

Mr. Jamieson: Is there not some conflict, Miss LaMarsh, between that statement and the one in the Bill itself:

...all Canadians are entitled to broadcasting service in English and French...

and this is the part that is important from my point of view

...as public funds become available;...

Does this suggest that extension is merely to go ahead as public funds are available?

Miss LaMarsh: No, it does not; but obviously Parliament does not have much say in the provision of private funds; and I do not think this presupposes for a moment that there will not be extensions by private operators.

There is the point—and this, of course, Mr. Jamieson, was discussed with the Canadian Association of Broadcasters—that the putting in of the words “private or public” would not really mean anything. Parliament’s only concern is about the provision of public funds. I suppose, as was considered when drafting the Bill, the part about funds could be dropped off completely but for the fact that you would then be left with a bare statement that it should be extended to all parts of Canada. I know that the day following its passage, the office of the responsible Minister would be heaped high with legitimate demands under that section for immediate service in both languages everywhere in the country.

Mr. Jamieson: I have a specific case of Saskatoon in mind, which is, I think, illustrative of the whole problem here, and which, in my view, indicates that the Bill is vague on this question. The CBC now has the necessary authorization to proceed in Saskatoon. It may also be that it has other licences which it has been granted but on which no construction has started. Let us assume—as has happened in this case, I take it—that there is going to be at least a delay in providing the funds for the construction of a particular station. Does this mean that the CBC can, in effect, sit on that licence indefinitely, or what is the position in areas that either have only single service or no service at all?

Miss LaMarsh: As you know, the BBG made the recommendation, but no licence has been issued.

• (10:20 a.m.)

Mr. Jamieson: But I take it there was an intention because it has now been announced

that they are not going to proceed. This seems to suggest that the original intention was to proceed with Saskatchewan.

Miss LaMarsh: The CBC made an application to the BBG recommending the granting of a licence. The government then decided in the interests of economy that there would not be an extension and the Prime Minister made an announcement to this effect.

Mr. Jamieson: I understand that part of it but does this now mean that the whole question, in so far as that specific application is concerned, is in abeyance or is the BBG now free to hear, let us say, a private application?

Miss LaMarsh: I should think so because no licence has been issued.

Mr. Jamieson: Forgive me for pressing this point but I think it is a key one here. If the original idea was, as the Bill states, that it was in the best public interest to put a private station and a publicly-owned station in that area, or in any area, this would now seem to suggest that we have to accept something less than what is considered ideal or most advisable.

Miss LaMarsh: What is left if there are no public stations...

Mr. Jamieson: For example, there would presumably be two private stations in that given section and there would not be total public service. The presence of the CBC would only be through a continuation of its affiliation with an existing private station.

Miss LaMarsh: In the Saskatoon situation I am not able to judge which is better. That is the function of the CRC.

Mr. Jamieson: I think the principle which is still quite valid is whether as a matter of public policy we intend to proceed toward the stage where a public service will be provided by the CBC which will run parallel with a private service or whether—and this comes back to my original question—we are going to continue the mix, because it seems to me that one or the other has to be stated. I do not think you can continue on an *ad hoc* basis because I believe the Saskatoon situation illustrates the problem that would arise.

Mr. Prittie: Mr. Chairman, is Mr. Jamieson not really asking if this is a permanent decision regarding Saskatoon or is it just temporary until public funds are available, possibly the year after next, to proceed?