

*Government Orders*

can dare to challenge our broadcasters, even the private broadcasters, with promoting Canadian recording artists on all radio stations in Canada, making sure that our national specials promote Canadian content in not just greater percentage but also of quality which will make all Canadians proud.

We have had several studies on the importance of our broadcast systems. There was the mass media study by Senator Davey and his committee many years ago that talked about the importance of using our broadcast and communications instruments for cultural survival. One of the better Canadian programs today is *The Journal*. The producer of this show is a fellow by the name of Mark Starowitz whom I have never met but who has been quoted repeatedly. He said: "It has become apparent to Canadian legislators that one of the definitions of a sovereign, political entity in the 20th century was the ability to control its national airwaves. Further, it has become equally obvious that a broadcasting system, based entirely on private profit, could not deliver the desired end".

He went on to say: "The reason the issue of television and national identity is felt so viscerally in many countries these days is because television is not simply an entertainment issue, it is a political issue. Television has become essential to the maintenance and functioning of any industrial body politic today".

We have to be sensitive to these men and women who are experts and who are working in the broadcast field.

I consider this bill to be more important than the free trade bill because this is the bill that makes sure that we become and stay galvanized as Canadians. I am concerned that if we do not keep that thrust on promoting the national spirit, then we are going to balkanize and we are going to become regionalized in our communications thrusts.

The other thing that I am concerned about in this bill is the fact that there seems to be some question as to whether or not the CRTC has the ability to regulate all of our broadcast systems. In fact I have had a little bit of legal advice on this. Section (2)(3) states that the act should be applied in a manner that is consistent with journalistic independence enjoyed by broadcasters. This flies in the face of the ability of the CRTC to regulate. I

think we are going to have to clarify that when we go to committee.

We have a very special opportunity over the next period to make sure that our broadcast systems are here to promote national unity in every respect. We should make sure that we do not as legislators give any position out there that we want to decentralize it and we want the regions to have sort of a priority position.

**Mr. McDermid:** Mr. Speaker, I do not want to prolong this debate because I know there has been an agreement reached. It was mentioned in the hon. member's speech and I want to add just a little bit to what he said about Mr. Séguin, the Quebec artist.

He has just finished a cross Canada tour which was very successful. It was sold out. I think Mr. Séguin—I don't know if the hon. member has spoken to him since the tour—made the statement that he was very surprised. This was his first cross Canada tour. He was very surprised that he had sellouts across this country. He could not believe the wonderful reception he received.

Since that tour I am now hearing his music on more and more English stations. He has some very wonderful French-Canadian music that is very catchy and is now being played. I think it is because of the tour.

I would not want the hon. member's comments today to make it sound like artists are being isolated and not being listened to in other parts of the country. Primarily they are not being listened to in other parts of the country because we are not getting them out into those other parts of the country. If we promoted the artists in Quebec and took them into the rest of Canada and displayed that talent across Canada, I think that you would not find one tape in one store in Toronto but you would find a huge number.

• (1340)

**Mr. Mills:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to that. I would like to inform my hon. friend that we met with Standard Broadcasting three months ago. We told them of the frustrations of the Séguins of the world. It was Standard Broadcasting which took the initiative and organized at the Canadian Association of Broadcasters a joint concert with Sash Jordan and Richard Séguin. That concert was syndicated last Sunday night to over 300