

Q. Now, in the rural areas, I heard nothing but condemnation. They condemned the radio commission and everything. They say that this thing has cost us a lot of money and the programs are not nearly as good as formerly?—A. Do you mean as formerly from the private stations?

Q. Yes, they had better reception. Radio was considered a great boon to our rural areas in the western provinces, but they say now they cannot get any of the stations. Ninety per cent of the radios in the rural areas are battery sets, and some of them are very ancient. Some the contraptions are home made. They are more or less for local conditions. They can only receive stations like Bismark, Moose Jaw and Regina, and when the wavelength is changed one station interferes with the other. I know they have trouble, particularly in getting Moose Jaw. The people are asking what this commission does. It seems as though they are doing nothing but interfering, one station with the other, getting the wavelengths so close that they cannot get any of them. They are very discouraged, to say the least, over the work of the radio commission. There is no use disguising the fact; they are dissatisfied; and they are asking: why not go back to the old form rather than have a radio commission. I was wondering whether you have had many complaints along that line?—A. Of course, complaints of that nature go to Colonel Steel. The complaints concerning the programs come to Mr. Maher and to me.—A. Of course the complaints of that nature go to Colonel Steel, but complaints of the programs come to Mr. Maher, Mr. Dupont and myself.

By Mr. Beynon:

Q. I quite appreciate that. I drove over the southern part of Saskatchewan last summer and I found the same difficulty. As I drove into a town or village, they would tell me that they were going to throw their receiving sets into the street, as they were of no use to them any more until the system was changed. I cannot speak from personal knowledge because I have not had the opportunity to listen, but that was the complaints all over, particularly in the southern part of Saskatchewan.

Mr. McKENZIE: I think the trouble is that probably the commission does not realize that there are no up to date sets there. They are all people who are not buying new radios, because they are not in a position to buy them.

Mr. BEYNON: They are not buying anything new.

Mr. McKENZIE: No, and they are not able to. I do not know what the radio program is, but they cannot tune in on these stations. Their are two stations that are very closely together. They appear to be on the same wavelength, and they cannot be separated by the sets they have.

The WITNESS: May I say this: the matter of wavelengths is a subject about which I know very little, but when Mr. Maher and I visited the Canadian west for some ten weeks last summer, we were greatly impressed with the need of radio in the rural districts, and we have given a great deal of consideration in the building of our western programs, and of all our programs, to the needs of those living in rural communities.

Mr. McKENZIE: Yes, but you quite understand that if they cannot tune in on a good program, it is of very little use to them. Something is interfering and shutting them off. I think that is something that should be given special consideration, in order to see if something can be done to give the people good reception; because a great many of them have said there is no use of us paying \$2 for a radio licence if we do not get any benefit from it. Whereas a few years ago, reception out in the rural districts was very good.

Mr. BEYNON: The best in the world.

Mr. McKENZIE: Both in the cities and towns.