

various policies and points of view are exposed to the Canadian people. But the decision as to which proposals are to be implemented rests surely with the people who, forming their judgements on the basis of the varied information available from the CBC and other media, express their will through their legislatures and their governments. The Corporation's mandate, in short, is to expose problems and identify options for the people, in a fair and balanced way, but not to dictate solutions or choices to them.

The question then is whether Section 2 (g) (iv) in the Broadcasting Act, in fact, infringes either on the essential independence of the Corporation from particular political policies and pressures or on the equally fundamental requirement that the citizens of Canada have available to them through the CBC a comprehensive and balanced exposition of all available viewpoints.

I think one must look for the answer to this question first and foremost among the reasons why we have a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, why it was decided in 1932 to establish a publicly-owned broadcasting system and why that system has been supported and re-enforced by succeeding Parliaments continuously since that time. Let me refer to but two of the statements which the then-Prime Minister, R. B. Bennett, made in introducing the legislation in question:

"Canadians have the right to a system of broadcasting from Canadian sources equal in all respects to that of any other country. The enormous benefits of an adequate scheme of radio broadcasting controlled and operated by Canadians are abundantly plain. Properly employed radio can be a most effective instrument in nation-building with an educational value difficult to estimate."

And again:

"First of all, this country must be assured of complete control of broadcasting from Canadian sources, free from foreign interference or influence. Without such control radio broadcasting can never become a great agency for the communication of matters of national concern and for the diffusion of national thought and ideals and without such

control it can never be the agency by which national consciousness may be fostered and sustained and national unity still further strengthened."

The underlining is, of course, mine—to stress the most fundamental fact!—the CBC was created, and has been maintained since, not as an agency independent or neutral from Canadian unity, but precisely to foster and enrich that unity. Or, to use the words of Bill 163-C, "to contribute to the strengthening of national unity."

Certainly the CBC is independent of government. As you so aptly put it, its function remains "as governments come and go." But the CBC never has been and is not now independent from Canada, from the existence of this country as a single sovereign state. In truth, the Corporation draws its own existence from the very fact of Canada.

That does not mean, of course, that the CBC is bound by the concepts of national unity laid down by Mr. Bennett in 1932 or by any other government, past or present. Surely the applicable concept or form of national unity at any point in time is precisely what the people of Canada at that point in time want it to be for that point in time. If the process of nation-building is never ending, so certainly the political arrangements of a single unified state are not bound in time or cement.

As I have noted previously, we agree that the CBC has a right and obligation to contribute to that process by, in your own words, reflecting and interpreting the various viewpoints available at any particular time concerning these arrangements. But in meeting this responsibility, the CBC must act within the bounds of its overall mandate to contribute to the development, not the destruction, of our national unity, whatever particular form the people of Canada might will for it at any given point in our history.

In that context and in those terms, I find nothing in the new broadcasting legislation to contradict the role of CBC producers as you yourselves envisage your professional responsibilities.

Sincerely,
Judy LaMarsh.