

Canadian Policy on Broadcasting

controlling of the C.B.C. or over the projection of a Canadian content and a Canadian culture in its programs.

According to the objects outlined in the clause, it appears that the council will have to go further and contribute to the unity of Canada and assist Canadians in developing a national identity. In other words, it seems that the council is going to be a very powerful board which, if it takes its work seriously, will have the ability to brainwash Canadians all across Canada in such a way as to shape our unity and identity. I question whether this is right, Mr. Chairman. One hon. member speaking in the debate yesterday likened the C.B.C. as a means of communication to something not very different from a newspaper. Certainly the corporation is not too different from a newspaper. A government should not become involved in the publication of a daily or weekly newspaper, so why should it become involved in a now established television network or even, for that matter, a radio network?

In 1932 when the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation was first set up it was the duty of the government to foster the development of a broadcasting network for Canada. We now have one network established with perhaps more on the way, and I suggest that at this point government should attempt to phase itself out of the operations of the C.B.C. Certainly, parliament should phase itself out of controlling the C.B.C. or we should put the corporation up for sale and let someone else run it. Some body similar to the Board of Broadcast Governors must impose regulations to control broadcasting.

• (3:40 p.m.)

The Minister of Finance has said that we are in a difficult financial position and that certain cuts must be made here and there. Not long ago the Prime Minister said that all the money which might have been available for housing had been completely absorbed by other expenditures. The Minister of National Revenue has cut agricultural payments to farmers because there is a shortage of money. Yet under this bill another large governing council is to be set up. In her opening remarks when introducing the bill the minister said that this council would need to employ more civil servants than any similar body has ever employed before. Instead of cutting down on the number of new employees the minister, through this bill, is seeking to increase their number.

Canadians are asking that government be simplified and that costs of government be reduced. Statistics show that one of every eight Canadians works for government at some level. In effect, our society has become so complicated that out of every eight people one controls the other seven. We should attempt to simplify our society and cut government expenditures instead of increasing them. The Minister of National Revenue said that the government will make a concerted effort to limit the growth of the civil service. Yet the Secretary of State under this bill is seeking to employ an ever-increasing number of civil servants.

Parliament must control this giant, the C.B.C. The minister quite obviously has found it almost impossible to control the giant. The bill says that the C.B.C. is to have a five year capital budget and that the minister will review the budget from time to time. That budget will only come before the house, for members of parliament to scrutinize, every five years.

Clause 2 of part I of the bill suggests that the council shall be called on to determine what programs are in good or bad taste. I sat on the broadcasting committees some years ago and we studied the question of broadcasting. What tests is one to apply to taste? Who can judge what is in good taste and what is not? If this is a free society, as I hope it is, then economics must be the judge. As the hon. member for Kindersley said yesterday, surely no one would buy a film like "Waiting For Caroline", broadcast it across Canada and expect to make money on it. The corporation spent \$319,000 making that film, and the Minister of Finance has increased taxes by 5 per cent. How can one reconcile the 5 per cent tax increase with the expenditure of \$319,000 to produce one film? I have not seen it but I have heard that it was completely and utterly in poor taste.

Mr. Dinsdale: Indecent.

An hon. Member: I liked it.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): Someone says he liked it. Bully for him. I can tell him that many Canadians did not. For another program, "The Ernie Game", the corporation spent \$320,000. Yet the government says that it has no money for housing or for agricultural payments to farmers. No voting taxpayer will believe the Minister of National Revenue when he says that the government is going to limit the growth of the civil service in face of the fact that this bill will increase