

EVIDENCE

NOVEMBER 15, 1951

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Dunton would you kindly proceed.

A. Davidson Dunton, Chairman, Board of Governors, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, called:

The WITNESS: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen. We are pleased to be once more before a special committee of the House of Commons. We have a responsibility to the people of Canada which is exercised as direct responsibility to parliament and we are very glad that parliament takes the interest in its child by having a special committee to review its activities, aims and policies. Our feelings are always a little mixed about coming before a committee. It is, of course, the proper thing, but it means a good deal of work for us. I would ask the committee if they could, as in other years, in the interest of the work and economy on our part in effort and time, indicate what particular information they might like in advance, and then we could have it ready for the committee and have the appropriate officials here at the time. We have no brief as such to put before you. Our brief is contained in the annual report which this year comes up to the committee a good deal nearer the date on which this committee is meeting.

Since the end of March there have not been any major changes or great developments in the activities of the corporation. Perhaps a highlight of the year so far has been the broadcasting on the royal tour. I imagine members may have their own opinions about that. We have had some criticism; on the other hand we have had a great deal of favourable comment right across the country. People seem to appreciate very highly the long broadcasting of the royal tour. For the corporation, of course, and its management, it is a very major operation. This time it had to be done very quickly, at very short notice. Great mobilization of manpower and equipment had to be carried out, and I hope members of the committee will agree that on the whole it was quite a major achievement. If you wish more details now or later Mr. Bushnell, our Director General of Programs, is here. He was actually attached to the organizers of the tour, working on all radio arrangements, but of course he saw what the C.B.C. was doing in particular and could describe to you quite an imposing operation. I was, Mr. Chairman, going to say something about the general financial position of the corporation since the annual report, but perhaps you desire me to deal with that later.

The CHAIRMAN: I believe the committee agreed to the suggestion of the agenda committee to confine ourselves at the present time to the policies, aims, regulations and development of the corporation, and defer our talk about revenues and expenditures until we have the bill before us. If we do that, I think we will proceed in a more orderly manner.

The WITNESS: Aims, of course, have to be very carefully related to revenues that we see coming in. Perhaps it will be useful to the committee if I just mention some of the things that we see as being in that heading. The first is that of maintaining our present services and our standards, and that can only be made possible through a change in the revenue structure. I would like to refer briefly to some of the things that appear necessary to us in the future. A number of them have been needed for several years now, but we have not