films, the ISBS
also avoids a conflict with the (motion picture) theater (cinema) owners. Cinema owners currently complain that their business suffers from home video cassette competition, and they have asked for relief from both legal and illegal showings of feature films on video cassettes. Listed below are some of the feature films Rikisutvarpid has broadcast and the year the film was released.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPORTED FILMS BROADCAST BY ISBS TELEVISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bordertown (1935)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boom Town (1940)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marnie (1964)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleuth (1972)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Jones (1963)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blume in Love (1973)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Plainsman (1937)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blithe Spirit (1945)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliver Twist (1948)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Indemnity (1944)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'amour en fuite (1979)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing in the Rain (1952)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet Charity (1969)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Star is Born (1937)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save the Tiger (1972)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressure Point (1962)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thoroughly Modern Millie (1967)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebel Without a Cause (1955)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Night of the Iguana (1964)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The State of the Union (1948)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Battle of Britain (1969)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was a Crooked Man (1970)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robin and the Seven Hoods (1964)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strangers on a Train (1951)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Iceland State Broadcasting Service
Domestic and Local Programs

One means of getting around the high cost of importing programming is to produce feature films and programs in Iceland. Unfortunately, Iceland's film industry was non-existent before the introduction of television, and the industry remains small 15 years later. The Iceland State Broadcasting Service produces one or two made-for-TV documentaries each year, and independent producers seldom make more than three feature films per year.

The Iceland State Broadcasting Service can do little to help itself because of a lack of money, talent, equipment, and technicians. Because of the problems which face the ISBS, it has not produced as much indigenous programming as it would like to but, considering its limited resources, has developed some fairly high quality Icelandic programming. Documentaries on Iceland, Parliamentary panel discussions, musical programs featuring Icelandic performers, and stage plays are examples of locally produced programs.

Television viewers can expect to watch programming after 7:45 p.m., except on Thursday evenings. A brief newscast in sign language starts the evening program and runs until 8 p.m. This is followed by "News
and Weather" which is read by a main announcer and reporters [13]. At about 8:25 p.m., 10 minutes of commercials are aired. The advertising segment closes with a woman introducing the evening's short animation, about 10 minutes of cartoons or a fairy tale. The next time block might be a 30-to-40-minute segment for sports reviews, cultural programs, or comedy, with a commercial segment at the end (generally, only two blocks of advertisements are run during the evening). At about 9:10 p.m., a woman introduces the two main programs for the evening, usually an hour long serial (like Dallas or Cosmos) or a two-hour-long film to be followed by a short program. Sign off is normally before 11 p.m., except on Saturday evenings, when programs may start as early as 4:30 p.m. and run until just after midnight.

The Berg Study

In the whole country there were, in 1970, 38,000 registered tv sets....This number corresponds acceptably with our data which indicate that 85 percent of the population have a set at their disposal. (Berg 1971, p. 5)

The Berg audience research study presented data about the ways in which Icelanders used radio and television in 1970. The results of the study are probably not representative of modern Iceland since the broadcasting environment has changed dramatically in the
last 14 to 15 years. The elimination of American
television competition and the addition of cable
television systems, home videocassette recorders, and
direct broadcast satellites are the most notable of these
changes. Researchers who look at the Berg study in order
to gain an understanding of how Icelanders use television
should keep these changes in mind.

Berg found that about two-thirds of the
population watched some television daily, except for
Thursday, when television is dark. Fridays had a lower
than average viewership—just over 50 percent of the
population watched some television. Personal observation
discovered that many Icelanders, especially young
Icelanders, go out on the town on Friday evenings and
this may account for much of the decreased viewership
during this one evening. Viewership is highest on
Sundays, when more than 80 percent of the population
watches some television.

We find also that the use of radio and tv are
dependent on each other. With a tv set at
one's disposal, the consumption of radio is
considerably reduced—tv seems to take over
some of the radio functions. This is
particularly conspicuous during the evening
hours (when tv is on the air) but even during
the day hours, tv-owners tend to listen
slightly less than non-owners. (Berg 1971, p. 11)
Icelandic Television Competition

Competition with the official Iceland State television service exists today in three forms: home videocassette recorders and videodisc players; cable television; and direct broadcast satellites. Of the three, the home video recorders are the most common form of competition. Unfortunately, the number of video recorders in Icelandic homes is not available but statistics have been published for other Scandinavian countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1982 VCRs</th>
<th>% of TV Homes</th>
<th>Market Share (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>165,000</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>64: 26: 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>70: 20: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>158,000</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>80: 13: 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>78: 8: 14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1982 VCRs</th>
<th>% of TV Homes</th>
<th>Market Share (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>90,000</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>30: 10: 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>81: 13: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>75: 15: 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>433,000</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>420,000</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>55: 25: 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>3,420,000</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>70: 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. K.</td>
<td>3,625,000</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>70: 22: 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. S. A.</td>
<td>5,250,000</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>75: 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Germany</td>
<td>2,650,000</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>48: 18: 34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *InterMedia 1983, Vol. 11, No. 4/5, p. 39*

Since the table shows that more than 1.3 million videocassette recorders are available to the Scandinavians, one should be able to estimate an approximate number of
VCRs in Icelandic homes. In order to do this, the number of television licences and InterMedia estimates for 1983 VCR ownership are recorded in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1982 TV Licences</th>
<th>1982 (83-WRTH) VCRs</th>
<th>% of TV Homes</th>
<th>VCRs as a % of Licence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1,873,000</td>
<td>165,000</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>8.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1,621,963</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>61,721</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1,271,098</td>
<td>158,000</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>12.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>3,321,000</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>15.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1983 TV Licences</th>
<th>1983 (84-WRTH) VCRs</th>
<th>% of TV Homes</th>
<th>VCRs as a % of Licence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1,886,322</td>
<td>245,000</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>12.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>2,200,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>62,634</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1,292,338</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>19.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>3,235,255</td>
<td>610,000</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>18.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*InterMedia 1983, Vol. 11, No. 4/5, p. 39*

Between 1,901 to 9,295 (the low estimate) or 2,849 to 12,113 (the high estimate) VCRs could be in Icelandic homes if a contrast/comparison with other Scandinavian countries (using the 1982 (low) or 1983 (high) values) is formulated. These figures were derived in this manner: after recording the number of television licences for each country, the number of VCRs (or the estimated number) was divided by the national licence figures; the result is a percentage of VCRs to licences;
from this, the low and high figures (developed from hard or estimated numbers) were produced by multiplying the lowest and highest percentages by the number of Icelandic television licences. A high (market) demand for movies and programs on videocassettes reveals a much greater availability of home video recorders than these estimates would indicate.

