

*Adjournment Debate*

Many people from that community have written to me indicating that if the government will not use its good judgment and be sensible, they will defy the regulations. I cannot blame them. Mr. Donald Waterfield of Nakusp, who wrote the book "Continental Waterboy" a documentary on the Columbia River Treaty, which is second to none, and who knows all about people being trodden on by the bureaucracy, wrote:

The considerable work and cost of our TV enterprise is all local. It has not cost the government a cent. So, as you will readily understand, we are furious with this quite unwarrantable interference with out private lives.

Mrs. Bert Millner of Nakusp wrote:

Surely in a culturally-starved area such as Nakusp and district, we should be adding more stations rather than reducing the number.

Mr. Aalten wrote:

I regard this action as a callous unfeeling act by a government that would deprive us of the entertainment this channel provides in response to some high-toned speeches and opinions put forward in the name of 'nationalism.'

Mr. Bowman of Nakusp says, "It makes us wonder just how free our free society is becoming."

Mrs. Sicotte of Nakusp writes:

The idea of Canadian TV alone is ridiculous. Outside of one or two good children's programs and a few good documentaries, the Canadian programs are an insult to one's intelligence for the most part, particularly CBC.

Finally, Mr. and Mrs. Ron Heppner of Nakusp wrote:

We feel that we are intelligent enough to be able to choose our entertainment without any help from the CBC and the Canadian government.

The CRTC has painted itself into a corner. It has not determined if a cable company broadcasting from its studio is deemed to be on-air or off-air. What will happen in Nakusp?

**Mr. Ross Milne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Communications):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the sincerity with which the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Brisco) tried to make his case, but I suggest that this situation has arisen for reasons other than those he mentioned. I wish to put the background to this case on record and, for accuracy, will follow my notes closely.

The CRTC returned the recent licence renewal application to the Arrow Lakes Television Society. In a covering letter, dated May 25, 1977, the commission stated that it received legal advice that, based on the regulations issued under the Broadcasting Act, it is unable to issue or renew a broadcasting licence for a transmitter which rebroadcasts a non-Canadian signal.

I understand that the licence in question was issued in 1963 by the Department of Transport on the basis that no Canadian television service was available in Nakusp, British Columbia. In the intervening years, the Arrow Lakes Television Society established two other rebroadcasters which provide full CBC and CTV service. In the circumstances the government cannot interfere with the decision of the CRTC which, in light of the responsibilities defined in law by the Broadcasting Act, felt that it was required to take this action.

The Arrow Lakes Television Society operates three low power transmitters located in Nakusp, British Columbia. Each

[Mr. Brisco.]

transmitter rebroadcasts a signal of another station, one of which originates from KXLY-TV Spokane, Washington. The Department of Transport originally licensed this undertaking on August 6, 1963. The CRTC has renewed the licence on three occasions, with the most recent renewal expiring on September 30, 1977. This licence was originally issued on the basis that no television service was available to the residents of Nakusp. Subsequently, full CBC and CTV service is provided by the two other rebroadcast transmitters operated by the Arrow Lakes Television Society.

In conclusion, the commission obtained legal advice to the effect that, based on the regulations issued under the Broadcasting Act, it was unable to issue or renew a broadcasting licence for a transmitter which rebroadcasts non-Canadian signals. As a consequence, the CRTC returned the recent renewal application with a covering letter, dated May 25, 1977, indicating the above.

VETERANS AFFAIRS—REQUEST FOR LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE PENSIONS OF WIDOWS

**Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe):** Mr. Speaker, we who are still here appreciate that the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. MacDonald) will be replying to this question which is of such concern to veterans in this country.

On March 1 the minister replied to my question with regard to pensions for widows of veterans who were in receipt of a disability pension of less than 48 per cent as he has on countless other occasions, indicating that the matter is under consideration. To be very frank, it is becoming a little embarrassing to me, as it should be to the minister, that we keep playing this broken record periodically in the House of Commons and in committee. It is long past a reasonable time when amendments to the legislation with respect to veterans' widows falling within this unfortunate category should be passed.

It is serious to note, and the matter is getting more serious each day as some 60,000 who fall in the category of between 5 per cent and 45 per cent grow older, that the government is forsaking these widows for no humane reason, and is instead festering a bitterness within their hearts which should be embarrassing to the government.

It is obvious from recent replies to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and myself that we will not see legislation during this session. Perhaps the minister could again appeal to the unpatriotic hearts of his colleagues in cabinet, asking that they repent for their glaring sins by asking Her Gracious Majesty, as suggested by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre and the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker), when reading the new Speech from the Throne in October to include in that speech amendments to the veterans' legislation to overcome this serious inequity.

I might add that the minister may not get the opportunity to take the credit if the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) calls an election for this fall, because my party supports such a move as a first priority in recognition of the sacrifice made by some