

*Broadcasting Act*

article from the *Hamilton Spectator* of September 27, 1983. The headline reads: "Use power of sales against porn: Broadcaster". That broadcaster was speaking in Kitchener and said:

People should use their buying power to force pornographic advertising from the media, says a 10-year veteran of radio broadcasting.

"It's a weapon too many of us don't use," said Liz McCloy, a third-year divinity student at the University of Toronto, during a conference on pornography. "Radio stations have images, corporations have images."

When listeners or viewers phone to complain, they may not see the effects of the call, but Ms. McCloy said from her radio experience, "panic sets in."

"Memos go out from general managers to announcers, salesmen and programmers: 'We have to clean up.'"

There is great power in the advertising dollar over the broadcasters when they do step over the mark. The problem that this Bill deals with and the problem we all face is that there is nothing now in the Broadcasting Act to give any kind of direction which would regulate or prevent pornography or the sexual exploitation of women in advertising.

● (1550)

I mentioned the furor on one of the pay TV channels over this Playboy adult programming. I think most Members received a lot of mail on this from their constituents because I did. Although the Playboy TV issue is only a small part of the pornography question, it serves to focus attention on the fact that we have progressed—if you like to use the word progressed in this context to the point where soft-core pornography is available on your television set via broadcast. I wonder how long it will be before soft-core pornography gives way to hard-core pornography and all its horrible ramifications.

The Playboy pay TV episode focused concern on the entire pornography/violence issue. One of the connections between violence toward women and pornography, violent sexism whether implicit or explicit, is that it leads to the degradation of women and has no place in the broadcast media.

As a communications critic for the Official Opposition I am concerned with the sex stereotyping of women in advertising and the degradation of women over the airwaves. Some of us take equal exception to printed exploitation. As a former journalist I recognize that this takes us into the most difficult and sensitive area of censorship, and I am not prepared to deal with that at the moment.

The CRTC is supposed to make decisions based on its view of what is in the best interests of the general public. It must decide what minimum standard of public morality should be applied by those it licenses. This is not a new idea and it falls within the power of the commission.

I would draw to the attention of the House the current code of advertising ethics developed by the CRTC, broadcasters and advertisers and the task force report which I mentioned earlier.

I should like to see the pay TV companies subscribe to and work within the guidelines set out in the report on sexual stereotyping, but there does not seem to be a great deal of activity in this area. Perhaps this is an extremely important and vital reason why we must have a new Broadcasting Act

from the Government—or from the next Government which some of us on this side will have a say in.

I should like to see a new Broadcasting Act tabled in the House as soon as possible and I think it should contain the material set out in Bill C-675, introduced by the Hon. Member for Broadview-Greenwood.

Although I would prefer pay TV licences and the CRTC to come to a co-operative agreement, perhaps the way to set up such a public forum would be to send the Bill to the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture and invite pay TV companies to appear before it to justify why they feel they should not come under more stringent laws on pornography.

Essentially, we are still dealing with the public airwaves and with young people, and we just cannot leave everything to their choice. Somewhere a provision has to be enshrined in the Broadcasting Act which will prevent the sex stereotyping of women.

I am sure I speak for all Members of the Official Opposition when I say that we are pleased to support wholeheartedly the subject matter of Bill C-675.

**Mr. Jack Burghardt (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Communications):** Mr. Speaker, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Communications I welcome this opportunity to participate in the debate on Bill C-675, presented to the House by the Hon. Member for Broadview-Greenwood.

I think it is quite evident from the remarks and comments I have heard outside of the House by Members of all the Parties represented here, that there is a great deal of support for the Bill. I had hoped that the debate this afternoon would be along those lines. This being politics, however, I must say that I am a little disappointed in some of the remarks of the Hon. Member for Broadview-Greenwood in her criticism of the actions or, as I suppose she was suggesting, the inaction of the Minister of Communications (Mr. Fox) regarding this very important concern.

I believe that actions do speak louder than words. If one were to look in *Hansard* since the whole issue of pornography came to the fore, one would see that the Minister of Communications has stated a number of times—and that I, as Parliamentary Secretary have stated a number of times—concern about this matter. We have suggested to the various elements of society responsible for pornography and the degradation of women in broadcasting, and the sex stereotyping question, that they clean up their act.

I am not going to go on at great length this afternoon about the Bill. I think everyone supports it in principle. Certainly the Minister has indicated his concern that something be done in a very definite and parliamentary way through the legal process to put teeth into the Broadcasting Act and regulations affected thereby.

As late as yesterday afternoon the Minister of Communications and I had the opportunity of a meeting with representatives of Media Watch, one of the groups to which the Hon. Member referred. It was set up to watch the media, television