

● (1720)

My constituents complain this year that CBC programming has deteriorated in quality, that when they see a "Canadian content" program they automatically cringe. Instead of using art to make their points, "Canadian content" productions use dirty words, vulgar expressions, scenes of sexual congress.

That is from the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River. I now quote from a recent letter from the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) who has had a long interest in this matter:

The United States Surgeon-General, in a recent report to Congress, has concluded, after two years of research, that there is a "causal relationship between television violence and anti-social behavior to warrant proper and immediate remedial action"—

I am satisfied that there is a causal relationship between the increase in crimes of violence in Canada and violence shown on television. There is, in my opinion, sufficient evidence to warrant immediate action.

The hon. member for St. John East then refers to his bill to amend the Broadcasting Act with respect to the portrayal of sex and violence. His final statement reads as follows:

In my opinion, social control for the protection of children is unrelated to censorship and interference with the civil liberties of adults. History clearly shows that regulations to protect children be they with regard to child labor, food, drink, arms, sex, publications, etc., have never played any role in the abridgement of political or civil liberties for adults. Where freedom has fallen, it has come about in a totally different way.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but the time allotted to him has expired. The hon. member can only continue with unanimous consent. Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Dinsdale: Not only have I been denied access to the letters so that we might properly understand the problem, but not once have I received an invitation to appear on any CBC program to discuss matters of this kind. I can only conclude this is a form of censorship by exclusion because this is a subject the CBC is not even willing to discuss over its own broadcasting facilities. It is for this reason I trust hon. members will support me so that we can bring this chartered libertine under control and have the CBC accept its responsibility as the chosen organ for public broadcasting in this country.

[Translation]

Mr. Serge Joyal (Maisonneuve-Rosemont): Madam Speaker, I am happy to take part in the debate this afternoon, because the contents of the motion of the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale) are almost similar to those of the motion put before the House some 15 days ago. At that time, the motion called for production of correspondence between the Secretary of State (Mr. Faulkner) and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang) about the subsidy applied for by a group of Canadian women.

Today's motion calls for production of the correspondence the CBC is said to have received following broadcasting of a play entitled *Baptizing*.

I followed the speech of the hon. member for Brandon-Souris very closely, and throughout I wondered what his purpose is in requesting the House to force the Crown

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company to produce those documents. He himself mentioned, in the course of his remarks, that over 2,500,000 Canadians had seen the play, which is the highest rating ever registered for that type of broadcast. He also mentioned that the viewers' approval index reached over 70 per cent, and that more than 50 per cent of the viewers—

An hon. Member: That is the CBC viewpoint.

Mr. Joyal: The hon. member should allow me to proceed with my statement, for I listened carefully to his. If he wants to ask questions, Madam Speaker, I shall be pleased to answer them.

He stated that over 50 per cent of viewers had said they were satisfied. I do not think anyway that the aim of this debate is to question the CBC's statistics. We know quite well that when companies, whether public or private, comment on the opinion of the Canadian public on their own services, the public is sufficiently mature to analyse those statistics and put them back in their proper context.

During this debate I also became aware of comments in various Canadian newspapers, and of course I realize that it was just as easy to quote favourable letters as to quote hostile ones, expressing criticisms of the program. During the hon. member's speech, I could not help remembering a program which, Madam Speaker, you may have seen on the CBC network, around 1956 or 1958 I think, after the canonization or beatification of Marguerite de La Jemmerais, when the CBC featured a drama relating the main events in the life of that Canadian woman which probably had a similar audience as the program we are discussing today, and raised such a general outcry from the Canadian people.

But to revert to the heart of the matter, I am somewhat surprised that the hon. member did not even mention that the very subject of his motion is the tabling of documents. That question, as I said at the beginning of my statement, has been frequently raised in this House since the beginning of this session, and that motion is indirectly supported by Bill C-225, introduced by a colleague of the hon. member, the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), which is presently being discussed by the Committee on Regulations and Other Statutory Instruments.

In fact, that committee had the opportunity to hear the hon. member for Peace River deal with government guidelines respecting the confidentiality of some documents or the objection the government might have to tabling some documents.

I too have tried to check the reasons why the CBC will not allow this correspondence to be published.

Criteria to be applied for exemption from production of government papers include the following, and I quote:

7. Papers of a voluminous character or which would require an inordinate cost or length of time to prepare.

I believe this criterion, among others, may have a bearing on the present instance.

There is also criterion no. 15, which reads as follows:

15. Internal departmental memoranda.

This also might receive application in this instance. And finally we come to the following heading:

Minister's correspondence