

*Canadian Policy on Broadcasting*

in the producers' set up. I note that the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River got the impression from reading the committee's report that we had exonerated the producers, and that he took exception to our whitewash of the situation. May I assure him that the majority of the committee began to realize that all was not well in the C.B.C., and that the final report did not properly reflect the thinking of the majority.

We must make certain that this bill gives the new management of the C.B.C. a clear mandate to enforce a policy which is also clearly stated in the bill, and that the C.B.C. management, not the producers, are accountable and responsible for what comes out of the T.V. tube or over the air waves. This does not mean, nor should it mean, a continuing war between both sides of broadcasting, but what it does mean is that when management says "do" or "don't", producers "do" or "don't"—or leave the corporation. Of course producers and artists are sensitive people and must be worked with carefully so that their talents are brought to bear on suitable subject matter. But let me remind the producers that the listening audiences of Canada are also sensitive people, and they elect members to parliament to see that in certain respects their wishes are carried out.

Section 2 of the Broadcasting Act states in paragraph (i) that the national broadcasting service should be among other things, a balanced service of information. It is essential that members of this house and the country at large should understand how badly unbalanced a performance we have been given in certain areas of broadcasting. Let me say right away, however, that there has been a noticeable improvement since this fuss was made in parliament. But not enough. The nature of the problems Canada faces in its broadcasting system and the serious nature of these issues can only be evaluated when we understand the power of broadcasting itself.

This power of broadcasting was thus ably described by the British broadcasting committee of 1949 in a report to the British parliament:

Broadcasting is the most persuasive, and therefore one of the most powerful agents for influencing men's thoughts and action, for giving them a picture, true or false, of their fellows of the world in which they live, for appealing to their intellect, their emotions and their appetites, for filling their minds with beauty or ugliness, ideas or idleness, laughter or care, love or hate.

[M. Stafford.]

Some of these problems are glaringly evident. Some time ago when Tom Gould resigned from the C.B.C. over the breach of good faith in using a story taken from a closed meeting at which the former leader of the opposition spoke, Dennis Braithwaite wrote in the *Globe and Mail*:

Ton Gould's resignation in protest may seem a drastic step in the circumstances, but Gould has been dissatisfied with the C.B.C.'s Ottawa news set-up for some months and simply flipped over what he considered to be a final lapse of professionalism. What ails Gould anyhow? What, for that matter, ails Stan Burke and most of the other top commentators in C.B.C. television news?

I have been doing a little study on this matter and I think the writer has put his finger on the point—lack of professionalism in the journalistic area. And where does most of the trouble lie? It lies with our old friends in the public affairs field who try to usurp the news field and give Canadians twisted versions of the facts, or, as the parliamentary secretary to the Prime Minister stated earlier in this debate, try to influence us through the process of distortion by omission. The news editors, too, share in this criticism. For instance, some recent examples of the anti-American bias of a number of broadcasters is strongly and tragically apparent.

On November 17, 1967, probably as a result of pressure from very top management in C.B.C. and the influence of statements made in this house, television carried the entire news conference of President Johnson of the United States. Let me quote some of the press comment on the president's performance. The *Montreal Gazette* of November 18 describes him as being "self assured and unusually forceful in his first formal White House meeting with newsmen since August 18." The *Ottawa Citizen* of the same date commented: "It was like the L.B.J. of old—the master performer, cool, suave, in command." The *Ottawa Journal*, also of November 18, had this to say:

The President was exuberant as he told the television press conference over-all progress is being made in the anti-communist war. Many observers regard his dynamic performance as a preview of his 1968 presidential election campaign.

The *Globe and Mail* of November 18 prints a headline across seven columns on page 1 reading: "The Real Johnson Stands up on T.V. and Draws Raves." The comment was:

It appeared that Mr. Johnson had at last discovered how to be as effectively persuasive with a mass audience as with a private gathering.

By contrast here are the key words used in describing the president's performance by