

*Privilege—Mr. Baldwin*

matter that will come before the CRTC on June 21. It will involve the actual AM radio stations becoming owned by the trust if the CRTC approves. This is a matter that should be considered.

I will give an example of interference in communications and the suspicion that arises in this situation. The 51 per cent owner of Newfoundland Broadcasting Limited is Mr. Jeff Sterling, a Liberal candidate in the 1975 election—a Liberal reformed candidate. He has been a Liberal supporter since 1949. That gentleman has the most eccentric scheduling on his television and radio stations. He owns a second TV network in Newfoundland, five AM stations, and he has a licence for nine FM stations. A comparable situation would be for a member of the government to own Global TV or half of the CTV affiliates in Ontario.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Crosbie:** They do not like it. They do not like to be questioned. I will give an example of what can happen through Liberal establishment ownership of the television and radio media in this country. A week ago last Friday I was invited by the CTV to appear on the program "Question Period", a public affairs program. When I got to Newfoundland I looked in the paper to see when it would be shown by the CTV affiliate, CJON. It was shown in the rest of Canada on Sunday afternoon. When I looked at the paper I discovered that it was going to be shown at three o'clock Monday morning.

**Some hon. Members:** Shame.

**Mr. Crosbie:** I could not believe it. I did not think even Mr. Sterling could be so eccentric as to have a public affairs program shown at three a.m. on Monday. Even I would not stay up for that. On Tuesday I checked to see if the program had been shown. I was told it had not been shown because they had lost the tape, or something stupid like that. We checked again this morning and found that it still had not been shown. I guess they are looking for the tape. That may not have anything to do with the fact that I am a Progressive Conservative member of parliament, or that I have had political disagreements with members of the media, but it does arouse some suspicion.

What I am putting before the House in connection with this motion of the hon. member for Peace River is another example of Liberal government domination of the communication media, interference with the free flow of information from members on both sides of this House to the people of Canada. We all know what we say here does not matter much if it is not reported. If it is not reported, how can it have any influence on what happens in the country?

There are three matters that should be considered. The hon. member for Maisonneuve-Rosemont (Mr. Joyal) is not in his seat today. He has alluded to some of this conspiracy. We cannot go into that in detail today. There are the actions of the Minister of Transport, using his position in the government to

[Mr. Crosbie.]

stop a publication. It is a new offence. It is not "lese majeste" but "lese Lang".

There is the control of TV and radio and the position of a minister of the Crown, whether a conflict of interest arises and whether it should be permitted. I had to give up my business interests when I got into public life. Does it behoove a member of the Crown, or not, particularly when it is a media that is controlled absolutely by the government or its agency? There are other matters to which the hon. member for Maisonneuve-Rosemont alluded.

● (1600)

**Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie) has managed by some ingenuous connection to link this to the principal matter before the House at the present time, and I suppose on that basis it is justified. However, I must say, with respect, that it is drawing a very long bow to use this particular incident to generate discussion about a matter which I am perfectly well aware has been on the hon. member's mind for some considerable time and one which he has discussed with a great many people, excluding only myself.

First, I am grateful to the hon. member. In view of the fact that it has been brought up, I assume I am entitled to make some response. I assure Your Honour that I do not intend to do so in detail. I am grateful to the hon. member for his emphasis on the fact that he is not laying any charges, nor is he suggesting any impropriety on my part. I want to reinforce that comment of his by saying categorically at the outset that in all my time in public life I have never on a single occasion sought to do anything to influence in any way, shape or form the output of any of the broadcasting associations or organizations with which I have had a very long relationship.

I would invite any member present, including the hon. member for St. John's West, to talk to the dozens, indeed, to the hundreds of people over the years who have worked for those organizations. They will, I am sure, confirm to a man that there has never been, on my part, the slightest suggestion of interference in any way. I want to lay that idea to rest in case there should be any indication that some kind of unreasonable or improper pressure has been applied. In fact, quite the contrary. The truth of the matter is, as anyone who has been in Newfoundland will attest, that the hon. member for St. John's West, both before he entered this House and since, gets substantially more coverage—not necessarily at three o'clock in the morning—than I do. Indeed, the opposition members generally have had that experience over the years.

Incidentally, in case he does still feel there was any relationship between my association and the kind of treatment we get on "Question Period", let me assure him that I commiserate with him because I, too, had to sit up until three o'clock in the morning in the vain hope I might see myself on the program about six weeks ago. Sad to relate, my experience was precisely the same as that of the hon. member, which I believe reinforces my argument that there was no association.