

Broadcasting Act

cities, to find commercial support, the means to carry on this response to the desire of people to hear broadcasting in their own languages, languages other than English and French. Subclauses (i) and (j) of Clause 3 contain the Government's response to the realities I have just sketched and the attempt to provide for them.

What will the programming provided by alternative television programming services be like? One short line says that it shall reflect Canada's regions and multicultural nature. There, of course, is the vital adjective. It shall, as far as possible, be acquired rather than produced by those services.

• (1240)

This third network is only a concept within the legislation. The resources have not been provided and study is to continue. It is a service that will be loaded with responsibility not just for multiculturalism but the regional realities and other diversities in Canada. It is feared that as a result of this third network, CBC and Radio Canada will pay less attention to the regional nature of the country.

We are told that this third network will provide for the multicultural nature of Canada and that the programming will be acquired rather than produced by those services. I can only conclude that this will be a very limited service. It is still only a concept because the Government has not provided the resources. We shall see what the next Government will do, but can only hope that it will move quickly to provide those resources.

This service could broadcast excellent NFB productions to Canadians. This service will hardly be able to develop a philosophy and view of Canada which needs to be reflected in broadcasting, or carry primarily the production of programming designed to reflect that reality.

There is no provision for broadcasting in languages other than French and English. Will there be a channel in the predominantly English speaking parts of the country to broadcast this kind of acquired programming in English while the areas that are predominantly French speaking will broadcast on another channel? Obviously, minorities will be neglected. What will the effect of such terribly limited resources in our metropolitan markets be on those producing such programming?

While there is some vision, there is not much evidence of that concept being developed. As long as this remains broadcasting primarily in English and French, it may serve to enlighten Canadians who know the official languages well but will do nothing to fill the gap in order to recognize multiculturalism as also being multilingual and that the diversity of languages spoken by Canadians needs some reflection in broadcasting policy.

I regret that we are likely to see just this one round of debate on this Bill, without amendments in order to continue the discussion that is so badly needed if the multiculturalism

policy we have enunciated is to become more than just a motto but a reality of federal institutions in the broadcast area.

Mr. Orlikow: Mr. Speaker, the Member talked about the need for programming in languages other than English or French. Not only is there very little broadcasting on radio or television in languages other than English or French, there is almost no programming which explains the life and problems of our native people and people who come from countries whose knowledge and comfort in English or French is limited.

The Hon. Member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Keeper) is here. There are elementary schools in his constituency and part of my constituency, where 95 per cent of the students come from either native families or new immigrant families whose language is neither English nor French.

Does he not agree that it is time that both public and private television and radio began to face up to the reality of what is happening in cities like Winnipeg, which is a small example of what is taking place in other areas like Toronto and Vancouver? Should they not deal with these problems? Is it not time for the Government to instruct them to do so? It has not called upon them to do the kind of job that is so essential if these people are to be integrated into the mainstream of Canadian life.

Mr. Epp (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for his question because it gives me an opportunity to expand on this important matter. He is right about the need and the limited response.

I alluded to CBQ's broadcasting of an hour of Oji-Cree in Thunder Bay every Friday afternoon. It is a rare exception to this generalization that the need is not being met. It is a very limited response in an area of enormous importance. The population in northwestern Ontario that speaks Ojibway and Cree often live in isolated communities. They live in sufficient numbers for the languages to have their own vitality. Nothing in the age of electronic information does more to strengthen the use of language and the belief in a future of it than to be able to hear it on the radio or television.

There is a diversity of population in cities from coast to coast. Aboriginal people and others from all over the world deserve to have broadcasting in their language so they may have an opportunity to live something of the strength of their own culture through the existence of their language.

The culture we see at folklore festivals is often reduced to food and dance partly because we do not know the languages. When the languages are reduced to the level that one communicates in a family, a great deal of the beauty and strength of a culture is lost.

If Barbara Ward's observation years ago about Canada being the first international nation is to be a reality, then our broadcasting must operate in more than just English and French. There must be a recognition of the need in our cities and wherever people live with a diversity of languages, to