

EVIDENCE

FEBRUARY 26, 1953.
11.00 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, we have a quorum and we will now proceed.

As you know, we are on item No. 85, departmental administration, which gives us the opportunity to discuss matters at large. Mr. Wilgress will have the floor. He has some statements to make.

Mr. Dana Wilgress, Under Secretary of State, Department of External Affairs, called:

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman, perhaps you will permit me, first of all, to take up matters arising out of the discussions of the previous two meetings. The members of the committee will recall that at the meeting last Thursday Mr. Pearson said he would have a statement prepared on the relationship of the Department of External Affairs to the International Service of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. I have this statement ready now and with your permission, Mr. Chairman, I propose to read it because I think it is of general interest to the members of the committee. The statement is as follows:

During the discussion on February 19 about the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation International Service the minister suggested and the committee agreed that a statement should be prepared in the department about the policies followed by the C.B.C.I.S. in its broadcasts to countries behind the iron curtain and about its relationships with the Department of External Affairs. I should like to give that statement to the committee.

The terms of the order-in-council establishing the International Service provide that it should work in consultation with the Department of External Affairs. Despite the physical difficulties presented by the location of the C.B.C.I.S. offices in Montreal this consultation has been constant and has developed gradually into an effective day to day liaison between us. I shall mention these arrangements in more detail later.

Members of the committee will recall the very full statement on the department's relationships with C.B.C.I.S. which the minister gave to the committee on May 30, 1951. I do not feel it necessary to retread all of the ground covered in that statement but for background purposes I should like to summarize briefly what was said at that time and then indicate how our relationships have developed since then.

The history of Canadian shortwave broadcasting falls into three periods—the first being the late war years when C.B.C.I.S. was established to broadcast to Canadian forces in Europe; the second period covering the early post-war years, when it was hoped that a period of peaceful international collaboration was in sight, and the third period which came upon us gradually with the growing threat of Soviet imperialism. In this last phase we have become more and more concerned in the "war of ideas", particularly in broadcasts to Europe.

Regarding our policy in these broadcasts, I should like to quote the following passage from the minister's statement in 1951: