

Telegraphs Act

never dubious about anything the government tells him. In fact, it seems to me he sometimes goes overboard far in advance of the government and dives into deep water with his mouth wide open—

Mr. Hosking: I hope I never make any more mistakes than the government.

Mr. Green:—without the slightest hesitation. In any event I am quite sure there will be supporters of the government across the country who will not be in sympathy with this move. It is not a very far step from a move of this type to a restriction of the freedom of the press. These cable services are primarily of use to the press of Canada and to the business community yet the government is stepping in and saying, "You have to do business through our nice little crown company; you cannot give your business to companies having the most modern equipment and providing the best service possible because that competition might be too much for our crown company." When you have a government with a mental attitude of that kind it will do the same thing in other fields. It is just one more step on the road downhill to dictatorship in Canada.

Mr. Pickersgill: It is nice to see the Tories so concerned over a United States company.

Mr. Green: We hear a chirp from the official squirmer of the house. We have this step and no doubt there will be other steps following until eventually the Canadian people will realize what is going on in this house and throw out this government. It is strange to have the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Pickersgill) raising the question of United States companies because—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Green: Let us have all the heckling we can on that. This is a very good place to have it. What is actually being done is that this crown company is in partnership with a large United States company, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. That is the only way in which this crown company will be able to get service through the coaxial cable system. They have this agreement with the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. So far as United States companies are concerned we are both in the same position.

Mr. Hosking: Except that we are tied in with the British government.

Mr. Green: Tied in with the British post office, but that was when they had socialism in the United Kingdom and that is why members of the C.C.F. are supporting this bill.

[Mr. Green.]

They are speaking in accordance with their beliefs and they are a whole lot more genuine about the thing than are the members of the Liberal party. They have given the minister far more support than he has received from anyone on his own side.

There is no need to go into the question at any further length. We have made our position clear. We think the government is making a great mistake. Even though this bill passes I suggest to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marler) that he take another look at his policy and it may not be too late for him to make a change to permit other outlets from the coaxial cable and allow private companies to have this same type of service. If it is considered that 24 outlets are too many perhaps he would give permission for a smaller number. I do suggest that in the interests of the country he should take another look at this whole question and make some changes in the policy he has been following to date.

Mr. T. S. Barnett (Comox-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I did not expect that there would be any discussion on third reading. I am inclined to agree with the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra (Mr. Green) when he says that the hon. member for Wellington South (Mr. Hosking) is perhaps never dubious as to the policy of the present government. However, I think the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra will agree that that cannot be said about me. The thing which has surprised me about this whole matter is that apparently the Conservative party has been as gullible as the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra accuses the hon. member for Wellington South of being. By that I mean to say that they seem to have swallowed holus bolus the attempt which was made by the Commercial Cable Company—I do not blame them for doing it—to use this bill as a vehicle for introducing the subject matter of a certain application they had made to the minister under the Telegraphs Act.

If there has been any debate on the merits of socialism, or public ownership versus private ownership, it has been introduced by the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra and his colleagues. Certainly as far as I am concerned this is not a socialist bill and certainly I am not supporting it on the ground of being a socialist.

As far as I can see, this bill is simply a licensing bill to give the government certain powers to regulate public utilities having to do with telecommunications. We do that same sort of thing in other fields and nobody has suggested that that involves socialism. I think it is confusing the issue to attempt to create the impression that the government of Canada