

licences go to the post office of their own accord, and only those who have to be reminded, those who have to be dunned a few times by the collector, are left to these commission men.

I do not think the post offices would mind if the sale of licences were taken from them because there is very little in it for the postmaster. The man on commission goes to a radio owner who says he will see about the matter. The collector goes away, and in the meantime the radio owner, having been reminded, goes around to the post office and gets the licence, the result being that the post office gets the sale after the groundwork has been done by the man on commission. Obviously, under these circumstances, it is hardly possible to get anyone to take on this commission work. It is necessary that there should be such collections; otherwise people will simply not get their licences, and you could not put on a force large enough to prosecute them, the amounts being so small. I suggest that one man be put on the job on the first of April, or whatever time is thought best, and that he be allowed to push the thing right through for the year. But it should be given to him alone. I suggest that it be taken from the post offices and stores and given to one man who will understand that he will get all there is in it; that he will get the cream of the business as well as the business among those who are reluctant to buy licences. I know of one man who has called on a radio owner five times, the net result to him being twenty cents. That does not pay. If you want the work well done, you must give it to one man only.

Mr. HOWE: We have considered very carefully the method of collection. The fundamental fact that we must keep in mind is that not too large a proportion of the \$2 shall go towards the cost of collection. The licence fee is a compulsory payment; we compel people to pay it, and if they do not, they are breaking the law. There is no particular day on which anyone must pay, and if payment is compulsory there must be some convenient place where people can go and get their licences. We did think seriously of eliminating the post offices and putting the business into the hands of collectors, but the same difficulty would apply there. The collector, in rural constituencies particularly, would have a large area to cover and would be required to call at least once upon every radio owner, and the housewife might not find it convenient to pay on the particular day on which he called.

[Mr. Neill.]

Whether she would mail the fee to the collector, we are not sure. I think it is fundamental that we should give people an opportunity to pay their licence fees reasonably at their convenience. As a matter of fact, we allow six months before exerting pressure.

I have great respect for my hon. friend's judgment, and if he believes that the scheme he suggests would work well in his own constituency, we are willing to try it there. I have made that offer to one or two members of constituencies where we know we are not collecting the proper portion of fees. If my hon. friend will call on the radio department, we shall be glad to work out a scheme for his riding.

Mr. MacINNIS: Has it been definitely decided to increase the licence from \$2 to \$2.50?

Mr. HOWE: An order in council has been issued to that effect.

Mr. MacINNIS: I have received, as no doubt most other hon. members have, a great many complaints against the increase. Can the minister tell us what the licence holder will get either in better programs or in reception for the additional fifty cents? I do not wish to waste my time or the time of others in replying to letters in this regard if there is some possible answer to justify the increase. If the minister can tell us—

Mr. HAMILTON: More will get reception, who do not get it now.

Mr. MacINNIS: —what value they are going to get for the increase of fifty cents, I have no doubt they will be satisfied to pay it.

Mr. HOWE: On each vote we are told that if we had more money to spend we could do a better job. It is the same here. If we had another hundred thousand dollars to pay for suppressing radio interference, we would be able to suppress more of it. The additional revenue is to be used in two directions. One is to increase broadcast coverage where at the moment coverage is very poor, and the other is to improve programs. As I said some days ago, in speaking during the debate on the address, tastes in programs differ. Whether my hon. friend will think we have improved the programs, I cannot say. Whether anyone else will think so, I cannot say, but we are going to spend more money on programs with the hope that we shall better satisfy listeners with Canadian built programs. As I say, this is an intangible matter, and my hon. friend and I could debate for a long time whether one program was better or worse than another, probably without settling