

CBC Programming

privilege of privacy is a privilege and right which all Canadians and members of this House ought to revere.

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): I draw to the attention of hon. members that if the mover of the motion, the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale), speaks at this time, he will close the debate. Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, I think most of us have heard it said that all politicians have in them some thing of the ham actor. Certainly, as I listened to some contributions in this debate I concluded that in this House there is evidence of a great deal of frustrated dramatic artistry. It will be interesting to see, when the TV camera invades this chamber, how we shall be portrayed in glorious technicolour.

I am afraid the debate has digressed from the subject matter before the House. What precipitated the debate was the notice of motion asking that an order of the House do issue for all correspondence with the CBC pertaining to the program "Baptizing." We then heard learned dissertations on the subject of freedom. The hon. member for St. Paul's (Mr. Roberts) embarked on this theme at some length this afternoon. Incidentally, I notice that the phrase "chartered libertine" which I used, was printed in *Hansard* as "chartered liberty". The actual phrase I used, and which should be corrected in the revised version of *Hansard*, is "chartered libertine". The definition of libertine is one who is licentious or allowed to do as he pleases.

While we are discussing the invasion of privacy, individual, personal rights and the tabling of correspondence, I suggest that one of the more popular types of program on radio, and this is being heard increasingly in Canada, is known as the open line program. Many open line programs depend almost exclusively on correspondence. The expressions of opinion on topics of the day are read over the air freely and openly. If we are going to get into the area of placing a special restriction on this sort of correspondence, it will severely restrict the operations of the electronic media, which for hour after hour, expose public opinion. I certainly would not expect the CBC to table letters marked personal and confidential. I think the argument put forward by several members is quite a spurious argument in this regard.

● (1730)

It has been suggested that I, as a free citizen, have a right to turn off the program. I must say that is exactly what I did. There had been a considerable amount of publicity preceding the presentation of the performances. I believe "Baptizing" was the first program in the series.

In light of the considerable publicity put out by the CBC, I waited with some anticipation for the first presentation. I am interested in good drama. Unfortunately, I was considerably disappointed and I turned it off. A group of young people came to me and suggested that I make a protest. I thought that was fascinating indeed. They described what had actually gone on.

[Mr. Fleming.]

Most of us in this House of Commons are middle aged. Recently, Frank Capra, a distinguished Hollywood producer, was interviewed by Vernon Scott. The interview was headed "Middle-aged get jollies from violence". I quote from this interview:

Frank Capra, winner of three Oscars for nonviolent movies, said today it is middle-aged people who get their jollies from sex and violence, not young folk.

If we were really catering to the needs of young folk through the electronic media today, we would be programming at a far different level.

I notice Your Honour is about to flag me down. May I just make one more point. The CBC is funded by very generous amounts of money from the taxpayers of Canada. In many respects it does an outstanding job. However, I contend it is not the responsibility and function of the CBC to experiment at the taxpayers' expense with off-beat, off-Broadway types of productions you would see in the sleazy parts of New York and expose this sort of production, according to the statistics given to us, to three million people. That is certainly not a function of the CBC.

I hope the House will give its approval to the tabling of these letters so we can actually see how the people of Canada feel about these matters. I took this to the president of the CBC in a personal letter. He replied that he had received all these wonderful letters in support of the program. If that is true I would like to see how the evidence shapes up in the actual tabling of these letters.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion of the hon. member for Brandon-Souris?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): In my opinion, the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Call in the members. The House divided on the motion (Mr. Dinsdale) which was negated on the following division?