

executive branch were at some point to come forward with tax proposals, conceivably it might involve another committee in that jurisdictional area. But I can't predict what the proposals will be, and I would rather not try to nominate other committees.

Mr. MACDONALD. Yes, sir. But it is in your testimony. Therefore, I have to ask you about it.

Mr. CAREY. Yes, sir.

Mr. MACDONALD. Why would the tax committee have anything to do with public TV?

Mr. CAREY. I think, sir, there might be a feeling that any legislation involving special taxes would be of germane interest to that committee. That is a question I think probably to be settled up here. Whether we in the executive branch, as we developed specific proposals, would feel it necessary to engage in conversations with the Ways and Means Committee, I am simply not prepared to say this morning. I don't know, sir.

Mr. MACDONALD. It seems clear to me. I am just asking for information. I am not arguing with you.

Mr. CAREY. I would say this is the primary committee, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MACDONALD. Right, and also the Appropriations Committee. I don't really understand the rather murky language you use about "appropriate congressional committees."

Mr. CAREY. I think that was mainly intended, sir, to indicate that probably more than one committee would be involved.

Mr. MACDONALD. You talk about user taxes. Do you think it fair that someone who purchases a TV set—and you indicate that low-income people are the heavier users of both the products that are advertised and of the sets themselves—do you think it is quite fair to charge everybody who has a TV set a user tax?

Mr. CAREY. To support public broadcasting?

Mr. MACDONALD. Yes.

Mr. CAREY. I think, sir, we generally have the feeling that user charges constitute a general policy that the Congress has long approved. We employ user charges in many areas.

Mr. MACDONALD. If I can interrupt, there is the highway bill, and so forth. Everyone who uses that road owns an automobile. But owning a TV set doesn't mean that they are going to use the facilities available that will hopefully be offered by the public TV concept.

Once again, I am not arguing; I am just trying to get your opinion. Do you think that is fair?

Mr. CAREY. I think relatively, Mr. Chairman, it is as fair an option for us to be considering together and debating as any of the others that we are speaking about. I would like my colleague from the Treasury Department to speak to this question, too, if he may.

These are the three primary alternatives that we have so far been able to drudge up. Every one of them has something wrong with it, and something right with it.

Mr. MACDONALD. Mainly, you have pointed out what is wrong with them, not what is right with them, if I read your testimony correctly.

Mr. CAREY. I think the right part of the tax on TV and radio sets would seem that it reaches and taxes the consumers of the public good that is being provided here. While there is a very strong contra-