

CRTC Act

would like to have a satellite dish on their roof, I have a personal belief about their effects on the communications industry. I support the fact that this Bill will establish rules and regulations with respect to the distribution of those dishes. I am pleased that it recognizes that programs from pay-TV channels cannot be distributed through dishes on the roofs of hotels and other establishments.

If consumers believe that everything is free, I suggest that no more programs will be produced because those programs that are now on pay-TV channels are paid for by the cable operators. They buy those films from the producers who, in turn, pay the artists. Consumers must realize that programs that are transmitted through the air are not necessarily free. If these programs are pirated, there will simply be no more programs. Who will pay the artists if no one pays to watch the programs?

I also support the provisions that prevent the owners of apartment buildings from distributing programs to their tenants. If they were allowed to do so it would cause further hardship to cable companies that are already experiencing financial difficulty.

With respect to the control of our broadcasting system, I would be the first to object to the Government dictating what goes on the air. I am sure that if the Government had found it possible, it would have changed some of its policies with respect to cut-backs to the CBC. Some Hon. Members are aware that I had worked for the CBC for 18 years, and some people may also say that I took a roundabout way to avoid being laid off. However, it should be noted that the Government does have an arm's length agreement with the CBC not to interfere with its daily programming. The Government can no more interfere with the CBC's decisions about lay-offs than it can with what Mike Duffy says on the air each evening.

I am pleased to have taken part in this debate. In closing I will say that, I have had experience working in private radio for some time and I believe that a licence period of five years is too short. I support the extension of that period to seven years because it will give radio programmers an opportunity to put their programs into effect.

Mr. Schellenberg: Mr. Speaker, I wish to compliment the Hon. Member for Essex-Kent (Mr. Caldwell) on his speech. As a former broadcaster, I also support the Bill. One concern with respect to Canadian television is with the reason why Canadians do not watch as much Canadian content as we would like. Is it possible for this Bill to address that problem?

I am reminded of an editorial cartoon that I saw some years ago. General Motors was having difficulty selling its product because too many cars were being bought from Japanese manufacturers. The planners were studying their vehicles, trying to find why they could not sell enough cars. The sign, in block letters behind them, read, "Build a Better Product". How can we build a better product so that more Canadians will watch more Canadian programs? Could the Hon. Member comment on that?

Mr. Caldwell: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for his question. He has addressed a difficult question. Yogi Berra once said, "If they won't come out to the ballpark, we can't stop them". I think that the same thinking applies here. We can put the programs on television, but we cannot make people watch them.

● (1620)

I feel we cannot simply sell out to the Americans completely. I have a great fear—if I might diverge from this matter a little—regarding the way the telecommunications industry is going. Again, one cannot legislate morality, in my opinion. But when a person can go to the corner store, buy a movie, go home and watch the movie, and do this continually every night, it bothers me. Are we going to have a generation of people who watch only western movies, if that happens to be their favourite, and what about those who watch a Playboy cassette, or whatever? It bothers me. Is this what we intend to do for our entertainment each night? I feel that as long as we have the commercial networks and the public networks, at least on some occasions some people might tune in to *The Journal*, an opera on CTV or CBC, or watch *The Nature of Things* and those types of programs. What happens if we simply throw up our hands and say, "It is wide open, folks. Do whatever you like". I realize that we cannot stop somebody from going home and watching a VCR, if that is his choice. If everybody is watching VCRs, who is going to produce the programs for the CTV, the CBC, Global or other channels? That is a problem and I do not know how we should address it. It certainly will be a problem.

Mr. Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Mr. Speaker, may I, first of all, on behalf of all our Members here congratulate the Hon. Member for Essex-Kent (Mr. Caldwell) on his maiden address, and a very fine one at that.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): He is not going to get off that easily. I want to ask him, as a 17-year veteran with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, one who knows well the operations of the Canadian broadcasting system and who comes from an area as inundated with American signals as is the Windsor market, does he have sufficient faith in the Canadian broadcasting system to believe that it can withstand such a heavy inundation of American signals?

Mr. Caldwell: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Parliamentary Secretary for the Minister of Communications (Mr. Scott) for that question. As I said, I did work there for 17 years. The situation has always been difficult. We are not going to be able to compete fully and have the ratings of a "Dallas" or shows of that type on opposite channels in the area. The CBC in Windsor was continually rated fourth in all its broadcast market as far as the area around Windsor is concerned and in my particular riding, other than for news and information. I wonder whether some of the programs we were doing within the CBC should have been done. I still think we need to have a heavy concentration of news and information in that area. I