

Radio Licence Fee

resolution passed by the Windsor city council on September 20, 1949, which reads as follows:

That a strenuous protest be made to the dominion government against the proposal of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to increase the annual radio licence fees from \$2.50 to \$5, particularly in view of the general opinion in this area that no fee should be charged for receiving sets; and further that copies of this resolution be forwarded to the local members of the government.

I propose, Mr. Speaker, to address myself solely to one point, namely, the inequality, the unfairness of the imposition of a radio licence fee of any kind. I do this because of an answer given by the appropriate minister to a question which I had on the order paper. As I said, I am not going to discuss the economics of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. I am not going to discuss the value of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is doing a fine job probably under difficult circumstances, but I do say that the imposition of a radio licence fee is an unequal and unjust imposition of a charge on the Canadian people who pay it. The bureau of statistics informed me that at the last census there were 2,706,089 households or families in the Dominion of Canada. I give that figure because that is the year in which the census was taken. It is estimated by the said bureau that in 1948 there were 3,235,000 households in Canada. The bureau of statistics gives the number of radios in the various provinces of Canada in 1941. I will give Manitoba first. In Manitoba 79 per cent of the households had a radio. In Saskatchewan 75.7 per cent had radios. The total in Canada was 77.8 per cent. I quoted these two provinces because they were the 1941 figures. But a census was taken in the western provinces in 1946 which shows that in the prairie provinces the number of radios in the households had increased to 91.5 per cent. That figure applies to Brandon and other cities. Flin Flon had 92.5 per cent, and so on. From those figures, Mr. Speaker, it is my opinion that about 90 per cent of the homes in the prairie provinces have radios. We can safely assume that a minimum of 90 per cent of all the homes in Canada have radios. Let us look at the sale of radio licences. In 1940-41 there were 1,454,717 radio licences sold. In 1948 there were 2,057,799 radio licences sold. In 1941, therefore, judging from the figures I have quoted and assuming that there were 75 per cent of the households with radios, of the 2,706,089 households 25 per cent did not have radios. That would mean that there were 676,522 households which did not have radios, leaving 2,029,567 which did have radios. I do not want to bother the house with statistics.

In 1941 two million and some odd thousand did own radios. There were 1,454,000 odd radio licences sold. Therefore there were about 575,000 persons who did not buy radio licences, which is considerably over 25 per cent of those owning radios who did not purchase a radio licence.

Again quoting the 1948 figures of the bureau of statistics, there were 3,235,000 households. Ninety per cent of them owned radios. In other words, 2,911,000 odd owned radios; but there were only 2,057,000 radio licences sold. Therefore there were 854,000 odd who did not purchase radio licences.

Mr. Cruickshank: Shame.

Mr. Brown (Essex West): My hon. friend says "Shame". I hope he is not one of them. That means, Mr. Speaker, that between 25 per cent and thirty-three and one third per cent or one-quarter and one-third of the Canadian people did not purchase radio licences. I cannot see therefore that the imposition by the present method of a radio licence is at all justifiable because of the fact that three-quarters or two-thirds of the people are paying for a licence and the other one-quarter or one-third are not paying anything whatsoever. Therefore, so that the government may have some idea of what is thought by one member of parliament who represents a constituency which is not at the present time serviced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, I would strongly recommend that the government totally abolish the imposition of a radio licence fee and take the funds out of the general fund of the Dominion of Canada so that there may be equality and justice to all such persons resident in this Dominion of Canada.

LOCATION OF TERMINUS OF OIL PIPE LINE

Mr. Howard C. Green (Vancouver-Quadra): Mr. Speaker, the subject I wish to place before the house tonight comes, in reality, in the form of a question, namely—whether the terminus of the main oil pipe line from western Canada should be in the United States or at the lakehead in Canada? I bring this matter up in this way and at this time because while the government appears to be partially committed to a terminus in the United States, I believe it is not yet too late to make a change in that policy. This is one of those questions, the decision concerning which may have far-reaching effects on the nation.

For that reason I make no apology for bringing this matter before the house tonight. In doing so I realize the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) will probably have an opinion contrary to my own.