

Canadian Policy on Broadcasting

Mr. Nielsen: For months, Mr. Speaker, Canadians were treated over the C.B.C. to an unending parade of drug addicts, black power advocates, prostitutes, purveyors of filthy literature, Nazis and pseudo-Nazis. All of the scrapings and leavings of society sooner or later turned up on the C.B.C. No one in the C.B.C. apparently was able to exercise any control over what went on.

According to the Auditor General, even elementary financial controls are lacking in this organization, which is now on its way to gobbling up \$100 million and more of the taxpayers' money, providing in many cases very dubious return. In this regard I have already made reference to the treatment by the president of the Glassco commission's recommendations, and his attitude toward them.

This is the organization, Mr. Speaker, that the government in this bill wishes to place in an even more privileged position than it now enjoys, with even less possibility of any control being exercised over the conglomeration of little kingdoms that have grown up within its great corporate structure. It is not more but, in my view, less administrative freedom that the C.B.C. needs.

While viewers of the English network have been treated to the scrapings and dregs of society, while every crack-brained apostle of a hair-brained cause has been given air time at the taxpayers' expense, we have had on the French network a parade of separatists and advocates of the destruction of Canada. Last summer the French network featured half an hour or more of Fidel Castro explaining in detail how revolutions should be mounted and opposition should be put down in order to bring into being the kind of "people's paradise" that exists in Cuba.

Is this the kind of responsibility from which the minister and the government wish through this bill to remove any last vestige of control by parliament? A great deal of good work is being and has been done by the C.B.C. Their news programming has generally been exceptional. The artistic talent that has appeared on the C.B.C. has usually been of high calibre. C.B.C. radio has a well deserved and world wide reputation, as pointed out by previous speakers. But no organization can exist without leadership and direction, and this is what the C.B.C. has been doing for four years. No organization can operate without administrative control, without clear definition of purpose and visible, definite goals. Yet this is what the C.B.C.

has been doing. No organization can allow within its administrative framework the spreading growth of self-contained and self-governing units, pre-empting government facilities and public funds to put forward their own views and their own pet projects. But this is what has been happening in the C.B.C.

These are some of the reasons for my being unable to accept any measure designed to add to the power and privileges of this group at the expense of the private sector. Comparatively speaking, the private sector has been doing a good job for Canada within the limits of a considerably less massive budget. It is time, I think, to take a realistic look at some of these questions and not allow ourselves to be lulled by the pretensions of the few against the interests of the many.

The assumption underlying this bill, Mr. Speaker—and this is what galls me—is that when Hogan's Heroes appears on the C.B.C. it somehow contributes to the national destiny and unity, whereas I Love Lucy does not, because it is on the private network. That stretches credulity a bit too far, even for me. If the provisions in this bill are applied in their present form, broadcasting freedom will disappear.

Mr. Munro: Oh, stop it.

Mr. Nielsen: The parliamentary secretary says "Oh, stop". Obviously he has not seen the letter dated November 3. If he had, his speech would have been designed a good deal differently from that we heard this afternoon.

Mr. Churchill: The minister says he is not well informed anyway.

Mr. Nielsen: That is right. If this bill is passed, the government will have the power to exercise direct control and regimentation, and in my view this should be resisted. This commission should be scrapped and its present functions should remain with the B.B.G. which should be continued, in my view, in its present form. This parliament should not participate in making broadcasting a bureaucrat's paradise, as they have with everything else.

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, it will not surprise you if I inform you and other members of the house that with the exception of part of the reference of the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) to some recent remarks made by the minister, I