

*Government Orders*

I have another concern that is related to that one. If that happens, as is proposed, how will this contribute to a possible new definition of Canada? Will it go a long way toward defining Canada as two solitudes, an English one and a French one? With respect to the French one, are we going to be primarily concerned about the French in Quebec as we ought to be to a significant degree by virtue of the numbers there? Are we going to abandon, or forget, or be less sensitive to *les francophones hors Québec*?

[Translation]

Why more Canadian content and why involve the National Film Board of Canada?

[English]

I want to look at the power of the media, the power of television and radio. We know that we need information on an increasingly regular and important basis. We recognize that our attitudes are formed by the knowledge and the information that we receive. We know as well that it is important to have Canadian information, Canadian content so that we can form attitudes about ourselves as Canadians, about the role that we occupy in this world in juxtaposition to other countries, and about the kind of economic, social and cultural development that we want for our nation. Where do we want to go as a nation?

Clearly, those are the kinds of questions that we are going to be exposed to by television and radio. Clearly, if the content, the attitudes, and the values are Canadian, that is going to be extremely helpful. If it were not, what kinds of conclusions are we going to reach? We need to talk to each other, as many of my colleagues have said. We need to recognize that we have important regions, such as the province of Quebec, the province of Ontario, the Atlantic provinces, our western provinces, and our great north. Will this contribute to helping us to reach out and to talk to each other? Will this kind of orientation that we are taking now prevent us from realizing the true nature of Canada, not only with regard to these five regions of which I speak, but our aboriginal people. Clearly, our aboriginal people are unique in many ways to the country. We have an important French language population. It is roughly 7 million Canadians. We have a number of important people who come from groups

other than aboriginal, French, or English. Clearly we also have the majority group, the English. Will this bill really contribute to identifying those particularly unique groups, and let us talk together and build a stronger nation? Those are questions that are a real concern to me.

One of my colleagues mentioned this particular institution, the CBC, and communications, in general, as potential instruments to national unity. It can be if it is handled appropriately, but will it be?

Why is it that we, as politicians, are often anxious to get in front of the camera and to be listened to on the radio? It is because we recognize the power of the media. We recognize what radio and television can do for us, for our parties, and for our ideas. If it can do that for us, it can do a lot for the country. Let us review some of the facts that some of our colleagues have shared. They are important because they emphasize and corroborate the points that I am making with respect to the power of the media.

Children watch roughly 1,000 hours of television, roughly the same amount of time that they spend in school and perhaps a bit more. Ninety-five per cent of Canadians listen to the radio 18 hours a week. That is almost as much time listening to the radio. Fifty per cent of Canadians use as a principle source of information, radio and television; 75 per cent of our books now used and read are non-Canadian; 70 per cent of our periodicals are foreign; and adult Canadians who listen to English language television and radio are listening to 70 per cent non-Canadian content.

These are really very powerful facts that speak to this dimension that we are trying to discuss today. That is, the need to have additional Canadian content and to involve the National Film Board which is a unique instrument to speak eloquently about some of the specific and particular features of our nation.

We need news and programs which are Canadian based and which have Canadian values. We want our own performers. We want to see them, encourage them, and develop them. Let us recognize that within that whole industry, there are important jobs for Canadians. If I have a choice, and without wanting to take anything away from anybody, I would want Canadians to get special and preferential treatment in this particular area.