

*Canadian Policy on Broadcasting*

Secretary of State before he made this statement, in view of the fact that Admiral Landymore had been told that his statement had to agree with the line laid down by his department head. The chairman did not really overrule me, but he kept telling the committee, "I recognize the hon. member for Royal", "I recognize the hon. member for Royal." Several times I asked the president of the C.B.C. whether what he was going to tell us had been cleared with the minister, as in the case of Admiral Landymore. Each time the chairman said, "The hon. member for Royal", "the hon. member for Royal", "I recognize the hon. member for Royal." It is nice that the Secretary of State has such precedents to justify her actions in this matter.

When the committee was sitting to consider the reference about the program "Seven Days" I refused to have anything to do with examining or listening to the producers who were telling us that they should have absolute power to do what they liked, and that the management of the C.B.C. had no control over them. I said at that time in no uncertain terms that they were responsible to and under the direction of management. Management can either manage properly or mismanage. In this case I think that the management did not have enough control over the producers. I said I would not listen to these producers attacking the management of the C.B.C. I did say, however, that I would come to the committee meetings if my presence was necessary, in order to maintain a quorum. On two occasions they dragged me out of other committee meetings where there was more than a quorum to come to the meeting of the committee on broadcasting, films and assistance to the arts, so that that committee would have a quorum.

About a year ago in Hamilton I was engaged in a debate regarding the C.B.C. The gentleman on the other side of the debate was one of these producers. He emphasized to the audience at McMaster University in no uncertain terms that I took such little interest in radio and TV that I read a newspaper all the time he was giving his evidence before the committee. I am glad he noticed that. I had been dragged there to make a quorum, but I had said that I would not listen to a producer attacking the management. I believe in the responsibility of management to the responsible head of the department. The responsible head of that department is the Secretary of State. Following that line of conviction and reasoning, the

[Mr. Cowan.]

hired hands are responsible to the Secretary of State. I am with her 100 per cent. I do not like the newspaper headings such as "Judy LaMarsh Stands Alone". Judy LaMarsh has a precedent in the former minister of national defence, and is on firm and solid ground in the action she has taken.

I have a large number of thoughts I should like to express in respect of the Broadcasting Act, but first I wish to mention the absolute impotence of individual members of parliament. They do not account for anything. It does not matter whether the private member is on the so-called government side or on the opposition side of the house; I have been a member of this house for a little better than five years now and I know whereof I speak. Private members of parliament are asked nothing and told nothing. Nothing is expected of them, except to be here to vote in accordance with the wishes of the cabinet, no matter what those wishes may be.

But, let us take the broadcasting bill. I am a member of the broadcasting committee; I am interested in broadcasting and radio. I never saw the bill, of course, until it was placed on my desk in my absence, and in the absence of other members of this house who had taken part in some provincial elections. When we returned, a copy of the bill was on our desks. We are expected to support the bill, because if we do not the government might fall and that would be a fate worse than death for the Dominion of Canada. I cannot agree that it would be a fate worse than death, because I feel that parliament is suffering fates worse than death because parliament does not govern this country any more; the cabinet does.

The blighters sitting behind and to the right and left of the cabinet are supposed to raise their hands even if they have never seen the bill before. They are supposed to support it, and it is expected that the opposition will cause only trouble. I am of the opinion that members of parliament are intelligent men. They were not sent down here by the constituents whom they represent to look like bumps on a log. The private members to the right of Mr. Speaker are supposed to support the action of the cabinet, and the members to the left of Mr. Speaker are supposed to raise objection. There are intelligent men on both sides of the house and among the private members. The consensus of the entire parliament should become the laws of the land, and not what cabinet brings down and says we should support because it is the considered opinion of the cabinet.