**Icelandic Cable Television**

Nearly 70 percent of TV homes in the Netherlands are connected to a cable system. The reason is the small size of the country. In the Netherlands, as in Belgium, the percentage of people that could pick up foreign programmes off air was always fairly substantial....Thus, the main incentive to build the Dutch cable networks was the wish to see programmes from abroad. (Nuyl 1984, p. 9)

Cable television in Iceland is being developed in spite of some groups' assertions that nongovernment owned cable television is unconstitutional. Frequently, the argument used is that only the ISBS has the authority to broadcast television programming. Of course, in the literal sense, cable is not broadcast, but this fact is avoided by those who oppose cable development on the island. The primary developers of cable television systems appear to be newspapers and apartment builders. The controversy was brought to the public's attention when a firm with 25,000 subscribers applied for
permission to tear up the streets to install cables between buildings (Hamar 1981). To date, no resolution of the cable controversy has been developed and implemented.

Direct Broadcast Satellite Television

Direct broadcast satellite channels will soon be flooding Western Europe with television programming. Most households in Europe should be able to receive at least a dozen different satellite-delivered channels by the end of the decade, while in many metropolitan areas a more elaborate dish antenna and conversion unit could more than double this number of viewing options. (Le Duc 1983, p. 100)

The appearance of direct broadcast satellites in geosynchronous orbits with "footprints" reaching Iceland has changed the future of the Iceland State Broadcasting Service monopoly on broadcast television. Although Iceland originally had the power to shut down the American Forces Television Station, there is little that it can do to prevent "spillover" onto the island nation from satellite transmissions intended for neighboring countries. The Icelandic government is virtually powerless to prevent Icelanders from watching the new source of programming.
However, as this torrent of mass entertainment begins to spill over national boundaries across the European continent, it will inevitably erode popular support for each nation's own unique mass media services. A report recently presented to the Council of Europe predicts that commercially oriented DBS channels will not only diminish the cultural and informational roles of the region's traditional "public service" broadcast organizations, but will also reduce the influence of the national press and film industries as well. (Le Duc 1983, p. 100)

As noted earlier, the influence of foreign programs on Icelandic culture is not lightly dismissed by the nation's intellectuals. They are concerned that their 1100-year cultural heritage will be damaged by people viewing so many non-Icelandic programs. Such a desire to protect one's culture is also expressed by the other Scandinavian countries. They banded together in the 1970s in an effort to develop, launch, and operate a Nordic Satellite system (NORDSAT). The consensus was that Nordic culture could be promoted through such a satellite system, and, since the cost of developing a direct broadcast satellite system was more than any one country could afford, all of the Scandinavian countries might benefit from the NORDSAT. Each nation's national radio and television programs would be transmitted through the NORDSAT DBS, thus sharing their cultural programming more efficiently.
Unfortunately, the Nordic Council of Ministers has been unable to develop a scheme for the Nordic satellite system that was acceptable to all of the Scandinavian countries. It is difficult to determine if the failure to reach a mutual accord or if Sweden and Denmark's offers to join other European satellite distribution systems caused the NORDSAT failure. The prospects for a Nordic satellite in the next 10 years are poor unless questions concerning advertising and the cost of the system are successfully negotiated over the next few years.

In spite of new developments in the field of broadcast communication, Icelandic state-run television remains virtually unchanged after more than 18 years of regularly scheduled service. The broadcasting authority continues to transmit an average of three hours of television per day, except Thursdays, when it broadcasts no television at all. This short broadcast time and the relative absence of current programming has created an environment in which Icelanders have had to seek alternative sources of television entertainment if they desired programs other than those carried by the ISBS. Home videocassette recorders, cable television, and direct broadcast satellites have begun to compete with Rikisutvarpid. (Some Icelanders even get together in
each other's homes on Thursday evenings to watch programming on videocassette or cable.) Although color television was introduced in 1975, many old monochrome films still find program time because of their relatively low cost. This adds to Icelanders' desire to watch alternative programming—a situation which could cause advertising revenue to drop as rates must decrease with smaller available audiences. If advertising revenue decreases because fewer people watch the ISBS, the broadcasting authority will be further weakened and be less able to meet its obligations to the Icelandic people. New and creative means of financing broadcasting must be developed, and the younger members of Rikisutvarpid must be allowed to implement their programming ideas for the ISBS to remain a viable, healthy service to the Icelandic people.
1. There are three major technical systems for broadcast standards in the world: the American NTSC—National Television System Committee; the German/European PAL—Phase Alternate Line; and the French SECAM—Sequential couleur à Mémoire. Technically, these systems are very similar but not compatible without the use of an expensive converter (Head 1976).

2. Television receivers used by the Americans in Iceland operate on 110-117 volts at 60 Hz (cycles) AC current. Icelanders who purchased American made receivers had to have them modified for their 220 volt 50 Hz AC power. If Icelanders purchased European made receivers, then the 625-line PAL receiver had to be converted to 525-line NTSC.

3. Minor word changes were made here to keep the text grammatically correct. The quotation is from Stefan Hafstein’s unpublished, uncorrected draft.

4. The Navy Broadcasting Service engineers said that the 500-watt transmitter was operated at 500 watts and that the signal was received in the Westman Islands about 125 km (78 mi) southeast of Keflavik.

5. Benedikt Grondal is a former leader of the Social Democratic Party, chairman of the broadcasting program board, and Ambassador to Sweden (1983). He studied at Harvard.

6. Grondal uses the term "Communist Party," but there is no longer a Communist Party in Iceland. They have been replaced by the People's Alliance.

7. Many countries have feared that their cultures would be "contaminated" by contact with people from other nations. Brislin (1981) says that "Contact between members of different cultural groups does not necessarily have positive benefits." Icelandic concern about US
television creating conditions which would change their culture is not unjustified. The Americanization of portions of a foreign populace because of American Forces broadcasting is not uncommon. Marlena Deidrick once said that she learned her English from listening to American Forces Radio in Munich after World War II. In his (1982) International Radio Broadcasting Donald R. Browne refers to the American Forces radio shadow audience, and says that information personnel are taught to be sensitive to the host nation audience. Perhaps the most well known fear of Americanization of a country comes from Canada. The Canadians restrict and resist the Americanization of their country. They have outlawed foreign ownership of land because of the large number of American absentee landlords; restricted or prohibited some US businesses from working in their country (cable television installation for instance); and greatly restricted the number of American produced programs which can be shown on Canadian television through Canadian Content Rules.

8. The cartoon appeared in Morgunbladid and was shown to me by one of the engineers at the Navy Broadcast Service-Keflavik.

9. The cost of building a small television station is very expensive. For example, in 1981, a new UHF television station was built in the Tampa, Florida, market. To build such a station, $5 to $10 million is needed. The cost of a 5,000-kW transmitter is in excess of $500,000. Three klystron tubes, at a cost of $25,000 each, are required for a transmitter. The tower package, including antenna, costs more than $500,000. Real estate, equipment, a building, and salaries are all extra.

10. Although "license" is the preferred spelling, both "license" and "licence" are used here. The word comes from the French language, where "license" is a transitive verb and licence is a noun. The arrangement in German is the same, and that is the rationale for its use here.

