

*Supply—C.B.C.*

Canadian people with the idea that the British empire and commonwealth is to be, and ought to be, disintegrated and destroyed?

**The Deputy Chairman:** Order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but I must advise him that his time has expired.

**Mr. Nowlan:** Mr. Chairman, I should like to take about two minutes of the time of the committee to deal with this matter. Certainly no one questions the sincerity of the speaker who has just addressed the committee but I, like himself, have listened to the radio. In fact I am one of those few people, I presume, who do not have a television set and who therefore appreciate radio all the more. I listen to it as carefully, I think, as do most Canadians, and I think I have some appreciation and am in a position to indulge in criticism of the programs which the C.B.C. carries.

There is no doubt, as hon. members have said this morning, that certain programs can be criticized and have been criticized, and probably justifiably so. But I think that criticism has gone to the extreme limit when we have the suggestion here that the C.B.C. apparently is an organization for the propagation of communism in this country. Certainly if it is I would suggest to the minister that he close up shop immediately, because I cannot imagine where more money has been spent to less effect than has been spent on that organization. I do not think communism has gained a tremendous foothold in this country. If the C.B.C. is busy propagating it, certainly it is a terrible thing; but I personally cannot accept that it has been a source for the propagation of communism.

More than that, if the propagation is done by subtle hints, such as the last speaker says—and I do not question for a moment that undoubtedly there have been subtle hints to that effect—and if subtle hints are going to affect the Canadian population, then either one of two things is true. Either we have a race of morons who are going to be unduly influenced by these subtle hints and there is not much good in saving them from communism anyway, and we do not believe that, or we have not much faith in our own way of life. I think our way of life is such that it can withstand subtle hints which undoubtedly emanate from time to time from the C.B.C. and also from some private radio stations. I have heard private stations sometimes using spokesmen who have engaged in propaganda of which I did not approve; nevertheless I think you have to have a balanced distribution of views if you are going to carry on a radio system at all in this country.

In so far as the position of the commonwealth and the empire is concerned, and I am sure I am second to no one in the house in my allegiance in that regard, I do recall the broadcasts every Christmas which I think tend to bring the commonwealth and empire together. I can recall the death of our late sovereign and the three days of programs carried at that time. I can recall the royal marriage.

Coming to more secular programs, the hon. member asked if anyone could name one program this year meaning, I presume, the last 12 months, certainly not 1956, which would help towards building or establishing commonwealth or empire sentiment. I want to commend the C.B.C. for one little program that my wife and I listened to last spring. I do not imagine it was a very expensive one. It was really mostly reading, although I do not know the mechanics and I presume there were actors in the background. It was a recreation of the book "The Reason Why". I think the program was spread over 12 Sunday nights, or it may have been Wednesdays; I have forgotten which. It was one of the finest things I have ever heard done on the radio. I think the C.B.C. certainly deserves credit for it and I would hope that there would be many more like it.

It was not entirely laudatory of the empire. I know it dealt very harshly with my own native country, Ireland, and the Irishmen who starved to death at the time of the potato famine. Nevertheless the picture created of the British army in the Crimean peninsula, starting back in Ireland, coming up through the purchase of commissions and finally ending with the charge of the light brigade, and the simple unaffected manner in which it was done, were something which I, in my own home by my own fireside, would not have missed for anything. I believe my wife and I missed one out of the 12 programs given, and I am sure there were thousands of Canadians who felt the same way about it.

I did not want this opportunity to pass without saying that in my opinion the C.B.C. is trying to carry out a difficult task, with respect to which criticism is justifiably legitimate from time to time. No organization can carry on the work it is doing without meeting criticism and expecting it, but I think the ledger should be balanced slightly this morning. I did not want this matter to pass without saying, speaking for myself and I think for many more associated with me here, that we feel that the C.B.C. has done a reasonably balanced job in the work it has accomplished.

**Mr. Herridge:** Mr. Chairman, I rise to express very briefly my support of the remarks