

*Radio and Television*

That brings up the question of which system is best suited to our particular conditions. First, as far as the system itself is concerned we have three choices. We could have a completely public system or a completely free enterprise system or a combination of both. I believe the particular system we have at the present time, which is not only a combination but a partnership of public and private enterprise, with the public acting the role of senior partner, is the very best system we could possibly have and is one which I believe we should continue to maintain, with perhaps some modification with respect to regulatory powers.

If we have a combination certainly there is a need for regulation; and while I do not think a very good case was made out against the C.B.C. by those who produced briefs before the Fowler commission, I think perhaps it would be worth-while to adopt the regulations which that body recommended. Not only do we have a financial problem but we have the difficulty of providing proper safeguards so that our system will not become the mouthpiece or a propaganda machine for the government of the day. We must be equally careful in providing safeguards to see that our broadcasting system does not become a mouthpiece for subversive elements.

Reference has been made to the function of the C.B.C. as a means of developing our Canadian culture, and no doubt it is making a worth-while contribution in that respect. I think there is an even more important job than that for it to do, however, which could not be as well done by any other agency, and that is to provide a uniting force to keep before us the great values on which our culture is based and on which our way of life has been built and by which it is nursed. In times like these, when we are engaged in a cold war, this function of the C.B.C. is perhaps the most important of all.

As far as Newfoundland is concerned we do not have very many complaints against the C.B.C. or against the private stations; in fact the programs are very useful and very enjoyable, and we are particularly fortunate in that we have private stations which do, I think, more than their part in developing local culture. I have listened to private stations in other parts of Canada and I have not yet heard a station which is carrying out its functions in any sense better than the private stations in Newfoundland.

As far as my own riding of Burin-Burgeo is concerned, I would like to take this opportunity of bringing to the attention of the house the fact that only a very small number of my constituents are able to avail

[Mr. Carter.]

themselves of the services which the Canadian broadcasting system offers. We need the services of the C.B.C. in Newfoundland to unite us as a province in the same way we need to be united on a national scale. But we have our diversities of interest, and one of the functions which the C.B.C. could perform would be to bridge the gap of isolation caused by our geography and by these differences of interest. In the western half of my riding it is impossible for people to receive the broadcasts which go out from the C.B.C. station at St. John's, and this despite the fact that a few years ago a great deal of money was spent increasing the power and trying to extend the range of that station.

I think it has been clearly demonstrated that it is impossible to reach the length and breadth of the south coast of Newfoundland by radio without building a small relay station either on the Burin peninsula or at Port aux Basques or both. As I understand it these relay stations are not very expensive, and I would ask the government to look into this matter and see what could be done in this respect. It is a very urgent necessity, because the people in my riding are fishermen; they want to hear the weather forecasts, they want to hear the prices of fish, and they want to hear where bait is available. Their ties with the capital city are so many and so varied that the need can only be met by having a system which could provide full coverage for the whole island.

What I have said with respect to broadcasting applies to an even greater degree as far as television is concerned. Only a few people in the extreme eastern part of my riding can now enjoy the benefits of television programs, and since a microwave relay system is being erected in Newfoundland so that programs from the mainland may be received in our province simultaneously with their reception on the mainland, and having in mind that one of these microwave stations is being built at Red Rocks which is only nine miles away from the centre of Port aux Basques, I would ask the government to have a look at this to see if it would not be possible to utilize that microwave station so the people in the Port aux Basques area may be able to receive television programs. I believe this could be done, and because television waves carry a greater distance over water, I understand that it would be possible for people west of the Burin peninsula to enjoy television programs also.

I hope the minister concerned will investigate this matter and give it all the favourable consideration possible.