

The Budget—Mr. Philpott

in Halifax. We also have private stations already licensed for Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, Regina, Fort William and Port Arthur, Sudbury, Windsor, Kitchener, London, Peterborough, Kingston, Quebec, Sherbrooke, Rimouski, Saint John, New Brunswick, and Sydney, Nova Scotia.

But the fact that Canada, even with that number of stations actually in operation or already licensed, lags very far behind the United States where 253 standard band television stations are already in operation, and that does not include the 129 ultra high frequency stations. At the beginning of this year Canada had a total of 365,400 sets in operation compared with some 12 million to 15 million sets in operation in the United States. What I am suggesting and what I am urging for the consideration of the house is that in our television policy we should carry out what seems to me to be what is right in line with the genius of our whole Canadian two-culture set-up, and especially at the basis of Liberal ideology. We should allow the fullest free development of both types of television.

We should of course complete and make strong the coast-to-coast national C.B.C. television set-up. Let us make up our minds always to keep the C.B.C., so far as television is concerned, in the same position that it occupies in the radio field, the dominant factor in the national picture or, if you want to call it that, the senior partner. But whatever we do let us never be guilty of holding back and frustrating the free development of free enterprise when free enterprise has a certain job to do in this Dominion of Canada.

When I look at our country and see, for instance, that in Vancouver alone there are something like three vacancies—there are certainly two—and that in almost every great city in Canada there is now only one C.B.C. station and listeners have to tune in private stations in the United States if they want a change of diet, then I suggest that the time is very close at hand when we can carry out the government policy suggested by the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. McCann) last year

and give the green light to free enterprise television stations where they are needed to fill out the picture.

I do not regard free enterprise privately-owned radio or television stations as poor relations in any way or, as some might say, country cousins of whom we are just a little bit ashamed. Certainly they are not in any way, shape or form second-class citizens. I look for the time when the full speed ahead signal will be given to private television station owners in Canada to go ahead and do the job to the very best of their ability.

I am not one of those who has as little confidence in public ownership and public operation of the C.B.C. as one gentleman with whom I was talking the other day. He was in favour of never allowing the private television interests to go ahead because he feared that if they did so in such cities as Toronto, Winnipeg, Montreal and Vancouver the C.B.C. would not be able to survive under free competition. On the contrary, Mr. Speaker, I have never yet seen a city which was not a better city if it had two good live newspapers competing. I have never seen a country which was not a better country if it had two live political parties competing, the one ready to throw the other out if and when it got the chance through the people tiring of the other party.

Therefore I suggest that the time is rapidly approaching when we should give the private radio stations, which have hitherto been held back from applying in the great metropolitan centres where the C.B.C. has had a justifiable monopoly up to the present time, a chance to go full speed ahead and make a two-fisted job of television in Canada.

On motion of Mr. Winch the debate was adjourned.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Abbott: I move that the house do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to and the house adjourned at 5.19 p.m. until Monday, April 26, 1954, at 2.30 p.m.