11. The 1984 World Radio TV Handbook reported new annual licence fee rates of 2,378 kronur ($84.51) for monochrome and 2,999 kronur ($106.57) for color television receivers. In 1983, there were 62,634 television licences—57,772 color and 4,862 monochrome. This reflects an increase of 10,595 color receivers and a
decrease of 9682 monochrome television receivers. The conversion of 9682 monochrome sets to color receivers will bring an additional 6.013 million kronur ($213,600) to the ISBS each year because of the difference in licence fee rates.

12. Icelandic television utilizes the 625-line European/German PAL-B system. The "B" system operates on a 7-MHz channel width with a 5-MHz visual bandwidth. The Visual/sound separation is +5.5 MHz, the vestigial side-band 0.75 MHz, and visual modulation negative. The PAL-B system has FM sound and is horizontally polarized (WRTF 1983).

13. The Icelandic reporters did "stand-ups" for the news, but no live microwave feeds were observed during the field study.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

The history and development of broadcasting in a country reflects the past culture and heritage of that nation. As a broadcasting system develops, it mirrors a society in transition through the programming it produces and transmits.

Introduction

The history and development of broadcasting in Iceland reflects its 1100-year-old cultural heritage. Icelanders have been cautious in the development of broadcasting on their island because they have feared that the medium could negatively influence the country's culture—a unique mid-Atlantic culture developed in relative isolation from its Scandinavian ancestry. The development of radio and television in Iceland has been predominantly a response to external influences and has not been developed from a purely Icelandic-derived ideology. Staunch resistance to an invasion of foreign
(in this case meaning American) programs continues to limit programming possibilities for the ISBS. This resistance to cultural intrusion by another society is not surprising given Iceland’s highly homogeneous population.

Although radio already existed in Iceland, major changes in the radio program content and the introduction of television occurred only after American Forces Radio and Television commenced broadcasting on the island. Generally, wherever American forces have been stationed abroad, the American Forces Radio and Television Service has provided programming to military members and their families, and Iceland is no exception. For more than 30 years, between 3,000 and 5,000 American military personnel and their families, as well as 60 percent of the Icelandic population, have been able to receive American Forces Radio from the 250-watt medium-wave transmitter located at the Keflavik NATO base, which lies in the most heavily populated portion of the island—southwestern Iceland.

This intrusion of foreign programs has influenced Icelandic culture, ways, and habits and has forced the ISBS to work toward developing national programming and to broadcast foreign entertainment programs on
television. Whether the American influence has been positive or negative depends on the opinion of the Icelandic asked the question. Generally, younger Icelanders support the changes in program content.

Between 1955 and 1977, as least 60 percent of the Icelandic population could receive the American Forces Television signal transmitted by the Navy Broadcast Service from the Keflavik NATO base. As a consequence, many Icelanders developed an appetite for American television entertainment. The very creation of Icelandic television was a reaction to more than eight years of an American military television monopoly on the island and an attempt to bring Iceland back to their own cultural heritage.

Those who manage the ISBS are slow to make changes. They fear the loss of their jobs and meddling by the Parliament in broadcasting affairs. Slow change over time has been the norm in Icelandic society for more than 1100 years. Today, Iceland attempts to maintain the essence of a ninth-century culture in a twenty-first-century world. The disparity between the old world and the new is as obvious as the differences between the older and younger Icelanders. For the older managers at the ISBS, the problem may be stated simply: should
Rikisutvarpid give the viewer or listener what he wants or what is culturally, educationally, and socially good for him? Similar concerns were evident in the earlier evolution of radio broadcasting.

Radio

Icelandic state radio developed because leading intellectuals feared that commercial radio would have a detrimental effect on Icelandic culture. This kind of concern is common in many countries. Iceland's decision to eliminate commercial (or private) radio and develop a state-supported system was similar to that of most of the European nations in the 1920s and 1930s.

In Iceland, the rationale for maintaining rigid control of the national broadcasting system has been (and continues to be) that literacy will decrease because of television viewing and radio listening. To date, no studies have been found which support or deny this premise in Iceland. It is possible to think of schemes which could enhance the literary heritage of the nation through the use of broadcasting. The absence of educational radio programming underscores the fundamental complaint of Icelandic scholars: radio is primarily an entertainment, rather than an educational medium.
To Icelandic intellectuals, radio's foremost quality is that it utilizes the spoken word which is very important in a society where preservation of the language is as important as it is in Iceland. Icelandic radio's entire format was developed on this premise. Once established, radio "talk" programming became the foundation of broadcasting. A dissonance between the broadcasting authority and the younger listenership developed. Younger Icelanders generally wanted music programs featuring American and British music. Since popular music was considered international and not Icelandic, the ISBS resisted playing music on radio. Finally, in late 1983, the demands of younger Icelanders for music forced the ISBS to add a radio (popular) music channel.

Perhaps some of the Icelandic intellectuals could argue that if the American military at Keflavik had not been allowed to operate a radio station, then Icelandic youth would not have developed a taste for American and British music. This is highly unlikely; Icelanders are well traveled and educated. While it is probable that the popularity of rock-and-roll, disco, and other forms of modern music would have taken longer to develop (because it would not have been as readily available), young Icelanders' interest in and increasing demand for
popular music was inevitable.

The American Forces radio station at Keflavik provided a readily available source for people who wished to listen to popular music. The Navy Broadcasting Service targets its programs toward 18-to-24-year-old service men and women. This targeting, plus the desire by some Icelanders to listen to English language programming, created the potential for an Icelandic shadow audience to develop a positive regard for the American Forces radio programs.

The difference between older and younger Icelanders may be reflected in their orientation toward audible forms of communication. Older Icelanders have told this researcher that they tend to be oriented toward the spoken word because it was emphasized in their youth. Some don't understand why other people like to have music playing in the background and prefer programs emphasizing the spoken word (which demonstrates their preference for "things Icelandic"). The younger Icelanders, on the other hand, are more oriented toward music. They prefer American and European music and television programs—a reflection of their interest in popular culture and international ideas. Therein lies a problem which continues to face the ISBS today: the ISBS does not
supply all the radio and television programs the viewers want. Changes in radio programming have been made in order to satisfy the young Icelanders, but, because of the expense of television programs and their production, the ISBS has thus far done little to increase the amount of television programming it produces and televises.

**Television**

Icelandic television developed because scholars, educators, and Icelandic nationalists opposed the American military television station on the island. American television probably would not have created a problem had there also been an Icelandic television system, but in its absence as many as 7,000 Icelanders purchased and modified television receivers in order to watch the American programs, on the NTSC standard, from Keflavik.

The Icelandic elite really did not want a television system in the country. They feared that television could ruin their 1100-year-old culture. They also were concerned that television would bring about the Americanization of Icelandic youth. So they resisted television's intrusion into their culture. They opposed the American station at Keflavik, and they opposed the development of an Icelandic system--most notably because
of the cost but also because of the potential (negative) cultural impact.

