

The advantages of abolishing the fee were that this would be popular with those now paying it; the cost of collection was high; many considered it unfair owing to evasions; and the present fee covered less than half of the C.B.C.'s expenses. The disadvantages would be that revenue would be lost when the costs of government and the dangers of inflation were increasing; the C.B.C. would be almost entirely dependent on appropriations by Parliament which might feel that it should control detailed operations; payment for services rendered was a reasonable principle and many were prepared to pay for the very real service provided by the C.B.C.; and, while the service brought varying benefits to different people, depending on the number and kinds of receiving sets they had, all taxpayers would have to make a contribution if the fee were abolished.

35. The Minister of Transport thought that certain assurances had been given regarding abolition of the license fee which might make retention difficult. Further, it was becoming increasingly difficult to obtain the services of competent collectors; enforcement costs were high.

36. The Minister of National Revenue felt present methods of collection required review. He doubted whether the C.B.C. was the appropriate agency to collect an increased license fee.

37. Mr. Abbott said that, if his proposals were accepted, a substantial effort would have to be made to improve the collection of fees in order to secure revenue and attain greater equity. The possibility of using Post Office letter carriers in this connection might be considered.

38. The Prime Minister thought that, while the amount of the proposed statutory grant should be based on a per capita figure, the legislation to be drafted on this question should not indicate the basis of calculation but only the amount of the grant.

As it would probably be desired to establish a fairly substantial license fee for television receiving sets, it would be unwise to abolish the radio license fee until the time came for settling the question of the television fee.

001575

Privy Council Office
Bureau du Conseil privé

RG 2, A5a,
Vol. 2648

National Archives of Canada
Archives nationales du Canada