

Hon. Mr. LAWSON: Yes. I was going to say there have been occasions when the CBC has asked individual persons to speak on some particular subject. Since the minister raises the point, I may say I was asked to speak for seven minutes and a fellow French Canadian was asked to speak for seven minutes.

Mr. BERTRAND: That is too short a time.

Hon. Mr. LAWSON: The subject was the Magna Charta celebration, something purely non-political; and if anyone could even suggest that I made a political utterance in it, I should be ashamed of myself. But I hardly think that is the point—

The CHAIRMAN: It is a pleasure to listen to you, Mr. Lawson.

Hon. Mr. LAWSON: I hardly think that is the point Mr. McCullagh is making.

Hon. Mr. HOWE: Each minister was asked by CBC to speak on the work of his department.

The WITNESS: I think that is very worthy. I think that is a fine thing. But we are discussing—

Hon. Mr. HOWE: I should not like to have it suggested that the government took advantage of its power to force its ministers on the network.

The WITNESS: I do not suggest that. I am trying to make that plain.

Hon. Mr. HOWE: Each minister simply spoke on the work of his department, in a purely non-political way.

The WITNESS: The chairman is establishing the policy of equality before the microphone. If that is his belief, it would be my deduction that when he gave him that time, he would see that members of the opposing party were also given time, to give equality. "Equality" to me means "equal."

Mr. BERTRAND: There is equality in many senses. When the ministers were asked to speak on the radio, they simply explained the working of their own departments. That is all.

Mr. BOUCHARD: There was nothing political about that.

The WITNESS: Maybe members of the opposition, of the C.C.F., or of the Social Credit Party would like to tell the people, under equality before the microphone, how they would manage the office of the minister, if they had the privilege of holding it.

Mr. HURTUBISE: They were explaining the established workings of the government.

The WITNESS: As I say, I cannot agree with them allowing that time—he is establishing equality before the microphone—while not allowing time to those opposing.

Mr. HAMILTON: I would suggest that the witness go on with his statement.

Hon. Mr. LAWSON: Yes. We can have argument afterwards.

Mr. HAMILTON: I suggest that the witness go on.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, please.

The WITNESS: Continuing: I want you to remember that at no time have I asked that the money I have available to purchase time should be used to shut out any other person. After all, they have established the fact that wealth gives privilege. I have never asked that to be used to the detriment of anyone else. Is Mr. Brockington to go further and suggest, along the line of his formula of equality before the microphone, that if a leading clergyman speaks over a network to discuss religion, it would become the obligation of the CBC to give equal time to an agnostic to express his views?

Hon. Mr. LAWSON: Incidentally, I have an application right now, from an organization somewhat similar to agnostics, asking for free time.

[Mr. George McCullagh.]