Financing a national television system was quite a challenge for a small nation like Iceland which did not have surplus capital to be used for something as "unnecessary" as television. Iceland's economic priority was to modernize the country and become less dependent on the annual fish catch and the revenue derived from it. From the beginning, the ISBS knew that it would have to finance the television operation from within its own house. Unfortunately, the government tied the broadcasting authority's hands in the area of obtaining revenue. The government has consistently failed to allow the ISBS to make an increase in licence fees equal to or greater than the annual cost of living increase. Nor has the Parliament permitted the authority to develop alternate schemes to obtain revenue. This effectively limits the ISBS to providing minimal television service to the nation. Symptoms of the limited finances are the absence of television on Thursdays and, formerly, the absence of television in the month of July. Also, there continues to be an average of only three hours of television per day, broadcast in the evenings. The absence of daytime television programming reflects the authority's limited revenue as much as any cultural
Since the broadcasting authority's revenue has been limited by Parliamentary action, foreign programs have been essential to the ISBS for continuing service to the nation. When the government of Iceland began the process of developing a television system, no film or video industry existed on the island. Even if the ISBS had had the facilities to develop and broadcast purely Icelandic programming in 1966, it would have cost more than the authority could afford; therefore, foreign programs had to be purchased in order to fill a broadcast day. The ISBS has shown many high quality foreign television programs, mini-series, and feature films. At least two-thirds of these programs have been purchased from the United Kingdom and the United States.

The ISBS continues to provide a minimum of public service programming. Educational television has never been implemented in the way that some of the early planners envisioned. The lack of "how-to," talk, cooking, medical, and other informational, educational, and entertainment programs contrasts sharply with the situation in the United States, where these kinds of programs are abundant. Although the Weather Channel, the Health Channel, and the News Channel on
American cable television are extreme examples of this kind of programming; Icelandic television, where such programming is totally absent, is just as extreme in the opposite direction. Specialized programs of this nature are not beyond Rikisutvarpid's production capability if its people had the desire and resources to do so.

**Satellites and New Technology**

Satellites, home video recorders, and home video players present a new threat to the stodgy Iceland State Broadcasting Service. Since program selection on Icelandic television has been so limited, Icelanders have sought alternatives to the state-run television service. The main alternative to the ISBS, for television viewers at least, is imported television programs and movies on videocassette. If enough Icelanders continue to watch home video instead of Rikisutvarpid, the advertising rates could drop, thus decreasing revenue for the ISBS. Also, as more and more Icelanders have access to home video units and greater program selection, pressure to change the operation of the ISBS may increase because of competition for viewers.

Direct broadcast satellites (DBS) may also threaten the ISBS television monopoly because Icelanders can receive television programming from other nations'
direct broadcast satellites. The Soviet DBS is already receivable in Iceland, and other national and commercial systems will undoubtedly be available soon. The failure of the Nordic Satellite (NORDSAT) project is directly attributable to the stubbornness of the Scandinavian nations involved. They could not agree on the type of material to be broadcast or on Iceland’s use of advertising to support broadcasting. Perhaps the unspoken underlying problem is that the Scandinavians continue to resist television’s intrusion into their lives and consider the medium to be an unnecessary evil. Whether or not television’s influence on the public is negative may be debated. But, while the debate in Iceland continues, the public circumvents the system in order to have more television programming available to them.

**Future Research**

This study has focused on the history and development of broadcasting in Iceland. Future studies on broadcasting in Iceland should be conducted to study the way Icelanders use radio and television, who watches or listens to what kind of programs, who doesn’t listen to radio or doesn’t watch television, and what the Icelanders believe could be done to improve broadcasting
on their island. Also, experiments with educational television could be conducted and studied in order to determine the educational potential for the medium. Perhaps the study which most needs to be done is one which seeks to determine the desires and wishes of the Icelanders concerning the future of broadcasting on their island. From this kind of study, a modern, national plan for broadcasting could be developed and implemented for contemporary Iceland.
APPENDIX 1

THE BROADCASTING ACT OF ICELAND

(Passed by the Althing on the 26th of March, 1971)

Section 1

The State Broadcasting Service

Article 1

The State Broadcasting Service is an independent institution owned by the Icelandic State.

Article 2

The State Broadcasting Service has the exclusive rights of broadcasting in Iceland, that is, the transmission for public reception of speech, music, pictures or other material, either with or without wires or by any other means. For this purpose the State Broadcasting Service erects transmitters and relay stations as required.

The State Broadcasting Service has the authority to import, own and operate transmitters, receivers and other similar equipment specially manufactured for broadcasting, such equipment being required to satisfy the conditions concerning frequency emission etc., as specified in the international conventions and regulations relating to telecommunications to which Iceland is a party.

Article 3

The State Broadcasting Service shall stimulate the general cultural development of the nation and encourage the proper use of the Icelandic language. It
shall broadcast material concerning literature, art, science, and religion, promote general education, and provide instruction in individual branches of learning. It shall present discussions of Icelandic social affairs in such a manner that the general public is enabled to appreciate the various opinions held. It shall maintain a news service and provide news commentaries. It shall broadcast varied entertainment features to suit people of all age.

The material broadcast shall be so designed as to cover the various aspects of Icelandic national life, as well as to meet the needs and wishes of both the minority and the majority. It shall provide all the services which are possible in accordance with the technical equipment available, and which may be of benefit to the general public.

The State Broadcasting Service shall in all its activities honour basic democratic principles. It shall respect freedom of expression and maintain strict neutrality towards all political parties and policies in public affairs, professional organizations, associations and individuals.

Article 4

The President of Iceland appoints the Director General of the State Broadcasting Service. The latter is responsible for the operation of and finances of the State Broadcasting Service, and he draws up annually its financial estimates. The Director General prepares and directs the execution of programs, and ensures that the rules pertaining thereto are observed.

The Director General issues regulations relating to the broadcasting of news and advertising on sound broadcasting and television, including advertising times, after having obtained the assent of the Broadcasting Council.

Article 5

The Broadcasting Council is composed of seven persons. They, together with an equal number of deputies, shall be elected by proportional voting in the Althing for a period of four years at a time. The Minister of Culture and Education appoints a Chairman and a Deputy Chairman from among the elected members of the
The Director General occupies a seat at meetings of the Council, where he enjoys freedom of expression and the right to submit proposals.

Article 6

The Broadcasting Council decides the general arrangement of broadcasting material, and gives its final assent to the programmes before they are put into effect.

The council issues regulations, as and when necessary, in order to ensure adherence to the provisions of Article 3. Decisions of the Broadcasting Council relating to broadcasting material are final.

Article 7

The State Broadcasting Service operates, under the overall direction of the Director General, in three Departments: The Finance Department, dealing with matters of joint concern to the State Broadcasting Service, the Sound Broadcasting Department, and the Television Department. A Director is in charge of each department.

