

Perhaps members of the press have distorted and exaggerated issues and in many cases lost their credibility. Thus at this time, when their voices are loud and clear and uniform on Bill C-58, few in this House, in these seats of power, are listening. It is as though they cried wolf too often, and unfortunately they are not being heard right now.

Virtually every major and minor newspaper and columnist is attacking Bill C-58 as a threat to the basic freedom of communication in our society. They are stressing the inherent danger of control of content and the use of tax legislation to drive publications and the border television stations such as KVOS-BC Ltd. out of the country. But now members of this House will not listen. That in itself is frightening. It means they have contempt for the press or lack of confidence in it; therefore it could be expendable in the hands of ruthless government. It is basic that even a bad press that is free is essential to a free society; when your press is no longer able to watch, no longer able to report, even if the reportage is bad, then your society is in jeopardy.

It has been said that parliamentarians and the press are natural enemies. I think at the present time this can be a very dangerous enmity since parliament seems determined to take unto itself, through Bill C-58, the power to control content in one segment of the media and remove the court's right of final arbiter in the question of content control and manipulation control. This will ultimately, if the law is enforced equally as it should be, affect the whole media. It only needs a small start to spread.

If we were to lose our liberties, the liberty of the press would bring them all back again. The liberty of the press and the liberty of the country must stand or fall together, as one writer said. The loss can spread once it starts with the speed of an infectious disease through the entire body of publications. When this happens, and it can happen, freedom is lost.

As long as the press is free and democratic, a type of love-hate relationship will exist. I think it is healthy that it exists between parliamentarians and the media. It is based on a reliance on each other and the need to work together; the one to enact legislation, and the other to tell it to the public.

For the politicians in parliament there is a fundamental ambition; that is to use the press, the media, to help them get re-elected. And the press, feeling this power only during elections, is inclined to subtle arrogance. But when freedom goes there are no elections and there is no need for those in power to maintain a friendship with the press. There are those dangers.

There is a thought that is passing through my mind as I read the history of democracies that have died. In every case the first action in their demolition was elimination of the press. It has been said so often, I have said it before and I say it again, that even a bad and irresponsible press that is free is better than no free press.

There has never been a time in our history when a responsible and dedicated press dedicated to this nation could be more useful and important to our sociological and economic health and the national well being. The good messages that are coming out of this House, the good

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things that are happening despite partisan politics in the front rows here, and the debate that goes on across this great hall, all the good things happening here are not being told across Canada. The psychic depression is more devastating, I would think, as a result possibly of press failure to tell the good as well as the bad. It is probably more serious than the economic pressures and worries.

That is not the issue at this time, however. No matter what the press does here it must be held free. Perhaps it may have to use self-discipline, but that is another debate. Even if parliament is not listening to the message about Bill C-58—perhaps because of annoyance—it changes nothing. The vindictive and punitive power used by parliament is dangerous. What is next after Bill C-58?

It is interesting to note that the Toronto *Sun*, a unique publication that survived and asked no quarter, asked no handout, asked no protection from the government of Canada in fighting the giants of Toronto, the *Globe and Mail* and the Toronto *Star*. The *Sun's* survival is something of a media miracle. The spirit of those who worked on the *Telegram* moved to the *Sun* when that paper was demolished in a sense, or taken over by the two giants.

The *Sun* points out, as many of us have pointed out repeatedly here, that the newspapers of Canada are jammed with material from the *New York Times*, the *London Observer*, *The Economist*, the *Los Angeles Times*, etc. If the C-58 content rules were applied consistently and as they should be in law, not one Canadian newspaper could meet the 80 per cent measure, a measure that would be made by ruler and probably a pocket calculator in the hands of officials of the Department of National Revenue. It would also mean that Canadians would be deprived of foreign news because the words "essentially different" and the other words "continuing arrangement" which govern this whole bill would ban entry of outside information.

On October 30, 1975, the Vancouver *Sun* wrote:

If there are tears to be shed they are not for two magazines that will, without doubt, continue to provide many of their two million Canadian purchasers—and at least twice as many readers—with a different American version.

Rather, they are for a country that would allow its laws to be twisted by bureaucratic redefinition to apply to two specific publications, whatever the publications ...

The article continues:

Whatever else it is, it is not freedom of the press, that "fundamental freedom" enshrined in that limited, neglected and for the most part ineffective act known as the Canadian Bill of Rights. Perhaps it is time that "fundamental freedom" was tested in a courtroom.

In the Montreal *Gazette* of November 27, 1975, John Meyer wrote, "Thoughtful Canadians have every reason to be apprehensive". He discussed the extremes to which the government is prepared to go, and said:

That government should be willing to bring its authority to bear to destroy competition as distinct from equalizing it, ought to cause other foreign subsidiaries in Canada to ask when they will be found no longer acceptable.

The list is endless. The Secretary of State repeatedly relied on the Canadian periodical association to support his position. This organization was formed less than three years ago in order to push this bill through for vested interests, not in the interests of Canada. Certainly if I