

*Private Members' Business*

That includes this new alphanumeric channels that we have got that no longer fall under the Broadcast Act.

There is a threat to federal jurisdiction and the national capacity of broadcasting in Canada. The combination of increasing pressure from American broadcasters for access to Canada, and an absolute refusal by the government to include in Bill C-40 any legislative basis whatsoever for limiting their access to Canada is a sure recipe for the rapid erosion of Canada's own broadcasting system.

The government has further weakened Canada's broadcasting system by putting federal jurisdiction over broadcasting at risk and by diluting the national structure of the CRTC. Let us look at this.

Since the 1930s, broadcasting has fallen under federal jurisdiction, reflecting the recognition that this is a prerequisite to maintaining an effective, integrated national broadcasting system. However, Bill C-40 redefines "broadcasting" to include hard wire or closed circuit services hitherto deemed to be under provincial control.

The bill also dictates that broadcasters and cablecasters should now have their services separated into programming and non-programming functions, a rejection of existing legal practice which argued that these changes could only lead to a questioning self-inflicted vulnerability.

Furthermore, Bill C-40 provides the foundation for an argument that a cable company may be subject to two regulatory regimes: one in accordance with which its broadcasting business is regulated, and another, possibly a provincial one in accordance with obligations to maintain different sets of books for different regulators, perhaps using different accounting practices, depreciation methods and cost separation techniques. This is all very costly, and add to that the GST, retransmission payments, and many other aspects and see what is happening in this field.

Second, with the passage of Bill C-40, all full-time CRTC commissioners, now known as the executive committee, will no longer be required for the taking of its decisions. This approach was known as collegial decision making and has been replaced with a concept that is called "who hears decides" whereby panels of three will be empowered to make decisions binding on the entire commission. The introduction of those who

hear decide—Mr. Speaker, did you want me to finish this?

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois):** I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but the order adopted yesterday by the House provides that at five o'clock, the House shall proceed to consideration of Private Members' Business. At 6 p.m. we shall resume debate without interruptions.

[English]

It being five o'clock p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's *Order Paper*.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—MOTIONS

[English]

### ENVIRONMENT AUDITOR GENERAL

#### PROPOSAL FOR ESTABLISHMENT

**Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West)** moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of establishing the position of Environmental Auditor General, whose purpose would be to conduct an audit of all government operations on a rotational basis to ensure that any activity, program or initiative of the government is conducted in a manner that is compatible with a policy of protection and enhancement of the environment.

She said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move this motion today on an idea whose time has truly come.

The concept of introducing environmental audit as an integral part of government operations and decision making has been promoted and supported by, among others, the minister in introducing the discussion paper on the Green Plan, the consultation on the discussion paper, the Standing Committee on Environment unanimously, the C. D. Howe Institute, the Rawson Academy of Aquatic Science, the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, and the Auditor General.

Like value for money or operational audit, environmental audit is an indispensable tool for management control of spending, for the effectiveness of the use of public resources, and for decision making. In addition,