

*Canadian Broadcasting Act*

course are in favour of its referral to a committee. It is only right that the membership of the board of governors should be increased by two, because that increase should mean a wider geographical representation on the board. I think it might be worth while to consider the advisability of having an amendment to the act to the effect that members of the board of governors should be Canadians. There can, of course, be no question at all that those who are appointed are Canadians; but it might be just as well to have that provision written into legislation. It might be advisable also to have some legislation to the effect that any individual in this country who owns or controls a radio station should be a Canadian citizen. I would deplore it if a vehicle for the dissemination of information or opinion such as radio were to get into the hands of those who are not Canadians. Those are two matters which the committee might perhaps consider.

As to the legislation, I think it is only proper that greater protection should be given to private stations. Despite the fact that on many occasions I have opposed the private owners, nevertheless I feel that they should have recourse to some superior court should they feel that their interests are imperilled. Allowance has been made for that recourse in this legislation.

We of course welcome most heartily the suggestion, which was contained in the Massey report, that the annual income of the C.B.C. should be roughly equivalent to \$1 per annum per head of the Canadian population. In this way many of the financial worries which beset those who are responsible for the C.B.C. will disappear, at least for the time being, and they will now be able to do the intelligent programming which we in Canada expect from them. I think the minister suggested this afternoon that if programs were to be prepared adequately one had to think in terms not of days or weeks ahead but indeed in terms of months ahead. When the C.B.C. was running a deficit continually, it was then obviously not in a position to calculate what might happen six months ahead. It is, however, possible that the amount of money which is now going to be at the disposal of the C.B.C. might be inadequate. It would be inadequate on this basis. If the parliament of Canada were to decide that there should be a private radio network, the C.B.C. would find this amount quite inadequate, for it is dependent upon private outlets to sustain its chain of communications; and since these would be barred to it, the C.B.C. would be forced into the position of having to build additional outlets

all across this country. That is, however, a contingency which I do not think will arise.

Here I should like to comment upon a statement by the leader of the opposition as to what he considered was one of the basic rights of democracy, namely, that the private stations should have a network. I do not concede it to be a basic right of democracy that the private radio stations should have a network of their own. It is true that the leader of the opposition wanted this network so there should be adequate discussion of public affairs. But I think there is that adequate discussion today through the courtesy of both the C.B.C. and the private stations. However, the principal question which is before the house is one that has continually vexed us in the past; and I think I can put it in no better words than those used in the report of the British broadcasting committee which was published this year. In paragraph 544 it states:

Broadcasting is the most pervasive, and therefore one of the most powerful of agents for influencing men's thoughts and actions, for giving them a picture, true or false, of their fellows and of the world in which they live, for appealing to their intellect, their emotions and their appetites, for filling their minds with beauty or ugliness, ideas or idleness, laughter or terror, love or hate. How can mankind ensure that this great power is exercised at all times for good rather than evil?

As I say, Mr. Speaker, that question has perplexed others wherever there is democratic control over radio, as indeed it has perplexed us in the past. From debates which have taken place, however, it appears that there is in parliament general agreement that parliament has the exclusive responsibility over broadcasting in Canada. I use the word "exclusive" advisedly, because it was used by the hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Fleming) last week; and I agree with him in this regard. But if parliament is to have exclusive responsibility, then obviously parliament must have effective control, and that control is exercised through the medium of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

It is at this point that we see the differences of opinion which exist. There is a decided quarrel among some of us—in good nature, I hope—as to how the C.B.C. should exercise that control. We heard again last week the arguments which have been raised time after time. None of them is new; all of them are old, and most of them are becoming very monotonous. Every time a radio committee has been set up it has justified the situation which exists in connection with radio in this country. The Massey report justified the position and the actions of the Canadian Broadcasting Commission. One would hope that those who are opposed to the C.B.C. having