

*Radio Broadcasting*

There were many good reasons for insisting upon an inquiry into our radio system in this country. We have an unusual type of supervision and control. Our system is in part like that of the United States and in part like that of Great Britain. In Great Britain the British Broadcasting Corporation exercises a complete monopoly under the government over the supervision of radio broadcasting and the production of domestic programs. In the United States there is an entirely different system. Under the communications board, radio broadcasting is supervised, regulations are laid down for program standards, wire facilities and things of that sort. Subject to that measure of supervision and authority, radio broadcasting in the United States is free and competitive.

In Canada we have a third system. We have a broadcasting corporation which exercises full authority of supervision, licensing, control of the networks, and over the whole of the communications between stations. It also supervises the operations of the private stations. There is no free competition between these private stations and the government stations operated by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation because the corporation not only exercises supervisory authority and licensing authority over the whole radio system, but is also a producing organization which competes on a commercial basis with the private stations across the country. It does so with a number of advantages. Particularly, it has the advantage of being free of taxation which is one of the features of the cost of the private station.

That system is wrong in itself. Let us by all means have a commission to supervise radio and to supervise the general provision that is made for radio. But if there is going to be government operation, then let that be a separate organization which will be subject to the same regulations, the same supervision and the same rights as the other radio stations of this country. Any other system makes the whole government system not merely a supervising organization but a propaganda agency of the government which appoints the agency that operates this system.

One may say that, after all, the men who do the broadcasting are perfectly free citizens, and that they have just as great freedom as has anyone else. But, Mr. Speaker, that is not true. Those who work for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and who broadcast regularly as employees of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation are under a severe restraint which is not generally known. It is not generally known, for instance, that

each of those employees who broadcast over the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation takes a sworn oath of secrecy which is constantly held as a club over the heads of those men and women to prevent them from publicly stating what the abuses are within that system.

There has been a very striking example of that fact just today. Most of the people who follow radio will know the name of one of the top Canadian broadcasters, Mr. Joel Aldred. Mr. Joel Aldred has today been dismissed from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The reason for that dismissal is an article which appeared in the *Standard*, a magazine published in Montreal. That article is headed "He bet he Could Talk". It is an article written to tell the success story of a man who is described as one of the five top radio announcers in Canada. Let us just get the background, both of this man and of the situation which is disclosed by what happened today.

Mr. Joel Aldred, who is now twenty-eight, is one of those many gallant young Canadians who played their full part in the preservation of free speech, along with the preservation of the other freedoms that were at issue in the last war. He served for five years with the Royal Canadian Air Force. He served with the bomber command. He had many flights over Germany and he was decorated with the Distinguished Flying Cross. I merely mention those facts to indicate that this man has shown his faith, his belief and his willingness to serve the principle of free speech which is a part of all the freedoms which were preserved by victory in that war in which he took his full share.

Mr. Aldred was broadcasting in the ordinary way for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. He was asked to permit this magazine to write an article about his life, because it is a typical success story of a young Canadian with vigour, courage and the willingness to do a job. He discussed this matter with the officials of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and with Mr. Davidson Dunton personally, and he was told that he was a free citizen in a free country. I urge the members of this house to read that article. They will find there simply a story of a young man who, as the heading says, believed he could talk in a free country, and who did, to the man who was writing the article, make certain statements as to things that he thought called for improvement within the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. He has been dismissed because he permitted his name to be associated with the statements contained in that article. He has been told that that was contrary to the oath of secrecy that is held