

been asking for jurisdiction over cable television, but I feel most strongly that to ensure that broadcasting remains in the national interest, control must remain a federal concern.

● (1750)

If federal control of cable television is lost it could mean the balkanization and fragmentation of Canada. The BNA Act has already separated us in many ways, but I believe that with a strong federal authority to guarantee the national interest, and with good communication and good will between the various levels of government and the people, many difficulties can be overcome.

To illustrate the need for a direct link of communication and co-operation between Ottawa and the provinces let me mention one problem now in the field of education. Because of the BNA Act education is a provincial matter, and each province has its own standards and requirements. In our extremely mobile society many students face difficulty in moving from one province to another, and university students generally lose credits if they transfer from one Canadian university to another. I feel that students should be able to transfer freely across Canada from one accredited university to another without losing credits.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Raines: If anything, it is my opinion that because they are experiencing and learning in new environments and coping with new ways and cultures they should gain credits. This is a question which would require co-operation between all the provinces, and a strong link of communication between Ottawa and the provinces could expedite the matter.

Communication is the key. The complexity of modern problems and the need to solve them quickly is going to require parliament to have a forum in a communications system which will receive and send information to the provinces, a system which will strengthen Canadian unity, a system which will not only seek and find answers from a limitless fund of information, from the most enlightened minds, but will receive and distribute vital information to every part of Canada.

These are only a few things that cable television could do, and because cable could become the principal vehicle of broadcasting to Canadians it is vital to keep it in federal hands. Meanwhile Canada has a national system of broadcasting—the CBC. And with some prodding, the CBC may, like Rip Van Winkle, waken to find itself in today's world. I would like to see the CBC gear itself to new and high demands, because the CBC could be a bridge to unite Canada more than the Canadian Pacific Railway lines united Canada in the past. The CBC could educate, stimulate, create understanding and appreciation of different cultures, places and problems.

The potential of the CBC is boundless, but it must come out of its torpor, its housekeeping bureaucracy. It needs, like any creative enterprise, constant changes and infusions and nourishment. I do not think the CBC has had many changes, infusions or nourishment to speak of for a long time.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Budget—Mr. Ritchie

Mr. Raines: In the past the CBC has had its moments of brilliance. But it has a great deal to answer for, Mr. Speaker. British Columbia and the other provinces—I might say, all of Canada except Toronto—have been shamefully neglected on the national scene. It is a fact that Canadian talent generally has had to go south of the border, or to England or Europe, to gain any recognition or have a chance to perform.

The CBC has failed to create mutual understanding of the French and English viewpoints, when it should have been obvious that the two cultures could have been introduced to each other gradually with diplomacy, tact and humour.

Today, in spite of the fact that it has been forced to devote a certain percentage of time to Canadian content, the CBC seems unable to provide Canadians with the creative outlet we so badly need and want. In any Canadian city, any Canadian small town, any rural community, you will find talent that should be on radio or television. Yet the picture I receive on my set consists of reruns, empty and soul-less movies from the United States, and sports.

Where is there any suggestion of a search for a better world? Where is the vision that should be expressing itself in songs and plays? Where is the attempt to explain and interpret British Columbia to the rest of Canada, the west to the east, and the north to the south? The CBC has a lot of catching up to do. It must become a dynamic outlet for Canadian talent and energies, a force for making things better in Canada.

Summing up, Mr. Speaker, I repeat my support for parliamentary reform. I believe it was Nietzsche who said, "Any truth lasts for only 20 years". And governments, like people, should be continually appraising and rethinking ways and means of achieving their priorities and goals. I urge this parliament to retain jurisdiction over the Canadian communications system, including cable television, and to make new and high demands of our national broadcasting system.

I ask all hon. members to consider the brave new world that our new miracles of communication could bring about. The potential for useful exchange of information, carried across Canada and with other countries, is boundless. We have the machinery, we have the hardware. Now, all we must do is to remember the philosophy which admonishes us "to make no small plans—they have no power to stir men's minds."

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Ritchie: Mr. Speaker, may I call it six o'clock? At six o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

Mr. Gordon Ritchie (Dauphin): Madam Speaker, the timing of this budget is somewhat different from those of the past six years that I have been here. I do not think it is