The Executive Board of the State Broadcasting Service is composed of the Director General, the Directors (of the Departments) and the Chairman of the Broadcasting Council. The Director General is the Chairman of the Board. The Executive Board shall assist in coordination of the work of the Departments, and make proposals concerning other matters submitted to it for consideration.

Employees of the State Broadcasting Service, other than the Directors, shall be engaged by the Director General, though only after receipt of proposals from the Broadcasting Council, if the said employees are employed in the Programme Department. Directors shall be appointed by the Minister of Culture and Education, after receipt of proposals from the Director General and the Broadcasting Council.
Section II

Distribution and Rights

Article 8

The State Broadcasting Service and the Icelandic Post and Telegraph Administration shall cooperate closely to ensure that broadcasting and telecommunications as a whole shall be operated in the most beneficial manner for the nation.

The Director General, after the receipt of the assent of the Minister of Culture and Education, has the authority to negotiate with the Icelandic Post and Telegraph Administration for the erection and operation of transmitters and relay stations of the State Broadcasting Service.

Article 9

The State Broadcasting Service has, in the course of its work, the same rights as the Icelandic Post and Telegraph Administration regarding the laying of cables or wires across or through private property, land, and buildings. The laying of any kind of new cables or wires is forbidden, if it is done in such a way as to disturb or interfere with cables, wires or equipment of the State Broadcasting Service.

Should electric cables, machines or equipment, of whatever nature they may be, cause interference with the operations of the State Broadcasting Service, authority exists for the necessary measures for the prevention of such interference to be taken or ordered at the expense of the owner. Employees of the State Broadcasting Service shall have access without let or hindrance to private lands for the purpose of control or inspection of these matters.

Article 10

The State Broadcasting Service has, without compensation or other obligations, authority to lay the necessary cables or wires, for the recording or transmission of broadcasting material, in or through churches, theatres, clubs, assembly rooms, sports halls or stadiums, schools, restaurants and in all places where meetings are held and where it is necessary to install equipment for this purpose, including lighting equipment
and other accessories. All such work shall be effected without detriment to the owner(s) of the premises. The right to broadcast what takes place at such premises does not affect this provision.

Article 11

The State Broadcasting Service has the authority to broadcast without remuneration all material which, according to the laws pertaining to authors' rights and printing rights, may be printed or published without payment. The broadcasting without remuneration of church services is also authorized.

Article 12

Broadcasting receivers may not be used for the reception of any material other than broadcasting material. A broadcasting user who inadvertently listens to other wireless telephony or telegraphy transmissions may not disseminate such information from other parties nor exploit it for personal, financial gain in any way whatsoever.

It is forbidden for a broadcasting user to exploit for personal, financial gain any broadcasting material, for instance by recording or publishing same, or by selling admission to his receiving set.

Section III

Finances

Article 13

The State Broadcasting Service has independent finances. Its revenue may only be allocated in the service of broadcasting operations or use.

The main sources of revenue of the State Broadcasting Service are payments for the use of the broadcasting services, payments for advertisements on sound broadcasting or television, and other sources of revenue that may be determined by the Althing (Parliament).

The Director General gives an account of the financial estimates to the Broadcasting Council, which he then forwards to the Minister of Culture and Education.
The Althing gives final ratification of the estimates.

The Minister of Culture and Education determines the broadcasting licence fees and the advertisement rates, after receipt of proposals in this connexion from the Director General and the Broadcasting Council.

**Article 14**

A sum amounting to five percent of the total revenue of the State Broadcasting Service shall be allocated to a Fund, known as the Executive Fund of the State Broadcasting Service.

Monies in the Executive Fund shall, in accordance with decisions of the Director General, be used for the securing of satisfactory accommodation and equipment needed for the operations of the State Broadcasting Service.

**Article 15**

Every person, home or institution being the owner of a receiver which may be used for the reception of State Broadcasting shall pay to the State Broadcasting Service an annual licence fee. Fees for sound broadcasting and television shall be collected. In the Regulations, provisions may be inserted requiring the payment of a licence fee for every single television receiver, even though there may be more than one in the same house or other premises, as well as payment for any sound-receiving equipment in television or radio telephony apparatus. Provisions may also be introduced requiring the payment of licences for sets used in motor vehicles or ships. If an institution is divided into different Departments, provisions may be introduced requiring payment for the reception of broadcasts in each individual Department.

The combination of sound broadcasting and television licence fees into one single fee may be authorized by means of a Regulation.

Provision may be made by means of a Regulation for the exemption from the payment of the licence fees of persons entitled to old age or disability allowances in accordance with Article 21 of the 1963 Social Insurance Act. Provision may also be made in the Regulation for the exemption of blind persons from the payment of sound broadcasting licence fees.
Article 16

Every person who avails himself (or herself) of State Broadcasting shall declare his receiver to the State Broadcasting Service. This applies to all television receivers and to one sound broadcasting receiver in each home or other premises, but cf. the provisions of Article 15 relating to the use of sound broadcasting receivers in motor vehicles and ships, as well as in institutions divided into different Departments.

When there is a change of ownership of a receiver, whether it be new or used, and which may be the result of a sale from a party dealing in receivers, the new owner, as well as the party who delivers it, shall immediately notify such change of ownership to the State Broadcasting Service. This applies also to the sale of a receiver with reservation of right of possession.

Any person dealing in the sale of sound broadcasting receivers or television receivers shall notify the fact monthly to the State Broadcasting Service.

Notifications submitted in accordance with this Article shall be made on forms provided by the State Broadcasting Service, which are obtainable from the latter and from Chiefs of Police. Notifications of such changes of ownership shall contain the full name and address of the new owner, together with the personal identity number in the case of individuals, as well as the type of television receiver and the production number. Furthermore, the form shall contain any other details that may be required and are specified in the Regulation.

Article 17

The State Broadcasting Service keeps a record of all television receivers used in Iceland and in Icelandic ships and aircraft. This record shall be in loose-leaf form.
The record shall specify:

1. The registration number, which remains unchanged as long as the receiver is listed with the State Broadcasting Service.

2. The type of receiver and production number.

3. The date of original registration.

4. Full name and address of the owner, together with, in the case of an individual, his (or her) personal identity number.

5. The date of change of residence of the owner, together with his (or her) new address.

6. The date of change of ownership of whatever nature, together with mention of the new owner, as specified in item 4 above. The date when notification of the change of ownership was received by the State Broadcasting Service.

7. Information, including the date, of any distraint upon the receiver that may be made in accordance with Article 20.

A television receiver shall be removed from the register if proof, regarded by the Chief Collector as valid, is advanced to the effect that the set has become unusable or will for other reasons not be any longer used for the reception of television in accordance with paragraph 1.

**Article 18**

The licence fee of a television receiver, together with interest arrears or other charges due to non-payment, and all collection costs, is liable to a mortgage on the receiver, which remains in force despite any change in ownership. This mortgage shall have priority over any other older or newer negotiated mortgages, court mortgages and other restraints to which the receiver may be liable, with the exception of the right of possession reservations.

