

*Broadcasting*

the St. Laurent government he will find no evidence of delays such as are taking place now in the calling of by-elections.

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****LAOS—REASSEMBLING OF SUPERVISORY COMMISSION**

On the orders of the day:

**Hon. Paul Martin (Essex East):** I wish to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. Is the minister in a position to say whether any progress has been made respecting the proposal for the reactivation of the truce supervisory commission in Laos in the light of the statement made by the President of the United States a day and a half ago.

**Hon. Howard C. Green (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** The situation at the present time with regard to Laos is that the United Kingdom, as one of the two co-chairmen of the Geneva conference of 1954, submitted to the Soviet union just the other day a draft letter to India as chairman of the international supervisory commission. This was done some days ago, but as yet the Soviet union has not said whether this letter is satisfactory.

If agreement should be reached between these two co-chairmen on the letter to be dispatched to the government of India I am very hopeful there would be some quick action. The proposal is that India send a representative to interview the king of Laos, and if consent could be obtained from the constitutional authorities of Laos to the commission coming into the country, then Canada, for her part, would at once name a commissioner and I think the commission would begin to function.

**BROADCASTING****APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE ON RADIO AND TELEVISION**

The house resumed from Wednesday, January 18, consideration of the motion by the Hon. George C. Nowlan (Minister of National Revenue):

That a special committee be appointed on broadcasting to consider radio and television broadcasting with power to examine and inquire into the matters herein referred to and to report from time to time their observations and opinions thereon and to send for persons, papers and records;

That the committee have power to print such papers and evidence from day to day as may be deemed advisable or necessary;

That the committee shall consist of 35 members; That standing orders 66 and 67 be suspended in relation thereto.

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

**Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East):** Mr. Speaker, at the time of adjournment when this motion was previously before the house I was stressing my sincere hope that when this committee meets it will give very serious consideration to the interpretation which is being placed by the board of broadcast governors on that section of the regulations which deals with controversial broadcasts. It is only in this past year that I have heard any criticism of previous interpretations of this regulation, but from my own knowledge I am convinced that the interpretation presently being placed on this rule concerning controversial broadcasts is of such a nature as to be in danger of wrecking some of the finest radio programs in this country.

All I want to do this morning is to give one illustration, because I feel this matter is of such importance that it should receive the earnest attention of the committee. I intend to make reference only to the program which is known as "Town Meeting in Canada". This program was founded on November 5, 1943, and originates from station CJOR in Vancouver. It was begun as a radio program of the discussion type, and its declared purpose was to promote justice, tolerance and reason through an informed public.

Since this program was founded nearly 17 years ago many prominent Canadians, many of whom are in this house at the present time, in the realms of politics, education, economics, religion, industry, trade unions and agriculture, as well as internationalists and ex-ambassadors, have appeared on it. I believe I am right in saying that up to the present time there have been approximately 880 continuous weekly programs extending over a period of approximately sixteen and one half years. For that length of time the program was free from interference or criticism regarding the policy of providing an opportunity for the expression of major points of view on controversial issues. However, since February 14 last the board of broadcast governors on two occasions have prohibited the right of broadcast.

With respect to one program dealing with a trade union jurisdictional dispute, they prohibited the right to broadcast not because it was a controversial matter but because at the last moment one party failed to appear when the program was about to be taped to go on the air. At that time the debate was on the question, what is the international issue involved in this dispute?

On a second occasion the subject of the broadcast was, what are the national issues between the Conservatives and Liberals? The program was accepted by both parties, but at the last moment one of the parties failed to turn up and of course the broadcast had