

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. There not being agreement, and it being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock.

At one o'clock the House took recess.

#### AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

**Mr. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise to speak to the subamendment offered by the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. McKenzie). May I say, first of all, that I support this subamendment; I believe it to be well-founded.

I listened with a great deal of interest to the hon. member for Bruce-Grey (Mr. Douglas). In my opinion, he gave a fairly well researched speech. He adopted the Liberal party policy that in broadcasting one must first be concerned about the people who are making money, and only second—if at all—about what the people want to hear or watch. His speech seemed to be devoted almost entirely to the quantities of advertising revenue being generated. Not once did he suggest that people might wish to express their own opinions as to what they wanted to watch or hear. It seemed to me that whenever there was a question of advertising revenue versus various other ill-defined quality objectives, advertising revenue won every time.

On the west coast in the Victoria-Vancouver region a great number of our constituents prefer to select the channels they want to watch or listen to rather than those they are ordered to watch or listen to by the CRTC and the CBC. The recent ruling by Mr. Justice Dubé, preventing the CRTC from extending the licence of Victoria Cablevision Company for five years when it came up for renewal, is significant. Mr. Justice Dubé found the CRTC could not renew that licence without hearing an application by Capital City Co-operative to take over the facilities of Victoria Cablevision Company together with the licence.

This presents a real problem for the CRTC. If the ruling of Mr. Justice Dubé is upheld, we will see in future, every time a licence lapses, not only an application from the station that has been producing programs but an application by one or more organizations. The licence holders will be presenting their cases on the basis of their performance, and the new applicants will be presenting theirs on the basis of their promises. There will be no basis upon which to judge what their performance is likely to be. It will call for the wisdom of Socrates to determine the matter in some of these cases, to determine whether a station which has been operating passably should be preferred over one which promises to do better.

The simple economic facts of life have made the licences of radio stations and television stations things of great value. The licence itself should not be of great value. I think we can all accept that proposition, and it is the case presented by Capital City Co-operative. A licence for a cablevision station, or radio station for that matter, should not be a thing of great value, yet over the years this has been the case. I suspect that the blame has to reside with the CRTC, which makes the rules under which these sta-

#### *Non-Canadian Publications*

tions operate. Compliance with the rules has always been accepted as sufficient reason for renewal of a licence; hence the likelihood of a station that has been complying with the rules losing its licence was extremely rare.

● (1410)

I compliment Mr. Boyle on the start he has made as chairman of the CRTC. He started off with a tremendous handicap in that his predecessor as chairman, who had the golden handshake, as it were, had the job of allotting licences over many, many years all across Canada. Since these licences were so valuable, it was of prime importance that the CRTC be purer than Caesar's wife. Imagine the consternation among objective-thinking people in Canada to find that the chairman of the CRTC was able to drop his role of judicial impartiality on very short notice and run for the Liberal party in Hochelaga. It is the questionable impartiality of his predecessor that has made it extremely difficult for Mr. Boyle to start work as the new chairman of the CRTC, but despite this handicap left to him by his predecessor I think he is doing a remarkably sound job. I sympathize with him in the difficult position he is now being placed by the ruling of Justice Dubé.

I would have preferred the CRTC to continue with their hearings on the west coast, excluding cablevision from its considerations. I do not think that cablevision and radio station renewals are so closely allied that the CRTC has to freeze everything at this time. There are many radio stations on the west coast, and a couple of new television stations are commencing operations or transferring shares or changing licences. All of this has now come to a stop. Some offers of shares in various companies had deadlines on them. I do not know whether it is legally possible to extend deadlines, but there is at least one radio station in Victoria that was due to appear before the CRTC to have its shares change hands. As I say, this procedure has been stopped, as has everything else.

Two other licence applications of great interest have been stopped. One is the CBC application for an English language television station in Victoria. This was of great interest, of course, to the people on the west coast, partly because it was going to rule another station off the cablevision channels. One of the stations due to leave the cablevision channels would be KVOS, although some people on the west coast thought that KVOS would be ruled out by Bill C-58. It is, of course, not known at the present time whether in fact this bill will ever pass. In the opinion of many of us KVOS has been operating as a pretty reasonable Canadian subsidiary. I hearken back to the speech of the hon. member for Bruce-Grey who was worrying about the money that KVOS had promised to funnel into Canadian television program production according to the subamendment tabled by my colleague for Winnipeg South Centre.

I should now like to speak for a moment or so about what these rulings and what the general attitude of the government toward electronic media is doing to the viewer on the west coast. He is being ignored completely. Men and women on the west coast who have grown accustomed to watching certain channels or programs are not willing to change. I should also like to say a few words about a very touchy subject in Vancouver and Victoria, and that is the