

Senator Desruisseaux was no doubt a decision he would have to make, but it was for us to determine how objective could be the insights of someone who was surely in a unique position, someone whose extensive media holdings had relatively recently been sold into an even more extensive media empire.

Our decision is a matter of record. So is my observation that although Senator Desruisseaux was not a member of the committee, he was free to attend our sessions and to speak at our sessions. To my recollection, he attended only once, and then he remained silent. In any event, there is one virtue in all of this. Senator Desruisseaux has been able to say, as he did in his speech in the chamber, the fact he had not been on the committee left him "freer to comment on this report, without being taxed with being an associated party in any way imaginable", and he said he appreciated this.

Let me then turn to the substance of the senator's remarks. In the circumstances, I shall ignore Senator Desruisseaux's apology for everyone from Lord Thompson to the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald*. Clearly we disagree; it is as simple as that. I have the greatest of respect for Senator Desruisseaux. Simply stated, it is an honest disagreement.

So, no doubt, is Senator Desruisseaux's disagreement with Senator O'Leary. Listen, if you will, to two quotations. Here is Senator Desruisseaux, at page 431 of the Senate *Hansard*:

I have participated in all the activities of the press and the broadcasting industry. I have attended their meetings, taken part in their discussions, and reports, and the studies of their national associations, over a number of years, and I certainly cannot agree to such views as those contained in the committee's report.

Contrast that with the comment of Senator O'Leary in his opening statement:

I have attended many meetings of editors and publishers, mainly held once a year, and what you got from such a meeting was a pentecostal feast of self praise, a sort of mutual admiration society. If they admitted to guilt at all, they swept everything under the rug of venerable and sanctified cliché about the freedom of the press.

There are two positions as to these meetings—the position of Senator Desruisseaux and the position of Senator O'Leary. Clearly the majority on the committee supports Senator O'Leary's position.

On another matter, I should like to quote Senator Desruisseaux at page 431 of the *Senate Debates*. Turning to the substance of his remarks, he said:

At one place in its quest for excellence the committee's standard for judging performance is said to be this: How successful is that newspaper or broadcasting station in preparing its audience for social changes?

With some serious members of the press I question whether this is an adequate approach.

After some fanciful use of weapon words like "mould" and "brainwash", Senator Desruisseaux comes on to complete his position thusly:

It is the function of the press and the function of broadcasting to assure freedom of the views of its public in the light of faithful, truthful and completely reported events from everywhere in the world.

No one could disagree with that position, but surely honourable senators there is something more. Surely, any newspaper worthy of the name must perform thusly. Surely these are absolutely rock bottom minimal requirements, and surely such obvious minimal requirements are not those against which we should measure performance and quality. Change is ubiquitous; the velocity of change engulfs us all every day. Indeed, one of the things that has happened in the past 24 hours, one of the facts of the past 24 hours, is change.

I want to be very clear on one thing. Our report says:

To insist that this is the media's main job is not to suggest any built-in bias for or against any notion of progress.

I thought Senator Prowse said this simply and effectively when he spoke in the debate as follows:

Let me now deal with that phrase that has been the subject of discussion. What is the responsibility of the newspaper to prepare people for change? To prepare a person for change does not mean that you have to advocate the change which may be coming; but, surely to goodness, if you are running a good newspaper you have a responsibility to let people know that change is about to take place.

In my view, our colleague Senator Stanbury effectively summed up the entire argument in this rather compelling statement at page 462 of the *Senate Hansard*:

Change need not be feared if it is understood, but if day after day we are assaulted with the news of violent events which we have not anticipated or whose causative factors have not been explained, we can hardly expect to avoid the feeling that events chase each other across our lives without rhyme or reason and are so far beyond our ability to affect or control that we might just as well lapse into apathy or seek change or authority through violence.

Honourable senators, Senator Desruisseaux also had much to say about broadcasting; much about the CBC, which he does not like. I shall return to the corporation in a moment, but first of all I would make a point that I think is self-explanatory. Senator Desruisseaux at page 430 said:

I would have appreciated analyses and more particularly recommendations with regard to another problem of unpleasant competition by the hundreds of American radio and television stations all along the 4,000 miles of the Canada-United States border.

That particular recommendation is, of course, made specifically, and in some detail, at page 209 of the report.