The mortgage shall be valid for a period of three years from the due date of the payment.
Should a registered owner of a television receiver be under an obligation to pay a sound broadcasting receiver licence fee, the said fee shall also be subject to a mortgage on his (or her) television receiver, as stated in paragraph 1.

Owners of sound broadcasting receivers and television receivers are personally responsible for paying the outstanding licence fees on them to the State Broadcasting Service before a notification of a change of ownership, in accordance with Article 16, has been received by the State Broadcasting Service.

**Article 19**

The Minister appoints the Chief Collector of the State Broadcasting Service, who shall satisfy the requirements (conditions) for a judge.

**Article 20**

After one month has elapsed from the date when sound broadcasting and television receiver licence fees have become due for payment, the Chief Collector may demand distraint on account of the unpaid fees, together with interest and costs, and (such) ruling shall be advertised in accordance with the stipulations relating to public dues.

**Article 21**

The Chief Collector may effect or cause to be effected the sealing of a broadcasting receiver:

1. If it is used for broadcast reception, without this having been notified to the State Broadcasting Service.

2. If the payment of the licence fee(s) for it has not been made on the due date.

3. If the interested party has announced that he no longer wishes to make use of it.

Should the conditions according to item 1 in paragraph 1 apply, or should distraint upon a receiver have been effected because of failure to pay licence fees, the Chief Collector may withdraw or cause to withdraw the receiver from the custody of the owner or from another custodian.
A competent District Judge shall issue a ruling, should this be necessary as a result of the aforesaid action.

**Section IV**

**Article 22**

If transmission of broadcasting material contravenes the law, the following penal and compensation liabilities apply:

If a person personally broadcasts material under his own name, the responsibility for it shall be borne by him. This applies both to the material broadcast simultaneously with its delivery, as well as to material broadcast from a previous recording. The provisions of this paragraph also apply to broadcast interviews, so that any person participating in an interview under his own name bears responsibility for his contribution to it.

A person bears responsibility for material that he himself broadcasts, even though it may have been compiled or composed by another person.

In the case of combined programme material, responsibility is borne by the person who directs the broadcast on any given occasion, provided that such a broadcast, including interviews, is not covered by the regulations relating to responsibility in paragraphs 2 or 3. The name of the person directing the transmission shall always be entered beforehand in the (relevant) Register.

An advertiser bears responsibility for his (or her) advertisement.

The Director General bears responsibility for other broadcasting material.

Should a specific employee of the State Broadcasting Service, cf. paragraph 4, or the Director General, cf. para. 6, become liable for compensation, the State Broadcasting Service and he (or she) shall jointly bear responsibility for payment of the same.
Article 23

No person shall be declared responsible for the transmission of broadcasting material for participation in same other than he (or she) who bears responsibility in accordance with the provisions of Article 22.

It is the duty of the State Broadcasting Service to furnish any person, who considers his (or her) rights to have been infringed by the transmission of broadcasting material, with satisfactory information on the person who was responsible for the transmission in accordance with the provisions of Article 22.

The right to take legal proceedings because of breaches in connection with the transmission of broadcasting material is governed by the general regulations of the law.

Penal and compensation liability become invalid if a period of 6 months elapses from the date of the transmission without a private lawsuit having been brought, a demand for public legal proceedings having been made, where applicable, or a public legal investigation having been initiated on account of an offense that is subject to unconditional, public prosecution.

Section V

Various Provisions

Article 24

Any violations of the exclusive rights of the State Broadcasting Service in accordance with Article 2, and unauthorized use of broadcasting material in accordance with Article 12, are punishable by fines. Penal detention may be imposed in the case of major offenses. Equipment and component parts imported, constructed or operated without authority, cf. Article 2, as well as receiving sets used for deriving financial gain from broadcasting material, cf. Article 12, are liable to confiscation.

Failure to make due notification in accordance with Article 16 is punishable by fines. In the case of a party trading or dealing in receivers, the amount of the fine shall not be less than 100,000 (Icelandic) kronur.
Other breaches of these laws shall be dealt with according to the relevant provisions of the general Penal Code.

**Article 25**

The Minister shall by means of a Regulation enact provisions pertaining to the implementation of the laws as a whole, or individual sections thereof. A Regulation may specify that any breach of its provisions be punishable by law.

**Article 26**

This Act shall take immediate effect. The Act relating to State Broadcasting Operations No. 68 of 28th December 1934, and the Acts relating to amendments to same, No. 64 of 31st December 1939, No. 34 of 29th April 1966, and No. 88 of 23rd December 1966 thereby become null and void.

**Temporary Provisions**

The Broadcasting Council shall, in accordance with this Act, be elected for the first time after the holding of the Parliamentary Elections in June 1971.

(English translation supplied by the Iceland State Broadcasting Service.)
APPENDIX 2

Additional Regulations Relating to the ISBS

Section 1

Sphere of Operations of the State Broadcasting Service

Article 1

The State Broadcasting Service has the exclusive rights of broadcasting, by which is meant transmission for public reception of speech, music, pictures or other material transmitted either with or without wire, or by any other means.

According to this Act, transmissions are not considered to be for public reception if they consist of information about the public telephone system, meteorological bulletins, or other messages to ships at sea, or material transmitted by wire to receivers inside a building or adjoining buildings of the same institution, such as hospitals, hotels, schools or factories.

Article 2

The State Broadcasting Service causes, in accordance with the decisions of the Director General, sound broadcasting and television transmitting stations to be erected and operated, so that as great a part of the nation as possible shall have the opportunity of receiving programmes.

The State Broadcasting Service has authority to import, own and operate equipment of any type whatsoever that is specially produced for broadcasting operations, such as sound and television broadcasting from places outside the premises of the State Broadcasting Service, for the broadcasting of programmes to transmitting
Section II

The Director General

Article 3

The Director General shall issue working regulations that specify in detail how individual items of the Broadcasting Act and Regulations shall be implemented, such working regulations being issued in conformity with the latter. Regulations or rules that may concern the material of Article 3 of the Act, such as news bulletins or advertisements, shall be submitted to the Broadcasting Council for approval.

In conformity with the provisions of Article 3 relating to impartiality, employees of the State Broadcasting Service are forbidden to participate in advertisements in or outside the State Broadcasting Service, except as announcers of the Service. Rulings in these matters are given in accordance with Article 34 of Act. No. 38, 1954.

Article 4

In the absence of the Director General, his duties shall be taken over by the Directors of the State Broadcasting Service, who shall be nominated by the Minister of Culture and Education.

Article 5

The Director General prepares and directs the execution of the programmes in accordance with decisions of the Broadcasting Council, and ensures that the rules in force are adhered to in all respects.

If the final decisions concerning programmes cannot—as a result of unforeseen circumstances—be put into effect, the Director General or, in his absence, the Directors of sound broadcasting or television, or other nominated officials, shall take the necessary action in accordance with usage or prevailing circumstances.
Article 6

All complaints of whatever nature regarding programme material or charges of breach of rules or regulations shall be forwarded to the Director General. Should there be any doubt as to the action to be taken on matters affecting Article 3 of the Act, such matters shall be referred to the Broadcasting Council.

