

Radio Broadcasting

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): When the Prime Minister made his explanation of this bill he suggested that the revenue of the commission should be derived from receiving licences. This clause provides for not only receiving licences, but private commercial broadcasting licences, amateur broadcasting licences, and receipts arising out of the business of the commission under this act. That refers to advertising.

Mr. BENNETT: Under this act.

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): I wish to have the Prime Minister make it clear that the revenues of the commission are not necessarily confined to those from receiving licences, but include also such things as advertising.

Mr. BENNETT: Any sums of money that may be derived from any service rendered by the commission will be paid into the consolidated revenue fund as part of the revenue of the commission. It will be observed that in this bill we have endeavoured to establish the principle that the commission itself shall not handle this money—if I may use that word—but that it will pay it into the consolidated revenue fund, and parliament will vote, on the basis of what our revenues have been, the sums of money that the commission may have available. We do not want to meet an accumulated deficit, thereby injuring the value of the commission before it gets properly under way.

Mr. EULER: May I make an observation that comes to my mind after listening to what the Prime Minister has said with regard to possible deficits. Supposing there are surpluses, which might be set aside by the commission as a reserve for future expenditures; what would happen in such a case? I notice that the second paragraph of part (2), clause 14 provides:

Provided that if at the end of any fiscal year there is a balance of appropriated moneys unexpended or if the revenue from sources mentioned in the preceding subsection exceeds the amount appropriated, parliament may appropriate any such balance or excess in addition to any appropriation permitted hereunder.

I suppose that means that the excess would come into the consolidated revenue fund, and could be used for other purposes. If the commission has in mind the idea of having that reserve for its own purposes, I do not think that should be done.

Mr. BENNETT: It will be observed that this statute does not contemplate the possibility of the commission dealing with money,

[Mr. Bennett.]

other than to receive it and pay it into the consolidated revenue fund. As this work proceeds in accordance with the appropriation made by parliament from year to year, the drafts or cheques are drawn not by the commission itself but by the appropriate minister, or the appropriate authority, to meet the indebtedness incurred by the commission within the appropriation made by parliament. The money will always be in the consolidated revenue fund. When parliament makes its appropriation for one year, it is bound then by the expected revenues of that year. If however the revenues are larger and there is a surplus of \$200,000 or \$300,000 and parliament comes to make appropriations in the next year, the appropriation is not limited to the expected revenue of that year but also to the revenue that accrues from the accumulated surplus of the year before.

Mr. EULER: If there is a surplus taken from the owners of the receiving sets, and that money is used for other purposes, for purposes other than—

Mr. BENNETT: It cannot be.

Mr. EULER: If it cannot be I will be quite satisfied.

Mr. BENNETT: It cannot be. If my hon. friend will examine the language carefully he will observe that it is to meet the very suggestion he makes that that language is used. In the very nature of things it would have to be so deposited as to be available for the action of parliament. Since appropriations come from parliament, and as any surplus will be in the consolidated revenue fund, it will thus be available to meet the necessities of the commission during the succeeding year.

Mr. EULER: I may appear dull, but may I put it this way: If there is a surplus in the account, will parliament or the government have any power to use it for general purposes?

Mr. BENNETT: It would not have the power to expend it. But need I say to my hon. friend, who has been a minister of the crown, that in the consolidated revenue fund to-day there are accumulated payments of superannuation fund which are being used all the time. This money is not being spent, but it might be in use. It belongs to the radio commission, and to that commission only, subject to the direction of parliament.

Mr. EULER: I do not wish it to be used for other purposes, that is all.

Mr. YOUNG: The Prime Minister says there cannot be a deficit. He also said parliament