

Sales to the government will probably remain at their present level, whatever happens to the subsidy. Commercial sales could be affected. However, the National Association of Canadian Millers was unable to convince us of the importance of these consequences. The Department of Agriculture is keeping a close eye on the situation and if other developments occur, it will take the necessary action.

[English]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION—REQUEST FOR MORE LOCAL PROGRAMMING—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock): Mr. Speaker, on March 23 I brought to the attention of the Secretary of State (Mr. Faulkner) the growing concern across Canada regarding the centralization policy of the CBC. I asked him whether there would be a re-evaluation of that program to allow greater latitude for local programs within the Corporation. The Secretary of State answered with his usual cynical and bombastic brevity, which is the last refuge of the insecure and inept and incompetent. He said, "Does the hon. member not know that we have just finished putting up a brand new building in Vancouver and are planning one for Regina?"

● (2230)

I came across a statement made by the president of the CBC which reads as follows—this is with regard to culture: "That is what the CBC is all about—interpreting Canada to Canadians and contributing to their cultural vitality". That is both encouraging and disturbing. It is encouraging if it means the broad exposure of the various elements which make up Canadian society, that is, the ethnic, cultural, economic, and other factors which compose our society, to other segments of Canadian life. Let the people speak for themselves; let them be exposed to every other sector of the country, and let the audiences see and hear. This ought to be the objective of the corporation, and if this is the goal of the CBC and of its president, it is encouraging. It is discouraging if it means that a few elitist directors and producers in Toronto are to decide what we can see and hear.

I would bring to your attention, Mr. Speaker, a statement made by Mr. Gordon Hill, the President of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, with regard to the cutting back of the program Radio Noon to 15 minutes from the former length of one hour. He said:

We are tired of the fooling around by the top brass of the CBC who have allowed the citizen-owned radio and television networks to become a hive of protest for anarchists.

It seems it is the goal of the top echelon of the CBC to replace what in their estimation is the mundane and the ordinary with what is culturally proper. Maybe the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation ought to be renamed the Toronto Broadcasting Corporation.

Recently I received a letter from a farm broadcaster in the prairies who is concerned that they are losing their broadcasts there. As one writer put it, producers who want to put out programs must crawl on their bellies in Toronto; sometimes they get something, but more often they don't.

Those responsible for regional programs are continually being harassed either by interference or by being placed on

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a pauper's budget. For example, a program on the West Coast called "Klahanie," which is a nature program well received by the public, gets a budget of \$2,000. Take the case of "The Beachcombers." Toronto writers are always being foisted on that program in the west, and old John Hirsch in Toronto wants to give that story an editor from Toronto. He even wants to bring in casting from Toronto for that totally British Columbia region program. The final disgrace is that as of April 1, 1977, British Columbia will no longer have a regionally-produced 10 p.m. regional news hour. That will come from Toronto, too. Toronto knows best.

I am sure the Secretary of State has heard of the British Columbia Committee for CBC Reform which has recently been established by friends of the corporation, people who believe in the system, who like what it has done in the past but who are fearful of the trend which is developing.

The people who belong to this organization are not red-eyed radicals but responsible Canadians, and for the edification of the parliamentary secretary who is here on behalf of the Secretary of State I should like to read a few of the names of members of that committee, to mention, for example, Barry Broadfoot, of whom, I am sure, many hon. members have heard. Then there is Roderick Haig-Brown, a writer and naturalist of Campbell River; Barry Leach, director of environmental studies of the Douglas College, New Westminster; Dorothy Livesay, a well-known writer from Victoria; Grace MacInnis, a former member of parliament and supporter of the CBC; Ian McTaggart-Cowan, professor and consultant of Vancouver; Robin Skelton, writer and editor of the *Malahat Review*, Victoria; Simon Streatfeild, of North Vancouver, a conductor who is very well known in music circles in Vancouver; Victor White, who is director, special projects, of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.

These people are not the red-eyed radicals usually associated with protests; they are people concerned about the direction being taken by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. They have succeeded in their work. You can call it local colour if you will, but it is legitimate local colour.

Let me come back to the minister's answer. He said:

One of the more significant things the corporation has done in the last two years has been to decentralize, and this is manifest by new buildings in Vancouver—

Where in the world did he ever get the idea to decentralize an operation by putting up a new building? Surely even this naive minister ought to understand that the heart of any broadcasting system lies in the producers, the directors, and the casting of each of the individual programs. To think that a new building will fill that role shows the naiveté of this minister.

I challenge him to re-evaluate this "divine aegis" of the members of the staff in Toronto and to let some of the people from the regions act with the wisdom that is inherent in those regions. Let them project some of the idioms, colour and idiosyncracies, values and concerns, of the localities, and let the people of Canada know what they are.

Miss Coline Campbell (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, I am informed by the