

have some assurance from the government that, should the cost of radio licences become excessive, some means will be devised of meeting that situation. The radio is one advantage which the people in the rural districts have enjoyed at a very reasonable cost, and I, for one, should not like to see the radio licence raised to an excessive point, because it would be a great hardship on the poorer people in the rural districts in my province at any rate.

Mr. MALCOLM: Before this bill leaves the committee, I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether, in his opinion, this legislation will cover television which is probably the most important feature on the horizon in connection with general broadcasting.

Mr. BENNETT: Undoubtedly the legislation is so framed as to cover any changes that may be made for the use of any new scientific knowledge applied to broadcasting. It would of course cover television as a feature of broadcasting. The definition clause is, I think, sufficiently broad to cover those matters. Paragraph (a) reads:

"Broadcasting" means the dissemination of radioelectric communications intended to be received by the public, either directly or through the medium of relay stations.

Paragraph (h), which defines "radio" reads:

"Radio" means and includes radiotelegraph, radiotelephone and any other form of radioelectric communication including the wireless transmission of writing, signs, signals, pictures, and sounds of all kinds by means of Hertzian waves.

I think that is sufficiently broad.

As regards the question raised by the hon. member for Assiniboia, he must realize that as parliament will determine the question of expenditures, the question of licence fees charged must also be reviewed every year by parliament.

Mr. SPEAKMAN: I had it in mind to ask a question similar to that asked by the ex-Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Malcolm). Another development that is now, I think, well within sight, is transmission of power by the use of wireless energy. There is no question that this is now a scientific possibility and I have no doubt in the next few years it will become commercially possible. I trust, under this legislation or subsequent amendments, we shall still retain our control over the air for that purpose also.

Mr. BENNETT: This legislation does not contemplate the control of the transmission of electric energy, which, so far as we now know, is transmitted by wires and not otherwise.

[Mr. R. McKenzie.]

If the time comes when wireless transmission of electric energy is a commercial possibility, no doubt this parliament having control of the air, as representing the people of the dominion, would be able to deal with the matter.

Mr. SPEAKMAN: That is what I had in mind. Our control over the air is now well established.

Mr. MERCIER (Laurier-Outremont): Has the Prime Minister any idea as to what amount will have to be expended in expropriating the stations already in existence?

Mr. BENNETT: That would be a matter of gradual determination and it would be very difficult to say what the value of the stations now in existence would be, having regard to the fact of allowance for obsolescence.

Mr. MERCIER (Laurier-Outremont): How many stations are there?

Mr. BENNETT: Sixty-six altogether, the chairman of the committee informs me.

Progress reported.

SUPPLY

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

The house in committee of supply, Mr. LaVergne in the chair.

Agriculture—fruit, \$390,200.

Mr. MacLEAN: Has the minister any information regarding the dismissal of the fruit and vegetable inspector at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, and the appointment of his successor?

Hon. ROBERT WEIR (Minister of Agriculture): What is his name?

Mr. MacLEAN: Chester E. Shaw.

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): My information is that he was discharged for political partisanship and the position has not yet been filled.

Mr. MacLEAN: Has he asked for a public investigation or hearing of his case?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): My understanding is that he has not.

Mr. MacLEAN: The file that has been brought down shows that he has asked for a public hearing and that one has been refused; would the minister consider granting his request?

Mr. WEIR (Melfort): I shall be glad to look into the matter and at the next sitting of the committee give any further information I can.