

*Canadian Broadcasting Policy*

the policies to cover broadcasting we must fulfil our responsibility to the Canadian people. After all, that includes ourselves as well.

I commend this resolution and certainly support it most completely because it is one of the most important topics with which we must deal in the remaining months of this session. So I say again that we look forward to the legislation and the debate which will follow.

**Mr. Stanbury:** Mr. Chairman, as one who during the last session had the privilege and responsibility of chairing the standing committee on broadcasting, films and assistance to the arts, I should like first to express my appreciation to the members of that committee who spent many long hours considering the government's white paper on broadcasting and hearing witnesses from many interested groups in Canada and also from abroad. Particularly I wish to express my thanks to the vice chairman of the committee, the hon. member for Montmagny L'Islet, and the other members of the steering committee, the hon. member for Royal, the hon. member for Burnaby-Richmond and the hon. member for Okanagan-Revelstoke. These members contributed a great deal indeed to the report which was made to this house on March 21 last by the committee.

I hope that the recommendations contained in that report will be reflected in the bill which the Secretary of State will be revealing to us shortly. I want to thank her for her comments about the work of the committee and for her assurance that the bill will reflect some of the thinking of our committee. I believe the committee's report was generally well received and was constructive largely because members of the committee approached the subject with that sense of responsibility referred to by many hon. members today as being of the highest importance to Canada. In the committee the subject was approached in a non-partisan manner. I hope that approach will persist during consideration of the resolution and the bill to follow.

● (4:50 p.m.)

Committee members realized how vital broadcasting is to the fabric of our country. But may I say, Mr. Chairman, that the committee did not do its job as well as it might have, any more than our broadcasting system has performed over the past 35 years as well as it might have. The magnitude of the challenge to all of us dealing with this subject is of the same order as the importance of the subject to our country. It is a subject of such

importance that it is probably not possible for this parliament to do complete justice to it, nor will it be possible for whatever structure we create to do the job as well as the need demands that it be done.

Our chief challenge in redrawing legislation for broadcasting is to achieve public control of our broadcasting system without government direction. This is a most difficult task, but it is one which was approached in the white paper in a way which received the general approval of the broadcasting committee and of commentators throughout the country.

The white paper looks to the establishment of an authority which will oversee all broadcasting in Canada. It goes without saying that it will be extremely important what instructions we give to that authority and what kind of personnel it will have. In this connection I think it is appropriate to refer to an editorial in the magazine, *Actra*, of September 6, 1966 which said that the B.B.C. should be:

—composed of individuals whose one concern will be to strengthen the political, social and economic fabric of Canada through the encouragement of Canadian programming; who will bow their heads to no commercial pressure; and who will not see as part of their function the need to protect and augment private profit at public expense or public bureaucracy for political expedience.

The new supervising authority will be extremely important to the functioning of our broadcasting system, but I hope we will not lose sight of the fact that the most important element in our broadcasting system is the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation which was established some 35 years ago to serve the public interest through broadcasting in Canada. The closing paragraph in our committee's report underlines this fact:

We express our conviction that the primacy of the public sector should be the paramount and continuing objective of the new legislation; that we must make more effective, and not undermine the main instrument by which "national consciousness may be fostered and sustained and national unity still further strengthened."

Those last few words were a quotation from the speech of Right Hon. R. B. Bennett, when he introduced the legislation establishing the C.B.C. He saw the C.B.C. as the main instrument by which "national consciousness may be fostered and sustained and national unity still further strengthened."

It is clear that this objective set forth by a Conservative prime minister some 35 years ago should be one shared by all parties in the house today. It is an objective which might