

*Canadian Policy on Broadcasting*

provision of alternative television service in that general region. Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, this is quite interesting. Three applications by John Albulet of Ottawa for C.A.T.V. systems in Prescott, Gananoque and Napanee were turned down on the ground that they would inhibit the provision of alternative television service in that general region. I made inquiries and found that the people in Gananoque and Napanee pick up the Kingston station which is privately owned.

I do not know how familiar hon. members are with the operation of C.A.T.V. installations, but the point one must bear in mind is that if you are the owner of a television station and have a licence from the government you possess a very valuable franchise. The more viewers you have, the higher the advertising rates you can charge the people who may wish to make use of your television station. But if any influence comes into play which reduces the size of your audience, the advertisers will not willingly pay any rate which you as the owner of the station wish to charge. They will argue with you; they will show you that your audience of viewers is not as big as you claim it is, particularly if there are C.A.T.V. installations in the neighbourhood. I say to you quite frankly, honestly and without fear of contradiction that the television station owners do not want the people in their immediate territory looking at the programs of other stations because when they look at other stations' programs they reduce the size of the audience the local T.V. station operator is seeking to sell to advertisers.

I have mentioned in the house before today the interesting set-up at the lakehead at Port Arthur and Fort William where they have a T.V. station. I believe there are about 24,000 or 25,000 homes at the lakehead and there is one television station. The people at the lakehead are so pleased at the fact that they can look only at the one station that more than half of them, over 13,000 subscribers in Port Arthur, pay \$5 a month so they will not have to look only at the Port Arthur station and can have their choice of Duluth-Superior or Marquette in Michigan. When over 13,000 families are willing to pay approximately \$5 a month for C.A.T.V. service because there is only one station in the area, what better commentary do you need in respect of whether or not the Canadian station is meeting the desires and wishes of the people of Canada?

[Mr. Cowan.]

The C.A.T.V. applicant was denied licences for Gananoque and Napanee. One can realize that if there were C.A.T.V. franchises in those places the people would be picking up stations such as Watertown, New York. No doubt you have heard over the years that the Americans have a tremendously deteriorating influence on anybody with whom they come in contact and that we must protect ourselves against the terrific influence which the Americans exert on such naïve and innocent people as we pristine, pure Canadians. If it is possible to keep Canadian citizens in Gananoque and Napanee from looking at American stations—only incidentally would they look at the Kingston station, you understand—it should be done because one never knows what ideas they might get. So these applications for C.A.T.V. franchises were denied and, of course, the television station owner in Kingston is quite happy because possibly his audience will be bigger if they have to look at his station without having the choice of stations which the C.A.T.V. system could bring in.

To return to the matter of Prescott, we are told that this application has been denied on the ground that it would inhibit the provision of alternative television service in this general region. That is a good mouth-filling phrase; it almost equals the right of freedom of expression—period. It was turned down on the ground that it would inhibit the provision of alternative television service in this general region—Prescott, Gananoque and Napanee. I telephoned Prescott and spoke to a very knowledgeable man there. He informed me that in Prescott the people are able to bring in on their sets the independent station here in Ottawa and are also able to receive Kingston. He said that because Cornwall is a relay set-up from the privately owned station in Ottawa they do not bring in Cornwall but bring in the French station out of Ottawa, the privately owned station out of Ottawa and the Kingston privately owned station. They do not get the C.B.C. very clearly in Prescott. But he says they spend all their time watching Watertown.

The C.A.T.V. applicant wanted to bring in all the Canadian stations I have mentioned with a clearer picture and of course pick up some United States stations as well. However, it was pointed out that this would inhibit the provision of alternative television service in that general region. You probably know that the television licensee in Cornwall fell on