Section III

The Broadcasting Council

Article 7

The Minister of Culture and Education decides the remuneration to be paid for the work of the Broadcasting Council.

Article 8

Meetings of the Broadcasting Council are held as often as is deemed necessary, normally once a week. The Chairman calls meetings and directs them. It is the duty of the Chairman of the Council to summon a meeting, if the Director General or two members of the Broadcasting Council request this.

Article 9

The Broadcasting Council selects a Secretary from within the Council. He or another, who is specially engaged for the purpose, enters in the minutes book resolutions passed by the Broadcasting Council and other matters of major importance that are raised at meetings. It is obligatory to enter any differences of opinion, if this is requested by the members of the Broadcasting Council or the Director General.

Article 10

A meeting of the Broadcasting Council is lawful if a majority of its members are present.

A decision of the Broadcasting Council is thus only lawful if a majority of its members participate in the voting. Names shall be called, if any one of the members of the Broadcasting Council or the Director General requests this, in which case all members of the
Broadcasting Council present are considered to participate in the voting. Any points of disagreement and voting thereon shall then be entered in the minutes book.

**Article 11**

If the Chairman of the Broadcasting Council is unavoidably absent, his Deputy shall, if requested, be summoned to take his place.

The Broadcasting Council itself decides, as considered convenient, the allocation of functions among its members. It may instruct committees, composed of members of the Broadcasting Council and employees of the Service, to attend to the preparation of specific programme features. Committee proposals and resolutions shall be submitted to the Broadcasting Council as a whole for approval.

**Article 12**

Programmes shall, in their main essentials, be submitted to the Broadcasting Council with at least four weeks notice. Programmes for each week shall be finalized sufficiently well in advance in order that there will be time to announce them to the public through the main information media.

**Article 13**

The Director General, in consultation with the Broadcasting Council, determines the rates of fees to be paid for the transmission of broadcasting material. The Director of the Finance Department and the Director of the Sound Broadcasting Department and the Television Department decide payments in accordance with the said rates, but it is their duty to consult the Director General and the Chairman of the Broadcasting Council, if there should be any doubt as to how the remuneration is to be determined.

In the case of large payments for unusual programmes, major dramatic productions, etc., decisions shall be taken at a meeting of the Broadcasting Council. A cost estimate for such programmes shall be available for approval before a decision is taken to broadcast them. Should the Director General consider these to constitute a doubtful precedent or an exorbitant expense, he can submit the matter to the Minister for a ruling.
Section IV

News

Article 14

The State Broadcasting Service transmits the news and news features concerning anything whatsoever that, in the opinion of the News Department of the Sound Broadcasting or the Television Department, is of news interest for many people.

News broadcast by the State Broadcasting Service on its own initiative and responsibility may not be tinged with any censures or biassed comments, and complete impartiality shall be observed towards all (political) parties and policies in public affairs, professional institutions, associations or individuals.

Broadcast news bulletins shall not contain any direct advertisements and announcements, unless they concern the operations of the State Broadcasting Service itself.

News commentaries shall be clearly distinguished from the actual news, and the name of the commentator concerned shall in such cases always be quoted.

During compilation of the news, care shall always be taken to ensure that the sources are as complete and reliable as possible. The State Broadcasting Service shall at all times be prepared to account for its news sources.

Article 15

It is forbidden to reproduce any person's statement(s), either by speech, sound or television recording, unless the said person has been aware of the presence of a news reporter and that his (or her) words have been recorded in sound or vision.

In the selection of news pictures, care shall be taken to ensure that these give as true an idea as possible of the events or circumstances concerned, and all types of distortion shall be avoided.
The Director General, after having received the approval of the Broadcasting Council, issues detailed Regulations relating to the State Broadcasting Service news transmissions. The provisions of Article 6 are equally applicable to news broadcasts.

**Section V**

**Advertisements**

**Article 17**

The State Broadcasting Service accepts advertisements for sound broadcasting and television. Care should be taken to ensure that these are completely unostentatious, free from exaggeration and doubtful assertions, and that they state or show only that which is true and accurate in all respects.

**Article 18**

Advertisements shall only be broadcast at specific times, as decided by the Broadcasting Council, except in the case of emergency announcements.

**Article 19**

The Minister decides, after having received proposals from the Director General and the Broadcasting Council, the charges for advertisements. Different rates may be charged for the various advertising times.

**Article 20**

The Director General, after receiving the approval of the Broadcasting Council, issues detailed Regulations regarding necessary limitations on, responsibility for and handling of advertisements.
Section VI
Collection

Article 21

The Collection Office of the State Broadcasting Service controls the fulfillment by users of the Broadcasting Service of the provisions of Article 16 of the Act relating to notifications, and makes investigations for that purpose. The Office shall maintain the necessary registers of broadcasting receivers and licence holders.

The Collections Office is responsible for the collection of licence fees from the users of broadcasting receivers. If distraint action is deemed necessary, the Chief Collector or his lawful representative shall perform such action whenever possible; otherwise, it shall be performed by a competent bailiff. If it is necessary to seal a receiver or withdraw it from the custody of the holder, the Chief Collector or his lawful representative shall take the necessary action to entrust the same to a competent bailiff.

Article 22

Licence fees shall be collected annually for every television receiver used for the reception of broadcasting material.

Article 23

Licence fees shall be collected annually for every sound broadcasting receiver, as follows:

1. For one receiver in each home, even though more than one may be in use there. The term "home" means dwelling space, in which the user of the broadcasting receiver lives independently or together with his (or her) family. It includes, for instance, the user of a broadcasting receiver living alone in a rented room, and also individuals engaged in employment, even though they may be boarding with a house-owner or other persons. In this connexion, a summer cottage is considered to be a part of the home. If a receiver is used with cables or wires leading to other homes, each home thus benefitting from a broadcasting receiver is considered to be a user
of a broadcasting receiver.

2. For one receiver at each institution. If the institution is divided into Departments, including branch offices, licence fees shall be paid for the use of broadcasting in each individual Department.

3. For receivers in vehicles and ships. Licence fees shall be paid for equipment for the reception of sound broadcasting on television and radio telephony sets.

Article 24

The due date of payment of licence fees for sound broadcasting is 1st April. It is, however, permissible to collect sound broadcasting fees from those users of the broadcasting service who also have television in two installments, and half the amount on due dates of payment of television licence fees.

Due dates of payment of licence fees for television are 1st April and 1st October; half the amount of the fees become due on each date.

Article 25

Should the user of a broadcasting receiver fail to pay for the licence fees within one month from the due date of payment of same, a surcharge of 10 percent may be added to the fees to cover the costs of collection.

Article 26

The State Broadcasting Service shall be notified in writing of any termination of the use of the broadcasting service. Obligation to pay (licence fees) ceases on receipt of the notification by the State Broadcasting Service.

