

Returning to the Cabinet Committee discussion of the Corporation's document, the President said this had gone well and the report had been received in a very positive atmosphere. As well, the accelerated extension of service program was discussed and it was agreed to in principle. It would seem that the Corporation will receive the additional necessary funds to accomplish this although Treasury Board has still to review this matter.

Other areas covered at this meeting were the numbers of employees deployed by the Corporation to cover major broadcast events, the CBC's posture on national unity and identity, bilingual coverage, the size of the staff establishment, and union problems in general.

On the question of Canadian identity, the President said he pointed to the CBC English and French radio and French Television Services as being distinctly Canadian and doing particularly well in achieving this aim. He noted that the one vulnerable spot for criticism in this regard was the English TV service particularly in prime viewing hours, brought about partially because of commercial exigencies, audience competition and the handicap of the Hollywood syndrome. However at the same time, he emphasized that this service gives a very positive image of Canada through such series as "The Tenth Decade", "University Sports Broadcasts", "This Land of Ours", "Man Alive", "Front Page Challenge", "Telescope", to mention just a few. The Canadian unity situation was a different matter and Management went to great lengths to explain to Cabinet the necessity of showing all aspects of the political and social spectrum in its programming thereby giving a service which is representative of all facets of Canadian reality. In this way, the national broadcast service cannot be cited as an instrument of propaganda.

During this meeting Management was commended on the job it had done on establishing a good measure of control in the news and public affairs areas of the French service. It was pointed out that no adverse criticism had been directed to the Government during the last six months. This observation by the Prime Minister was followed by the statement that in comparison, as of late, complaints have been heard about programming on the English television network in the areas of news and public affairs to the effect that many were NDP oriented and not professional enough. The President said that Management re-assured the Cabinet Committee that it would be looking into this matter to determine its validity and establish what degree or measures of discipline might be required.

(2) French Network Newsroom Situation

The President reported to the Board at some length on the paradox that has developed in the French network newsroom where personnel changes made last year resulted in achieving greater control over news and public affairs programming (as commented on by Cabinet) have now resulted in a situation where the newsroom has been practically strangled to the point where reporting of activities in Quebec was almost non-existent. As a result of some programming surrounding the anniversary of the 1970 October Crisis and this year's Montreal riots, tension developed between the Supervisor and the Director of news and public affairs over planned unnecessary disciplinary action by the former of some newsroom staff involved resulted in his attacking his superior about the underlining of his authority. This situation was presented to Senior Management in a lengthy memorandum in which the Supervisor lost all sense of proportion in this instance and even went as far as accusing the Director of encouraging separatism in the newsroom. He demanded that the news element be separated from public affairs and challenged the structure of the Corporation. The Vice-President for the French Services Division provided an opportunity for the Supervisor to present his case, at which time it was explained why the structural demand was not acceptable. It was further pointed out to the Supervisor that it was imperative that he recognize the Director's authority and accept his direction. This not being possible then some other solution would have to be found to remedy this conflict.