

Supply—Secretary of State

communicating with my constituents in the Yukon is through the medium of the C.B.C. I have no private radio stations to help me in the Yukon.

Mr. Pickersgill: I wonder whether the hon. gentleman's point which he is raising would not more properly be raised on the C.B.C. than on the B.B.G.?

Mr. Nielsen: I thought we were on the C.B.C.

Mr. Pickersgill: No, this is the B.B.G.

The Chairman: This is vote No. 1, board of broadcast governors.

Mr. Scott: Mr. Chairman, I should like to raise at this point a matter which has been receiving very widespread publicity in the Toronto newspapers, and I presume other similar news media, and that is the decision of the C.B.C. to convert the programs of radio station CJBC in Toronto from English speaking to French speaking. The reason I raise the matter under this item is that the suggestion I want to urge on the government is properly brought, I think, under this particular item of the board of broadcast governors. It is always difficult to talk of the C.B.C. because one does not like to be put into the category of attempting in any way to exercise political interference with a crown corporation. But at the same time this corporation has taken a decision and instituted a procedure in Toronto which appears to be widely opposed by a good many people. I think it is our duty as representatives of some of those people to raise this matter and to draw to the attention of the government the seriousness with which this move is being viewed in some very significant quarters in the city of Toronto. The background is well known to all and it has been set out in a release issued by Mr. R. C. Fraser who is a vice president of corporate affairs of the C.B.C. This document, released on September 20, traces the background of CJBC and its position in the C.B.C. national network and it outlines the reasons advanced by the corporation for the initial decision to carry French language broadcasts over CJBC. It also sets out reasons why the corporation has now reached a decision that by October of 1964 the station shall become completely French speaking. It is most unfortunate that this document was not published some considerable time ago. One of the difficulties, now, is that the C.B.C. has to some extent botched the whole job of public relations. I think there is a case to be made out for a French speaking station in the city of Toronto. All the statistics indicate that a fairly wide audience would be interested. But because,

at the beginning, this was sprung on everybody without a good deal of advance preparation and public relations work, this matter is now being blown up into a great issue in the city.

I want to make it clear that as a representative of this party and of one of the Toronto constituencies I am not taking the position that French speaking or bilingual people should not have a station in the Toronto area. But station CJBC has built up a wide listening audience. It has developed a high calibre of programming and attracted the loyal allegiance of a large number of listeners—between 165,000 and 170,000, I think. Because of the manner in which this change has been announced by the C.B.C., the whole argument in its justification has become misunderstood. The most serious aspect of this situation is that many of us are coming to the conclusion, from work in our constituencies and surveys made, that there is growing in Toronto an increasingly widespread anti-Quebec feeling. This is a disturbing element, but it is a real one and it is easily perceived by anyone who tries to assess the feelings of his constituency. I recently completed a survey of my riding and the most significant thing about it, as the returns came back, was the growing anti-French sentiment. I think this arises because all that is being heard in English speaking Canada are the voices of the demagogues, the voices of the extremists—the people who are saying to English Canada: You must do this, or that, or it is the end of confederation. It is only because an extreme point of view is getting through to English Canada that this reaction is building up. But because of the way in which the C.B.C. is handling this matter, its decision to make this station French speaking is likely to be caught up in this anti-Quebec move which is developing, and I do not think we should permit this to happen. I do not think this is a decision about which we should make inflammatory speeches.

It may be that the case of the C.B.C. is unassailable. However, to date they have been unable to convince us that there is no other way of meeting the needs of the French speaking or bilingual people in Toronto. No satisfactory explanation has been given why we should be deprived of one of our largest and best English speaking stations. If an examination of the circumstances convinces everyone that there is no other technical solution which would provide a French program, then I think the C.B.C. would have a strong case, perhaps even an unassailable case. But this has not been done to date and the whole question has been so botched by the C.B.C. from a public relations point of view that