

Canadian Broadcasting Act

responsible for the economic chaos and suffering of the hungry thirties, for financing Hitler to power, for promoting world war II with its tragic carnage? Do you know that there is a close tie-up between international communism, international finance and international political Zionism?

These are the views of the member for Peace River. I have no doubt they were spoken with conviction, but he is convinced of things which I believe to be wrong. He has faiths and beliefs which I cannot accept; and he is loyal to ideas which I abhor and scorn. I would say indeed that the ideas enunciated in that broadcast were dangerously subversive, that they approached something close to racial hatred. Yet I will insist that the hon. member for Peace River had the right to say those things because I rely upon the common sense of the people of Canada to sift the dross from that which is good and decent. Therefore I am not prepared to join with those who will make an organized although insidious attack on freedom.

All I want to do is remind the house that parliament is still the guardian of the rights of the people. Parliament is still the final custodian of freedom, and in a country such as Canada in which every group is a minority, parliament has a special responsibility. That being so, I would like to commend to the house a quotation to be found in the report of the British broadcasting committee of 1949, in the brief of Mr. Geoffrey Crowther and Sir Robert Watson-Watt:

The only ultimate safeguard of liberty lies in diversity. The report which your committee will make will be a crucial stage in the resuscitation, or in the destruction, of the free society.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the motion?

Mr. E. G. Hansell (MacLeod): Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to take up any further time of the house in this debate, but the speech that has been made by the hon. member for Winnipeg North (Mr. Stewart) should be answered. I do not believe it should be just left in the air; but I feel that it could be better answered after the committee has discussed the bill, and had the opportunity of bringing out certain facts respecting the operation of the C.B.C. Therefore I will reserve what I might have to say on this matter until after the committee has reported and the bill has come back to the house.

In passing, I will say that the hon. member has attempted to take up a good deal of time in suggesting, if not directly, then by inference that there are people in the house who are desirous of suppressing freedom of speech. That is absolutely incorrect. No one in this group, no one in this house, has any desire to suppress freedom of speech. What we do desire is that whatever goes out over the air

[Mr. Stewart (Winnipeg North).]

by way of propaganda—I use the word in its best sense, for after all it is propaganda—should be answered. Nobody speaks over the air unless he has some information to divulge, or unless he is desirous of influencing people. There would be no other purpose. Therefore I use the word propaganda in its best sense. All we say is that when a speech goes out over the air an opportunity should be given for those views to be answered. We do not believe in suppression, and the hon. member cannot get away with that. We believe that all have a right to speak. We do not believe that the taxpayers' money should be used to propagate any idea that cannot be answered in the same way. That is our position; and that cannot be done in the limited time available and with the limited air channels used on the national networks.

We have no objection to men going out to the vacant lot, if they want to, and blowing their heads off with the sound of their own voices. We have no objection to men renting halls. We believe in the freedom of assembly. Let them speak to those who want to hear them. We have no objection to men gathering people around them, if they have something they think is good for people to listen to. But when it comes to putting millions of dollars of taxpayers' money into a radio corporation, whose time and whose channels are limited for people who may want to answer that which goes over the air, that is where we have some argument.

As I said, I am speaking now purely extemporaneously. I will have something more to say on this matter after the committee has done its work and the bill is reported.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to the special committee on radio broadcasting.

GOVERNMENT ANNUITIES ACT

INCREASE IN MAXIMUM ANNUITY TO \$2,400 AND PROVISION OF GREATER FLEXIBILITY

Hon. Alphonse Fournier (for the Minister of Labour) moved the second reading of Bill No. 23, to amend the Government Annuities Act.

Mr. Knowles: Has the parliamentary assistant answers to any questions that were asked at an earlier stage that he could give the house at this time?

Mr. Paul E. Cote (Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Labour): As I had occasion to mention during the debate on the resolution, it is our intention immediately after second reading of the bill to move that it be referred to the standing committee on industrial relations. Since hon. members who