

*Canadian Policy on Broadcasting*

public controversy." How absolutely vital this is to any viable democratic system.

In clause 2(g) (i) the bill speaks of a "balanced" service of information, and in paragraph (iv) it says that the system should "contribute to the development of national unity."

I refer to the language used by the Secretary of State when she said:

Perhaps the most important feature of the C.B.C.'s mandate in the new bill is the obligation to contribute to the development of national unity.

Then she said:

—the C.B.C. has an overriding responsibility to be objective and balanced in its presentation of news and commentaries on public affairs.

Later she referred to Adlai Stevenson's comment that freedom demands infinitely more care and attention than any other system.

That is why this bill is one of the most important that I have ever tried to discuss since entering parliament. Sir, I agree completely with the solid foundations laid by R. B. Bennett. I have read carefully the debates which took place when the bill was introduced originating the C.B.C. where, financed by the people of Canada, we produced an entity independent from government. This bill, I think, is an attempt to make broadcasting more truly the servant of the Canadian people, the perfect mirror of truth and culture.

When I use the word "culture" I like Somerset Maugham's statement:

The value of culture is its effect on character. It avails nothing unless it ennobles and strengthens that. Its use is for life. Its aim is not beauty, but goodness.

Sir, in the 15 odd years of television we have had four voluminous volumes of evidence studying this problem, the Aird commission, the Massey commission, the Fowler commission and the Glassco commission, in addition to parliamentary committees at an average of one every two years. Yet today there is a widespread concern about the state of broadcasting in Canada.

The conclusions drawn by the Aird royal commission are still relevant. The first of these was that broadcasting should be carried out in the interests of Canadian listeners and in the national interest. The second was that where religious broadcasting is allowed there should be regulations prohibiting statements of a controversial nature. This is still important. I do not want to dilate on this point now but I think it is a matter of concern to

many Canadians. The third was that broadcasting of political matters should be carefully restricted under arrangements mutually agreed upon by all political parties.

• (12:40 p.m.)

May I touch on what is one of the most grievous aspects of the general problem, the problem of national unity. When I came to the House of Commons as an opposition member in 1961 I was deeply concerned to discover that there were increasing misunderstandings and tensions between English and French Canadians. Having been brought up in Quebec and having many friends in that province, I found it difficult to understand how people who live together and love one another as much as the people of Canada do could become involved in such a family tangle. I started to examine the reasons for it. One thing which shocked me was that a man who appeared to be rather undistinguished, Dr. Chaput, the separatist, had more time on the national network than the then leader of the government, Right Hon. John G. Diefenbaker. I could not comprehend this. Then I found that for a period of months after my leader became Prime Minister the same thing obtained. Marcel Chaput, who appeared to represent virtually nobody, was more important to the media than either the former prime minister or the new prime minister. He stimulated a series of programs which seemed calculated to rake the French-English issue.

I received a letter from Quebec city dated May 26, 1966, written by one of the most progressive and highly qualified leaders in French Canadian university life today. I would prefer to withhold his name, but I may say that he is a man who is very greatly respected throughout this country. He said:

Far from being interested in seeing these grievances settled, they—

He is referring to the broadcasting producers.

—are using every means possible to create friction between English and French Canadians. They are attempting to show a false image of the English Canadians even to the extent of distorting all that comes from Ottawa—the more animosity there is between the two ethnic groups, the more the success of their course is assured—this instrument that lives on our citizen's taxes is a far cry from contributing to national unity—certain proposals put before the parliamentary committee are purely anarchist when one reads between the lines.