

Canadian Broadcasting Policy

licences to broadcast. In doing so we asked for certain commitments. I shall give you one example of what I mean, Mr. Chairman.

Let us take a private television station in Toronto with the largest potential market in English Canada. I had some public argument with Mr. Bassett, the owner of that station, and looked up the promises which the promoters of the station made when they applied to the B.B.G., for their licence. There were a number of applicants for that licence in Toronto. They were asked to submit detailed proposals on the kind of broadcasting they would do, and I take it that their proposals and applications were most important factors in deciding who would get the licence.

I would hate to think that the reason Mr. Bassett and his group got the licence in Toronto was that Mr. Bassett was a Conservative and there was a Conservative government in power at the time. I would hate to think that he and the other applicants were asked to waste a lot of time and money preparing their applications unless there was an important reason for those detailed applications, namely that the applications and information contained in them would be a big factor in deciding who would get the licence.

Here is what Mr. Bassett promised to do. In the field of "drama and specials" Mr. Bassett promised the B.B.G. that if his group got the licence it would produce a program called Canadian Playhouse with five performances a year. I presume that meant five individual hour long plays a year. He promised that there would be at least one performance yearly by the Toronto Symphony, one performance by the Canadian Opera Company, one performance by the National Ballet Company, and one performance by the Stratford group.

In the field of talent development he promised three programs entitled Search for Talent, Screen Test and Barber Shop, each to run for 25 minutes per week. In the field of light entertainment he promised a personality show lasting an hour and a quarter three times a week. In the field of women's affairs he promised a half hour program for Women Only, three times a week. In the field of music he promised three programs weekly, each of 25 minutes duration, Piano Quartet, Sound of Jazz, and Top Ten. For the ethnic groups—Toronto is becoming a city with large ethnic minorities, which I think is good—he promised two programs, Polka Party and Romance From Other Lands, each for 25 minutes a week.

Had these promises been fulfilled the kind of campaign which ACTRA is carrying on would be largely unnecessary because a great number of Canadian artists, producers and directors would have been employed. What did Mr. Bassett do in that field? Virtually nothing, Mr. Chairman. Similar promises were made by the private station in Montreal, by the private station in Winnipeg, and by the private station in Vancouver.

We gave the B.B.G. the job of deciding who should receive these licences, licences to print money. Did we give the B.B.G. the authority and power to discipline successful applicants who did not live up to their promises? I am told by the B.B.G. that we did not give them that power. When we see the new legislation we shall have to examine it carefully to see whether it gives the regulatory authority that kind of power. If it does not we will continue in the present mess.

The questions I have raised are ones that the minister should have discussed in principle during her opening statement. But she did not do so. This means that the things we ought to have discussed today will have to be discussed at considerable length and in detail when we see the new bill.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I simply say that I hope the information I have been given is wrong. I have been told by people in the C.B.C. that the new legislation will not change things very much. I have been told by people in and around the B.B.G. that the new legislation will not give the B.B.G. the kind of authority it requires to do the job that needs to be done. If this be the case, then I tell the minister we are in for some pretty rough debate before the legislation passes.

Resolution reported and concurred in.

Miss LaMar thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. C-163, to implement a broadcasting policy for Canada, to amend the Radio Act in consequence thereof and to enact other consequential and related provisions.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): Order. Possibly with the indulgence and co-operation of the house we could proceed with the next item.

Mr. Rapp: Six o'clock.

Mr. McIlraith: The Speaker has asked if we should call the next item. The item we propose calling is No. 35, the resolution standing