

## COMMONWEALTH COMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL, 1944

6. The problems arising were given preliminary consideration at a conference held in Australia in 1942, at which most of the Commonwealth Governments were represented. The problems were more fully examined by the Commonwealth Communications Council at its meeting in London in May, 1944. The Council considered that the time had come to make a fundamental change in the present organization. They did not think it adequate for the needs of the Commonwealth telecommunications system. Although companies existed in the Dominions and India, the main instrument of Commonwealth telecommunications was Cable and Wireless, Ltd., a United Kingdom company owning a substantial interest in the capital of the local companies. The Council felt it was essential that the Dominions and India should have a greater share in the administration of the Commonwealth telecommunications system, with a view to its development as a whole on both the cable and the wireless sides. Moreover, they considered that a company largely commercial in structure, with obligations to private shareholders, might not be in a position to provide a service fully to satisfy public needs and strategic requirements.

7. The Council recommended the establishment of a series of public utility corporations in the United Kingdom, in each of the Dominions, and in India, each corporation being owned by the local Government, but linked by an exchange of shareholding between the United Kingdom corporation on the one hand and the Dominion and Indian corporations on the other; the Commonwealth Communications Council acting as a clearing-house for information and as the essential co-ordinating authority on behalf of all the Governments.

## LORD REITH'S MISSION TO THE DOMINIONS AND INDIA AND THE COMMONWEALTH TELECOMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE, 1945

8. While accepting the view of the Commonwealth Communications Council that there was a case for a fundamental change in the present structure of Commonwealth telecommunications services, the United Kingdom Government did not think that the scheme recommended by the Council would provide that degree of central co-ordination essential to secure the consolidation and strengthening of the wireless and cable system which was felt to be imperative, and, with the agreement of the other Commonwealth Governments, asked Lord Reith to undertake a mission to the Dominions and