

The Budget—Mr. Philpott

year by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. That figure amounts to \$24.8 million. That, of course, does not include a loan of \$4.7 million which was made by the treasury in the year 1953-54. We all know that that is a considerable increase from the expenditures of the past. That is, the grant has gone up from \$8.2 million in 1953 to \$24.8 million in the present year. That amount, of course, is going to come out of the special 15 per cent tax which is imposed on radio and television sets, tubes and accessories. When we have that amount of money involved, and even if it was not concerned with something of which we are all so justifiably proud as we are of the C.B.C., I would think it would be the duty of every one of us to give a long and careful look at that expenditure. I myself have had the privilege of working with the C.B.C. over a great many years, although not for the last several years. I have also had the privilege of working for private radio stations for a good many years. I thus had the privilege of perhaps getting a close-up view of how the two of them operate and what their peculiar difficulties are.

When you look back at the growth of the C.B.C., you see that it has not come up as a straight agency of the government. If there is anything of which they are most jealous and proud I think it is of the fact that they are not a subsidiary agency of the government, taking their instructions from the government and that they certainly do not follow any particular political line. If we wanted to name the things about the C.B.C. of which we are all most justifiably proud I think the chief one would be that in its political basis it is absolutely impartial, absolutely fair and that it has worked out the most fair and just system, especially at election times, that I know of in any country which it has ever been my privilege to visit.

If you look back at the period of growth of the C.B.C. you will see that we allowed it to develop. Nobody ever had a plan in advance which was carried right through to a successful completion. For instance, in the Aird report the idea was that eventually the Dominion of Canada would take over all radio broadcasting. As we know, as the years went on, that became an impractical policy and just by the pressure of events it did not happen. We also know—and I think this is an extremely important point for us to realize—that when the C.B.C. first came into operation and when there was a limited number of private stations—that is auxiliary stations or stations in separate operation from the C.B.C.—the audience of the Canadian people was divided on a much different basis from that on which it is divided now.

[Mr. Philpott.]

A large percentage of Canadian listeners did not listen at all to Canadian radio stations, either public or private, but rather tuned in to United States stations. Hence, as we know, over the years there grew up, shall I say, the peculiarly Canadian system which we now have in Canada, with the C.B.C. the dominant party—some would say the senior partner—in the whole radio set-up in Canada, but nevertheless with the private stations—the commercial stations as they are sometimes called—performing an extremely useful and valuable public service without any kind of subsidy from the treasury of this country.

We are now faced with the rise of a new medium; and I say that television, as it is coming up in North America and all over the world, is a utility of such tremendous potential that it may have a far greater effect on the lives of all of us, and especially on the lives of our children, than radio has had in the past, or possibly even the press. What I am anxious to stress today, Mr. Speaker, is that it would be a mistake for us to try to duplicate exactly in the television field the set-up that we have had in the radio field. I note that on March 30 of 1953 the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. McCann) set forth clearly the government's policy with regard to television in Canada. As reported at page 3393 of *Hansard*, among other things he said this:

These words make it clear that it was not the policy of the government to create monopoly in television or to limit any one area indefinitely to one television station.

The minister was of course explaining the necessity of having coverage right across the country, that we should have either a public station or a private station in every centre right across the country before there could be any duplication. Then he added:

... it may not be long before there is a sufficient degree of national coverage to justify the government and the C.B.C. giving consideration to permitting two and perhaps in some cases more than two stations in certain areas. It is anticipated that, in due course, private stations will be permitted in areas covered by C.B.C. stations, and the C.B.C. may establish stations in some areas originally covered by private stations.

I think that is a statement of policy with which everyone can agree. It is a good, sensible, common-sense statement setting forth the position of the government at that time, but I submit that the time is rapidly approaching to follow the course set forth by the minister. I look at the television set-up in Canada as it exists today and this is how it shapes up to me. We have C.B.C. stations actually operating in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal, with one in the process of being established