

was brought about. If the information that has come to my hand is correct, as to how it was brought about, then I think the matter is extremely serious. I do not wish to talk out the minister's item; on the contrary I wish to cooperate with him. But it has been brought to my attention, whether rightly or wrongly, that pressure was brought to bear upon the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation by the newspaper fraternity of this country. It is reported to me that in the January 15 number of a paper called "Marketing", published in Toronto, there appears the following reference to a certain meeting which was held:

A constructive suggestion was made that if the CBC would seek to secure its needed additional revenue by increasing the licence fee on radio sets, the press would stand back of it and help the public realize that such increase was just and necessary; otherwise the press would have to consider the advisability of revealing what the CBC is doing in flooding Canada with U.S. programs.

A statement like that is exceedingly serious. Sitting here, I have been wondering what authority parliament has over the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. If pressure can be brought to bear upon it by such means in one connection, it looks to me as if it can be brought to bear in another. I am greatly alarmed about the matter.

Mr. HOWE: There was absolutely no pressure brought to bear. We knew, when we undertook the program of high-powered stations across Canada, that such a program could not be undertaken with the revenues then available, but the change was not made as a result of pressure.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): I wish to bring to the attention of the minister a matter of importance in connection with the Radio Patent Act. There have been complaints from a number of people who have brought in radios from the United States—

Mr. SPENCE: Let them buy them here.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): But the point is that the government gave them the privilege of bringing radios provided they were valued under \$100, and an employee of one concern in Calgary told me that there were three hundred convictions against people who had brought in radios. Would the minister inform us how this matter will be dealt with? What are we going to do about the matter?

Mr. HOWE: The whole question is in the hands of the tariff board. They are making a thorough investigation and we expect to have a report in due course.

[Mr. Blackmore.]

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): In regard to this act?

Mr. TUSTIN: It has been represented to me that there has been a great deal of discrimination in the matter of advertising charges. Is there any difference between the rates which are charged United States advertisers and those which are charged Canadians?

Mr. HOWE: Not so far as I am aware.

Item agreed to.

Progress reported.

On motion of Mr. Lapointe (Quebec East) the house adjourned at 6 p.m.

Monday, March 7, 1938

The house met at three o'clock.

RIGHT HON. R. B. BENNETT

REPORTED RETIREMENT FROM PARTY LEADERSHIP
—OBSERVATIONS OF THE PRIME MINISTER

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, before we begin the afternoon's proceedings may I be permitted to say to my right hon. friend the leader of the opposition (Mr. Bennett) how sorry I have been to learn that because of an impaired condition of his heart he has found it necessary to inform his party that he will not be able beyond a few months to continue to hold the position of its leader which position he has held during the past ten years. I know this expression of regret will be equally felt by all hon. members, and I hope that the right hon. gentleman will permit me to express this feeling toward him on behalf of the house.

I have often marvelled that my right hon. friend found it possible to assume the great amount of work he has undertaken, knowing something of the tremendous strain which, as leader of a political party, part of the time leader of the government and part of the time leader of the opposition, he has had to endure. Knowing how completely my right hon. friend's life has been devoted to public affairs, how conscientiously he has performed his duties as leader of his party and in the house, I can imagine how distressing it must be to him to feel that, because of the condition of his health, he is obliged to relinquish some part of those duties. In the decision which has become imperative he has my sincere sympathy.

I would express the hope that with release from extra strain, and some of the exacting burdens he has borne my right hon. friend's health may be speedily restored; that the