

*Government Administrative Policies*

Currently, the CRTC is standing behind two sets of rulings which if implemented will shut Canadian viewers up in a tower of isolation. The CRTC has taken upon itself to regulate not only Canadian broadcasting as to Canadian content but to tell Canadians what they may and may not see and hear in broadcasting from abroad. The ruling shutting off cablevision from the United States is one which Dr. Goebbels in his most totalitarian frenzy could not have bettered. In Russia you are not allowed to watch or listen to foreign programs. In other countries behind the iron curtain you are not allowed to watch or listen to foreign programs. In Red China you are not allowed to watch or listen to foreign programs. In Canada, if this ruling goes through, you will not be allowed to watch or listen to foreign programs except those chosen for you and declared harmless by the CRTC and Dr. Juneau.

No one in Canada has the right to regulate what Canadians shall see or hear. I maintain any such ruling by the CRTC is unconstitutional and invalid, and is certainly an infringement on the Bill of Rights. If they can shut out foreign television programs via cablevision, they can shut out foreign newspapers and magazines and we will have taken a long step toward totalitarian thought-control in this country. I maintain the CRTC does not have this power. Parliament never intended it to have this power. Nowhere in the act are they given the power to prevent access by Canadians to broadcasting originating in other countries. If this is permitted, they can prohibit shortwave radio and even records produced in the United States. I am not a lawyer, but this kind of intellectual and cultural separatism is so much against our traditions and the spirit of our laws and constitution that I say with confidence it goes far beyond any power ever confided by Parliament to this board.

Telling people what they can view and what they can hear is in the same category as telling them what they can read and what they can say. We are dealing with the field of communications. If this board has the power to do this, then Parliament must immediately clip its wings. I am prepared to move a motion to the effect that the production of cablevision programs from the United States, while subject to the ordinary rules governing broadcasting, shall not be prohibited by order of the board. The board, in other words, shall not have the power to prevent cablevision transmission. If that is not enough, we can go further. I feel that cablevision should be sub-

[Mr. Ritchie.]

ject to our rules, but surely the board cannot cut it off completely without reducing this country to a totalitarian state.

I come now to the closely allied question of Canadian content. I charge that the board's position is purely one of strategy. The board has no intention of enforcing a 40 per cent Canadian content ruling because they know, first of all, they cannot define Canadian content. Secondly, they could not enforce it if they could define it. Some 70 per cent of CBC television now is from the United States. If you take out the news and a few afternoon shows, most of which feature United States personalities stopping over in Toronto, and the deadly CBC panel shows, what is left is produced in the United States. If it were not, the CBC would be one vast expanse of dead air—and that might be an improvement. On the CBC during prime time on Sunday nights we have that great Canadian show "Ed Sullivan"; we have "I Love Lucy" in old re-runs; we have "Mission Impossible", "Disneyland" and dozens of others, each and every one an American production. Thank God for them!

• (9:20 p.m.)

The board knows it cannot define Canadian content and that, I submit, is just a stick with which to beat the broadcasters. They are going to be pretty tame if they know at any time the board can step in and say, "Your Canadian content is down; we are going to close you up." How can they prove differently? Is "Bonanza" Canadian content? It has an hour of Lorne Greene, who is a Canadian. Is the "Rich Little" show Canadian content? If not, why not? When Bob Goulet does a guest shot on the "Carol Burnett" show, is it Canadian content? Is "Tom Jones" Canadian content? He is a Welshman. If not, what about the "Pig 'n Whistle"? Do British entertainers count as Canadian in Toronto, and foreign in New York? What about René Lévesque; is he Canadian content? These are some of the problems which make it impossible to define Canadian content.

When you have a show written by Peppiatt and Aylesworth, with Percy Faith's music, starring Rich Little and Bob Goulet with Lorne Greene as guest star, produced in New York, how do you count that? Mr. Juneau used to have a prominent position in the National Film Board. That organization recently obtained large sums of money from Parliament on the pretext of making Canadian feature films. They went down to the United States and got Abbie Hoffman, one of