

Mr. Fortier: Are you not of the opinion that the CBC ought to be barred from commercial competition?

Mr. Giguère: Not at all. We believe that it is necessary to have competitors at the commercial level in all the markets in the Province of Quebec and, if you wish, to carry it further, we might say markets throughout Canada. What we do not agree with, though, is that the CBC should subsidize the sponsors. That is what is happening.

[Text]

The Chairman: May I just ask at this point a question which is interesting to me. I do not know the answer to it. Perhaps you do not know either but is the CBC more commercial in French on its French network than it is on the English network? Do you know off hand.

Mr. Giguère: Off hand I would say it is more commercial.

The Chairman: Is it about the same?

Mr. Giguère: It is about the same. I would say that, generally, the criteria or the basis of the commercial aspect of the activities would be the same.

The Chairman: I take your point. I just wondered if it was more commercial.

[Translation]

Mr. Fortier: If your representations are received favourably and the CBC agrees to raise its advertising rates to a more reasonable level, will you then concede to the CBC the role it now plays in the field of broadcasting, or do you advocate a change in this role?

Mr. Giguère: In saying that, are you talking about its role as a broadcaster?

Mr. Fortier: Yes.

Mr. Giguère: You are putting me in a difficult position because I would like to judge the CBC with greater objectivity.

Mr. Fortier: I am sure you are going to do so.

Mr. Giguère: I would like at least to try to be objective. I think the CBC...

Mr. Fortier: When they came, they were asked what they thought of you.

Mr. Giguère: The CBC plays a very important role, a vital role, not only in French but in English too all over the country. I believe that the CBC does things that are altogether outstanding and produces broadcasts of excellent quality in some sectors.

Mr. Fortier: Broadcasts that the private stations could not produce. Is that what you are getting at?

Mr. Giguère: Yes. It is.

Mr. Fortier: Can you give some examples?

Mr. Giguère: I shall give you an example. If a concert with 110 musicians is broadcast on a Sunday evening, you can quite understand that the expenses on that occasion are astronomical. In private industry—I am speaking for us at Channel 10 and the stations which work with us—we do not have that kind of money, because such a broadcast is actually a purely cultural endeavour. And from that angle, the CBC has done a great deal in the past and I believe—and this is only an opinion—that the hand of the CBC French network has been forced over the past 4 or 5 years. Perhaps in some cases the cultural aspect of the broadcasts has been trimmed down, if you wish. And then again, we might say that this is constructive, that it is perhaps time the CBC realized that, in order to enter into dialogue with the public, one may produce avant-garde broadcasts and broadcasts of an extremely high cultural nature but, from another standpoint, it is essential not to get so far ahead of the audience that it cannot catch up.

In this respect it has to be acknowledged that, on the French network over the past four years, the CBC has been much more competitive than it ever was at the programme level. And to some extent this is what gave rise to my comments on the commercial aspect, because that aspect is definitely competitive. When the cultural level is mentioned, it is obvious—I am talking, you know, about the purely cultural (symphonies, stage productions, operas and troupes that are going to charge something like \$85,000 or \$100,000 for the presentation). It is obvious that that is one of the roles of the CBC. I believe that the CBC does in part fulfil its role.

There is need for the CBC, as there is need for all broadcasters, moreover, to carry on a continual analysis and evaluation, because they are in a society which is passing through an exceedingly rapid phenomenon of evolution. Therefore, the broadcaster who seeks to reflect his impression of it and who wishes, of necessity, to keep ahead of it, is obliged to reappraise his attitudes towards his audience. And it is perhaps something the Corporation does not do enough of. That is a very general