

Canadian Policy on Broadcasting

puts in a claim for a particular area the licence might very well be awarded to the C.B.C. even though, as we know in the case of Saskatoon, the C.B.C. is not immediately able to erect a station in the area. The danger of this form of statement of broadcasting principle is that when the public purse is slim, and it is pretty slim now, the C.B.C. could tie up many areas in Canada. The other station in Moncton, New Brunswick, is an obvious example in the maritimes, and there are five or six altogether across Canada. This subclause could be considered a direction to the commission that these licences be held for the C.B.C., and yet the public would not have the protection of the C.B.C. having to erect the stations immediately and give service to the people in those areas. In short, there are areas in Canada which could be denied the option of choice.

I do not see why we cannot change this provision so that the issue would be resolved in favour of the public. For example, I can see that in Saskatoon and other places both stations might be owned by private companies but one would be on the C.T.V. network and the other on the C.B.C. network. I do not think it is necessarily public ownership of the second station that we are looking for in all places. Surely what we want is to give the public the right to choose between two networks. I hope the minister will be good enough to consider an amendment when that part of clause 2 is considered.

My second point deals with clause 29. The maximum fine that can be imposed on malefactors is set forth in this clause as \$100,000. I suggest that this places a stigma on the industry and really tags it with delinquency. In my opinion a smaller amount would do the job just as well. After all, surely nobody seriously thinks that any magistrate would impose a fine of \$100,000. I cannot see that any station would break a regulation to the extent that it would profit by as much as \$100,000 by so doing. Therefore I suggest we take a second look at this clause and bring the proposed maximum fine down to a more reasonable amount.

My final point deals with clause 47 which covers the drawing up of a five year capital program and a five year operating budget. The evidence of the minister's very capable deputy minister, Mr. Steele, was to the effect that one could forecast operating budgets reasonably well for three years and that thereafter one could not foresee the difficulties that could arise in the fourth and fifth years. I simply suggest that we make the legislation

[Mr. McCleave.]

fit the facts and that when this clause is considered we amend it to set the term at three years instead of five.

I know that some people would like to have the budgets introduced on a year by year basis and debate them year by year. But undoubtedly a look can be taken at broadcasting every year because we will have the estimates of the Canadian radio and television commission before us and therefore will not be sloughing off C.B.C. affairs for three years or five years. On balance I think it is a good idea to try for long-range planning but a five-year period is impractical. A three-year period has been found to work and in my opinion we should strive for that. These are the points that I or somebody else will be raising and that I will be supporting as the debate proceeds.

[Translation]

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Chairman, just a few words on clause 2 dealing with general provisions of Bill No. C-163 which provides in paragraph (d) that—

—the programming provided by the Canadian broadcasting system should be varied and comprehensive and should provide reasonable opportunity for the expression of conflicting views on matters of public controversy, and the programming provided by each broadcaster should be of high standard, using predominantly Canadian resources—

• (4:20 p.m.)

Mr. Chairman, I understand that Bill No. C-163 has not yet carried but on the French network of the C.B.C. television we too often see Russian, Polish, Ukrainian films with subtitles or translated. When we read the subtitles printed at the bottom of the picture—when we care—we realize that the translation is a language that almost no Canadian can understand. I believe it is abusing the Canadian public to present such films which may have some value, I admit. We are given, for instance, Italian, or Russian or Polish films of high quality which Canadians cannot understand because quite often the subtitle below the picture is the same colour as the picture, white on white; so you can imagine if it is easy to read. And they are shown to us nearly every week. Not later than last week, I was watching one of those movies, following the national and international news, at the end of the evening. Frankly, I must say that the management of the C.B.C. or those who are responsible for such programs do not choose too adequately the movies presented to Canadian audiences as far as quality is concerned.