

Canadian Policy on Broadcasting

I remember the immigration committee a year or so ago on the occasion when the immigration white paper came down. I was a member of the Liberal immigration group which met quite frequently with the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Marchand) and his deputy. The night before the white paper was brought down there was a very interesting and intelligent meeting held in the minister's office. I can remember a recently elected member of the Liberal party at that meeting asked in a rather plaintive way, "may we see the white paper before it is produced in parliament?", and the laughter of the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, who himself had been in the house about a year and a half, and the laughter of the deputy minister of immigration was very interesting to behold. To think that a newly elected member of parliament should ask to see the contents of a white paper before it was put before members of the House of Commons, with the indication that those of us sitting to the right of the Speaker would have to endorse that white paper, was astounding.

● (3:50 p.m.)

Mr. Knowles: May I ask the hon. member a question?

Mr. Cowan: I am limited to half an hour.

Mr. Knowles: Did the hon. member say that the deputy minister of manpower and immigration was at a meeting of the Liberal caucus?

Mr. Cowan: I did not say "caucus"; I said it was a Liberal study group on immigration.

Mr. Knowles: That's just another name for it.

Mr. Cowan: Those are your words, not mine. I should like to read some of the expressions of the Secretary of State (Miss LaMarsh) in her introductory speech on second reading. At page 3746, referring to the broadcast committee, she said:

Because this was indeed a committee free of narrow partisanship—

If these committees are "free of narrow partisanship", why is there always a majority of supporters from the right of the Speaker on the committee? In the case of this committee we had 25 members and 13 of them were Liberals. Why is it that if a Liberal is going to be away for one reason or another we have him replaced by another Liberal, and if a Social Credit member is

going to be away he is replaced by a member of the Social Credit party? Is this done to show there is no narrow partisanship on the part of the committee? The membership is engineered from the start to the finish.

We are told by the Secretary of State that the report of this committee was very valuable. I have a copy of the report of the committee here in my hand and I have a copy of the white paper. There were 21 paragraphs in the white paper, and the committee concurred in 19. One can see the heavy additional thought we gave to the white paper, which came out of the everywhere into here. The two paragraphs that we did not concur in had to do first with educational television, and we suggested there be a delay in considering it, and one made some complimentary reference to the Fowler commission, which was past history. We simply approved of the historical reference. We had 19 concurrences in respect of 21 suggestions in the white paper.

If we read on in *Hansard* we find a reference by the Secretary of State to the effect that the bill in front of us is what the government intended should be before us. It is interesting to know that the bill was coming down, no matter what the committee action might have been in connection with the white paper.

Let me draw your attention to the speech of the Secretary of State on November 1 and pick out the "we's" in it. In the second paragraph it says, "we" have been formulating this bill. You might think that the "we" is the Liberal caucus. I can tell you that it was never discussed by the Liberal caucus. You might think that the "we" is the Liberal party. It was never discussed by the Liberal party. The "we" is the cabinet, and I presume means the majority of the Liberal cabinet. That does not necessarily mean 25 people; it could be 13 or 14.

Then we have reference again on page 3746 to this effect, that the committee's report was particularly valuable to "us". The "us" would again be the cabinet. On page 3747 there is a reference to all these sources of individuals and groups who have given "us" their views. The Secretary of State then says "we" have arrived at a consensus. She refers again to "we" and "us".

Then we go on and find a further reference about the agreed upon principles as a starting point. They were agreed upon by whom? They were certainly not agreed upon by the caucus and not agreed upon by the Liberal party,—but they were agreed upon.