Article 27

The Director General decides the exemption of blind persons from the payment of licence fees for sound broadcasting, provided that valid reasons exist. Proposals from the Associations for the Blind shall be sought prior to the taking of such decisions.
Section VII

Executive Fund

Article 28

Five (5) percent of the undivided licence fees for sound broadcasting and television shall be allocated annually to the Executive Fund of the State Broadcasting Service, together with any surplus income that may result from the operations of the Service.

Article 29

Money in the Executive Fund may only be used for the securing of satisfactory accommodation for the operations of the State Broadcasting Service, and the obtaining and renewal of necessary equipment.

Article 30

The Director General controls the Executive Fund and decides monetary allocations from it with the assent of the Minister. The money in the Fund shall be deposited for interest in a State Bank.

Section VIII

Article 31

Violations of this Regulation are punishable in accordance with Article 24 of the Broadcasting Act. This Regulation is issued in accordance with the authority contained in the Broadcasting Act No. XX/1970.

Ministry of Culture and Education
APPENDIX 3

Regulations Relating to News Broadcasts of the ISBS

Article 1

The State Broadcasting Service broadcasts news and news features regarding any matter which, in the opinion of the News Department of sound broadcasting or television, is of news interest for many people.

News broadcast by the State Broadcasting Service on its own initiative and responsibility may not be tinged with any censures or biassed comments, and complete impartiality shall be observed towards all (political) parties and policies in public affairs, professional institutions, associations or individuals.

News bulletins broadcast by the State Broadcasting Service may not contain any direct advertisements or announcements unless they concern the operations of the State Broadcasting Service itself.

News shall be broadcast with as little delay as possible, but speed may not be at the expense of accuracy.

Article 2

News commentaries shall be clearly distinguished from the actual news, and the name of the commentator concerned shall in such cases always be stated.

Article 3

During the compilation of the news, care shall always be taken to ensure that the sources are as complete as possible and that they are absolutely reliable. If there is reason to believe that a news item will be called in question, or other reasons exist, the
names of the source(s) shall be stated. The State Broadcasting Service shall at all times be prepared to account for its news sources.

The State Broadcasting Service does not broadcast speculations or conjectures concerning events or facts, unless they are quoted from other sources and are considered to be of special news interest.

It is not the duty of the State Broadcasting Service to broadcast news likely to cause disputes, or news that shall be of abnormal benefit or advantage to associations, institutions or individuals.

Article 4

It is forbidden to reproduce any person’s statement(s), either by speech, sound or television recording, unless the said person has been aware of the presence of a news reporter and that his words have been recorded in sound or vision.

Persons interviewed by a news reporter shall be informed that possibly only part of the conversation may be broadcast.

During the broadcasting of a person’s statements, taken from a speech or interview, care shall be taken to avoid divorcing them from their context in such a way that the material becomes disjointed or vague.

In the selection of news pictures, care shall be taken to ensure that these give as true an idea as possible of the events and circumstances concerned, and all types of distortion shall be avoided.

Article 5

The State Broadcasting Service broadcasts news and news features about the proceedings of the Althing (Parliament) according to the general news value of the same.

It broadcasts news and news features about the major actions and decisions of the Government and Local Authorities that concern the public. In the same way, news and news pictures shall be broadcast in connexion with the attitude of the opposition (political) parties in the most important matters of dispute.
Article 6

The State Broadcasting Service does not broadcast reports of parliamentary meetings, political meetings, open or closed party meetings or conferences, general meetings, meetings of the trade unions, professional or other associations, unless the News Department considers them to be of particular importance.

Nevertheless, news and news features shall report on the work of regular, policy-forming conferences or meetings of political parties, though not more than once a year for each party unless there are special reasons for so doing.

Mention may be made of the founding or dissolution of associations and of the election of persons to committees, should this be deemed of news interest.

The State Broadcasting Service does not normally broadcast resolutions or appeals to Parliament, Government, Local Authorities or other bodies, unless these have special news value.

Article 7

When broadcasting news of disputes, such as labour disputes or disagreements, information shall be sought from all the parties concerned, and their points of view shall be explained as fairly as possible.

Article 8

Mention shall be made in the news of investigations of public matters arising from breaches of the general Penal Code, other laws or police resolutions, as well as of public prosecutions connected thereto, provided that the case in question is considered important and likely to attract public interest and discussion.

Article 9

Sources of news, described in Article 8, shall always be sought from the offices of the Chief(s) of Police, Judges or the Public Prosecutor, as may be deemed appropriate and with regard to the stage that has been reached in the investigation(s). The authorities shall be consulted in connexion with the disclosure of the name
of the defendant, and such a name shall never be disclosed except with the sanction of the authorities.

**Article 10**

Should public rebellion, riots or other disturbances take place, these shall be mentioned, if they are considered to have general news value. Information shall normally be sought from the police authorities, but it is permitted to broadcast sound or vision recordings of the events, or to obtain statements from discerning eye-witnesses, and to base news reports on them, insofar as deemed appropriate.

**Article 11**

The verdicts of courts of first instance may be broadcast in respect of matters specified in Article 8, either in full or in extract.

**Article 12**

In the case of minor public affairs, brief mention may be made of investigations, court proceedings or judgments, if these are deemed to be of news interest.

**Article 13**

Judgments of the Supreme Court may be broadcast in full or in extract. The assistance of the Clerk to the Supreme Court may be sought regarding the selection of the same.

**Article 14**

News of accidents shall not be broadcast until it can be assumed that the next of kin of the person(s) involved have become aware of the occurrence. There is, however, no obligation to delay the announcement for longer than 24 hours.

**Article 15**

News broadcasts of the State Broadcasting Service may not mention a person's birthday until he (or she) has attained the age of 70 years, except in special cases.

The death of notable persons may be mentioned in the news, as may be deemed appropriate by the News Department.
Mention may be made of professional anniversaries, but not if they are less than 25 years, and of wedding anniversaries, if these are not less than 50 years.

Mention may be made of the anniversary of an association or institution that has reached a minimum age of 10 years.

Article 16

Mention may be made of newly published books and sound recordings. Mention may be made of new newspapers and periodicals that appear on the general Press market, when they are first launched. Individual issues after that shall not be mentioned, unless they contain particularly important or interesting material.

Mention may be made of art exhibitions, dramatic performances, concerts and premieres of Icelandic motion pictures in the manner deemed most convenient and appropriate.

Mention shall not be made of publications, books, exhibitions or motion pictures, which are generally considered not to be worthy of attention.

Art commentaries shall be dealt with in the same way as news commentaries, cf. Article 2.

Article 17

The State Broadcasting Service reports on all kinds of scientific work, research and publications, and places particular importance on publicizing the work of scholars.

Article 18

The State Broadcasting Service stresses the importance of broadcasting regularly as detailed accounts as possible of Icelandic industries and occupations, their progress, innovations, and the state of the labour market, as well as the state of the national economy as a whole.
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