

*Canadian Policy on Broadcasting*

reincarnation would not cure. The parliamentary secretary said that the whole purpose of the bill was to take broadcasting away from the realm of political intervention, so it could operate freely and not be subject to political pressures. I wonder whether he has forgotten the provision whereby appeals from the decisions of the commission can be taken to the minister. This leaves matters in a very unsatisfactory position.

A national broadcasting policy is referred to in the bill, but nowhere is this so-called national broadcasting policy defined. Anyone in conflict with the aims and objectives of the so-called national broadcasting policy can be speedily punished. And what a provision for punishment is contained in the bill—a fine of \$100,000. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, what private station will dare go against a decision of the executive committee, or the minister in her directions to that committee or the radio commission, if they have hanging over their heads the penalty of a fine of \$100,000? What inducement is that to free speech and free programming in the country?

**Miss LaMarsh:** Read the act.

**Mr. Nielsen:** I have read the act. I have read it from cover to cover. The minister has one version of it and I have another.

**Miss LaMarsh:** Everybody in the country has one and you have another.

**Mr. Nielsen:** I do not believe I am alone in the views I hold.

**Miss LaMarsh:** Nobody in broadcasting agrees with you on this.

**Mr. Nielsen:** In effect what the act does is give the C.B.C. a mandate. That is what hon. members opposite have been saying. It gives the C.B.C. top priority over the private sector of broadcasting in this country. Hon. members opposite speak of that private sector as though it has a job to do, too, but that it is really incidental. This I believe is not the way to look at it at all.

This mandate is spelled out in clause 2 (h) of the bill, where the following words are used:

—where any conflict arises between the objectives of the national broadcasting service and the interests of the private element of the Canadian broadcasting system, the objectives of the national broadcasting service must prevail;

[Mr. Nielsen.]

Nowhere are the objectives clearly spelled out; nor is it spelled out who or what body will establish that such a conflict has indeed arisen. Who makes, for instance, a decision, and on what basis is a decision made, as to what constitutes a “balanced”, and I think that is the word used in clause 2 (g),—service of information? Who makes the decision as to what is balanced and what is unbalanced?

**Miss LaMarsh:** Parliament.

**Mr. Nielsen:** The minister says parliament makes that decision. I respectfully submit to her that if this is her belief, she has not read the bill. The executive committee makes that decision, and the decision of the executive committee will be subject to political influence. The private sector of broadcasting is placed in a clearly disadvantageous and inferior position, not necessarily because it is less responsible than the C.B.C. but simply because it is private. This has long been one of the tenets of the bureaucrats in the Liberal hierarchy. That is why they are always going off the rails on matters of policy of this nature. They did it with respect to the minister of consumer affairs, as he has almost come to be known.

**Mr. Turner:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) is not questioning parliament's decision on second reading of that bill, is he?

**Miss LaMarsh:** He is the same old hatchetman.

**Mr. Nielsen:** By gosh, Mr. Speaker, if I am a hatchetman I should take lessons from the minister, because I have not seen a better job than that done on the C.B.C. management in the last couple of days by the minister.

**Mr. Churchill:** The hatchetwoman.

**Mr. Nielsen:** We have had many examples of the awful urge of the Liberal party to control and regulate. I think they have a pathological compulsion to bureaucratize society. Under this bill they will make the C.B.C. supreme. The Conservative Government created the Board of Broadcast Governors in order that the C.B.C. might not be an uncontrollable octopus. I think that board has done a very good job. I may be alone in that opinion.

**Miss LaMarsh:** You are.

**Mr. Lewis:** You are.