

*Broadcasting*

which should move along calmly from point to point in order to cover the whole subject is the place to be continually jabbing and prodding with the kind of political charges which cause the meetings to flare up, send the newsmen scurrying for telephones and, in effect, interrupt the smooth progress of the committee's work.

I hope that this session the committee will have a new chairman because of the elevation to ministerial level of the hon. member for London (Mr. Halpenny), and that we shall now have a chairman who will be able to direct the committee in a smooth and cool manner.

In terms of ad hoc problems with which the committee might deal—if the minister is not prepared to give an undertaking that the government wishes the committee, and will so direct the chairman, to review the Broadcasting Act—the hon. member who spoke for the Liberal party stressed the question of the principle of licensing, and reiterated his doubts about the television licence which was awarded in Toronto. I know I heard a story the other day about one of the producers of this new concern who was told by the management that he must remember this was “a Conservative television station”.

I do not attach too much credit to that particular story, but I do think this system of awarding television licences, as we see it in operation in the Toronto area, raises problems for the C.B.C. itself. I look at the Toronto stations, particularly the one which is now providing television as it ought to be, and I see a close connection with a newspaper, the *Telegram*, which I think openly supports, editorially, the present government. I do not complain about that as such, but when I look at the C.B.C. I get more and more the impression that it is the extension of another Toronto newspaper, the *Toronto Star*. Perhaps I should not put it as blatantly as that, but I know that a number of the headliners who work for C.B.C. television also work for the *Star* and made their reputations on the C.B.C. before they became what could be called valuable properties and were hired by the *Star*. Five or six of the great hired by the channel 6 happen to be employed by that newspaper.

If I have any preference it would be for the *Star* as compared with the *Telegram*, because I think it is the more interesting newspaper, but it seems to me we have created a situation where the two evening newspapers in the city, each of them somewhat given to sensationalism, have definite links with the two television stations in Toronto. I do not know how a parliamentary committee can apply its wisdom to this situation, but it

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does seem to me that our licensing system has got us into what could be quite a competitive log jam. I suppose the people in Toronto area will be the final judges, but the question of the principle behind the T.V. licence awards to newspaper owners is certainly something we should know more about.

There is a case, and I should like to see the committee deal with it, relating to the Prince George television station. I have had communications from that area both of a general and of a particular nature which would indicate that here, perhaps more clearly than elsewhere, political influence has been at work, but again I do not know whether this is the kind of thing which should be investigated in detail before a parliamentary committee. Certainly the people who write to members of this house think it should. I have also received a letter or two from the Halifax area indicating that political influences have been at work there as well.

I mention these things to show that the committee could spend its whole career dealing with charges of political favouritism in connection with licensing. I think the best way to approach the licensing problem would be to get the head of the board of broadcast governors before us, forget about other witnesses, and keep pressing and questioning him, perhaps in continuous session for two or three days, in order to get the whole thing cleared up through his point of view. I suggest that cross-examination of Dr. Stewart might in the long run tell us more, if we persisted, than an attempt to investigate charges of political favouritism in all parts of the country where licences have been awarded.

At the same time, I know that such cross-examination would be difficult. As I think anyone who has tried to examine Dr. Stewart will realize, he is very quick on his feet and is a master at shifting his ground. I do not mean by this that he is Machiavellian, but he is extremely careful. I think that should be the challenge to the committee, and we will see what we can do.

Another point which it seems to me the committee might examine, both with the head of the C.B.C., Mr. Ouimet, and Dr. Stewart, is the effect of what might be called the C.B.C.'s new policy of commercialism. I know this is a reflection of the ukase or the request or the suggestion contained in both the Fowler report and the report of the broadcasting committee of two years ago that the corporation should go out after more advertising revenue, but in the process this