

Supply—Secretary of State

talk", and talk of a cancer on the nation, the hon. member for Rosthern wonders what the C.B.C. has done for entertainment and for the cultural activities of this country. I will say it has done a great deal more than many of the networks in the United States which are privately owned. Last night hon. members appointed themselves as a group of art critics and tonight we are appointing ourselves as a committee of censors of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

I would remind hon. members that, by and large, the C.B.C. is doing a good job. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Canadian Labour Congress and many other groups support the idea of the C.B.C., and feel that it should carry on as it is at the present time. The minister, I believe, need not pay too much attention to the complaints that are heard occasionally from the Conservative party and the conservative Liberals.

Mr. Regan: My remarks will be very short and I am sure they will not be in any manner controversial. Having derived my livelihood from the broadcasting business for some years before I entered the practice of law, I have a keen interest in the operations of the C.B.C. and broadcasting in general. While I worked in private radio, nevertheless I feel that the knowledge I picked up there helps me to appreciate the very important role that the C.B.C. has played, and today plays in the development of the national life and the culture of the country.

I have had the opportunity, as most hon. members have had, of observing both television and radio in other countries, and on that standard alone I think the C.B.C. shapes up very well indeed. I think the most significant thing we must remember with regard to the C.B.C. is that, had we not had it in the early years, and in later years in television, had we not had this national organization broadcasting in Canada and seen to it that there was included in the broadcasts matters of cultural interest, and matters for which sponsors could not be found, then our subservience to American culture would be very much greater than it has been.

In my opinion the C.B.C. is independent, imaginative, progressive, active and sometimes controversial. I admit it often puts on programs with which I personally disagree, but I would hate to see its independence taken away, and I think that any organization to be successful in this sort of business is bound to be very controversial sometimes.

I would agree with the hon. member for Danforth that its public relations branch somehow broke down rather badly with regard to the switching over from English to French of the radio station in the Toronto

area, because the full story of that should have been put before the public at an early date. I just want to make two or three remarks of a regional nature, but before doing so I should like to make reference to the remarks made earlier in favour of closed circuit television. I do not know much about this pay television, but I do hope that in the rural areas of Canada, which probably will never be supplied with this type of television, people will still be able to watch such things as hockey games on C.B.C. television, involving the Montreal Canadiens, the Boston Bruins, Chicago Black Hawks, Detroit Red Wings and the New York Rangers.

The C.B.C. organization or branch in the Halifax area is capable of producing programs for television and radio of a very superior type. Some of these are shown on national television, such as the Don Messer show and King Fisher Cove, both excellent programs, and I thank the C.B.C. for the efforts it has made in developing branches in cities all across the country capable of producing programs of this type.

Before resuming my seat, I want to refer to one specific radio program carried over the maritime radio network which I think has merit to be included on the national network. I would urge the C.B.C. to consider the possibility of having the half hour show *At the Opera*, with David Murray, which is now broadcast on the maritime network on Thursday mornings, placed on the full Canadian network. This man David Murray not only has an excellent program but he shows excellent selection in his music, and includes a knowledgeable commentary of the proper length. In conclusion I only want to say I feel the C.B.C. has made, and I hope in the future will continue to make, a very valuable contribution in the development of a national culture across this nation.

Mr. Nesbitt: I shall just make one brief remark, although I have quite a number of remarks to make about the C.B.C. In fact, I have a nice long speech, not exactly in the same vein as the hon. member for York-Humber. I do not intend to deliver it this evening but I will on another occasion.

I do not think there are many members of the committee who really object to the C.B.C. as an institution. I for one think the C.B.C. as an institution is an excellent thing for Canada, but like the hon. member for York-Humber, I think there are a number of fields in which it needs rather severe checking up. However, the chief complaint most people have about the C.B.C., most of the people I have talked to, is in the field of public affairs programs.