

nesses that are here can be exposed. Surely if something is strong, it can correct itself, and people will understand the weaknesses.

When my friends come to visit the House of Commons and they sit in the galleries, they walk away from this place saying to me, "Look, we never realized how dramatic and how exciting this place can be". This place can be dramatic and exciting. Real drama takes place here, such as the capital punishment debate and other debates which have taken place. These debates are an ornament to this country, and to thought in our society. I think we should provide the opportunity for people in Canada to view and to hear them, because few people do. There will be a thousand times more people than those who read *Hansard* who will get a picture of the House of Commons.

All of us who support this measure of the government at this time—and I should say that originally this was not a government measure but a private member's measure,—myself included, have for the last 12 or 13 years been putting forward resolutions to televise the House of Commons. It is not as though this just happened overnight and the government has just become aware of it. Like so many things the government does, it does perhaps the right things for what sometimes seem to be the wrong reasons. I will give the government the benefit of the doubt because this is not the time to cavil about it.

I do not want to go through the exercise of the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker). It is difficult to know whether he supports the measure or does not support it, but meanwhile he used the opportunity to lambaste the government for all kinds of things that have nothing to do with this debate.

As I listened to the debate this evening I wondered, if there had been televising of the House of Commons in effect tonight, who would have come off best. I think that my leader would have come off best because he made the most intelligent speech of the whole lot. The next one would have been the government House leader, and the last would have been the spokesman for the Conservative party because his speech would have been seen as a kind of ploy. I think that perhaps this is one of the things of which the official opposition is afraid.

I do not think there can be any doubt when I say that the government is probably doing the right thing for the wrong reason, that one of the reasons for haste is that we have a government which is in serious trouble. Their analysis has told them, and my analysis has told me, that televising the House of Commons will help the government and hurt the opposition. I am not saying that this is out of some Machiavellian aspect of television, but I think it is vitally important, even if that is the consequence of televising the House of Commons, that the television come in here, and I think it should happen quickly. I do not think that this should be dragged out and held over for a long period of time.

At no time in our history have we needed to have the House televised as we need to have it televised now. I can think, for instance, of English speaking Canadians who say to me that

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the government is full of French Canadians, all they have is French Canadians on that side. That is the misapprehension of many people in this country. Of course it is not so. On the other hand, you have people in Quebec saying that the whole government is run by les Anglais. It is about time that the people of this country saw what their parliament is like, saw that in fact there is representation of both French and English Canada, saw in fact the goodness that exists in both these people, and the sincerity which exists on both sides and how hard some of us are trying to keep this country together. I think that, if we televised the House, only good can come out of this important debate that is taking place in our society. The sooner we do it, because time is critical, the better the chance we have in dealing with what I think is an enormously serious problem and one that has to be dealt with as quickly as possible. I cannot think of anything that will do more to dispel some of the ignorance and prejudice with regard to what exists in this Chamber than letting the people see for themselves those who represent this country.

You may say that some of the things they are going to see will not be all that pleasant. That is fine. The Canadian people are not that weak stomached that they cannot stand it. I can only say the kind of thing that Cromwell said when somebody asked him how he was to be painted. He said, "paint me with my warts on". Let them see their parliament with its warts on. The warts are not that significant as to destroy what I think is a favourable picture of the institution which legislates in this country.

I want to come back to something I started to say about the effect that television would have, that it would benefit the government and be to the disadvantage of the opposition, at least in the initial stages. The reason I say this is that the present bias of the news media is to attack the government on every occasion and to make it look in fact worse, if that is possible, than it actually is. But the bias of the media in this country—and it is not because the government is Liberal, they would do the same thing if the government were Conservative or NDP—the actual tendency of the media now is to attack every institution that exists.

This is something that has happened in this country over the last number of years, and the only explanation I can come up with—and I am not saying it is something the media can do something about, I do not think they can because it is the nature of things—is that over the last number of years, with the decline of a number of competing newspapers, radio and television stations, the media has felt called upon to prove its purity and to show that it is not an institution, although it is the greatest establishment in this country. It feels called upon to attack, as a matter of course, every institution, whether it is the Workmen's Compensation Board, the Ontario government, the federal government, the Manitoba government, or the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. There is a presumption of guilt if you are a government agency or if you are an established organization.

I suppose that one of the reasons they do it—I know many newspapermen and I have a tremendous admiration for them