

EVIDENCE

(Recorded by Electronic Apparatus)

Tuesday, November 14, 1967.

● (9:40 a.m.)

The Chairman: Gentlemen, we have a quorum.

I would like to announce that the composition of the Subcommittee on Agenda and Procedure will be as follows: Messrs. Berger, Fairweather, Prittie, Simard and Stanbury.

I bring to the attention of the Committee the report of the Steering Committee which met last week which reads: (*See Minutes of Proceedings*).

Mr. Cowan: I suggest sitting while the House is in session.

The Chairman: Is there any other comment? Is that agreed on division?

Agreed on division.

The Chairman: Before us this morning is Bill C-163 which has been referred to us by the House for consideration.

We have with us the Minister, the Honourable Judy LaMarsh, and her officials. I will call clause 1 of the Bill and ask the Minister if she would like to make a statement.

May I ask everyone, including the Minister, if they would please co-operate with the Committees Branch by using the microphones and trying to speak into them.

On Clause 1—*Short title*

Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Secretary of State of Canada): Mr. Chairman, may I say at the outset that I welcome this opportunity to appear again before this Committee, this time with respect to the new Broadcasting Act.

As I am sure all members are aware, the government found the Committee's report on the White Paper to be of very great value in considering the Bill. I am very hopeful that the same quality of consideration will be given and the same degree of helpfulness will be found in the Committee's report on Bill C-163.

I would like to make some comments, in what will be a relatively brief statement,

particularly on the aspects of the Bill that attracted some attention in the House and might not have been covered fully in the rather lengthy statement I made on Second Reading.

Events may not have proven this to be a warranted assumption, but I have to assume that the members of the Committee feel as they did in preparing their report on the White Paper, that they consider the principle of a public broadcasting system to be firmly established and to be, in general, well supported both within and without Parliament.

Having said that, I should like to comment with respect to the debate that took place in the House. It caused some distress to many in and outside the House in that, while it was a very thoroughgoing and wide-reaching debate, it seemed often to be a rather universal condemnation of an institution which I feel has done much in the country and has yet much to do.

Parliament represents the people whose institution this is. From time to time trustees are appointed who are to report to Parliament. It seems to me that in making the comments many did, particularly with respect to programming and with an apparent wide gulf between the Corporation as it presently operates and many of the people of Canada, we must be very careful not to throw out the baby with the bath water. That, in this statement at least, is all I propose to say with respect to the general debate.

However, I would like to refer to some of the points and comments made by some members, especially with respect to the mandate of the CBC as it is set out in Part I.

Mr. Prittie expressed a fear on second reading that the clause providing that the CBC shall, and I quote:

contribute to the development of national unity...

might lead to what he called an anti-separatist witch-hunt, particularly within Radio Canada. That, of course, is not a section designed for that purpose and I do not think