

Parliament and, eventually, by the other eleven present members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The motion of Hon. Mr. Robertson for approval of the protocol was agreed to.

**CANADIAN BROADCASTING BILL**  
COMMITTEE AMENDMENT NEGATIVED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the amendment made by the Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce to Bill 17, an Act to amend the Canadian Broadcasting Act, 1936.

**Hon. Mr. Hugessen:** Honourable senators, this order stands in my name, and ordinarily I should move concurrence in the amendment. The only reason why it stands in my name is that during the absence of the chairman of the committee yesterday afternoon I was for a time acting as chairman; but the amendment to which the report refers, and which it recommends, was considered in the morning. I opposed that amendment, and therefore I opposed the committee's report. In the circumstances it would not be appropriate for me to move concurrence in the amendment, and I have asked the honourable senator from Toronto-Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck), to make the motion.

**Hon. Arthur W. Roebuck** moved concurrence in the amendment.

He said: Honourable senators, in view of the fact that I moved the amendment in committee, I think it is very fitting that I should move concurrence in it here.

Perhaps, for the benefit of senators who were not present at the committee, I had better give an explanation of what the amendment is and what it involves. But first let me say that I am not a fan of private radio stations or an advocate for them, and I do not carry any brief on their account or on anybody else's account. My own view is that private radio stations should be subject to the control of the C.B.C. or such other authority as the government may set up for that purpose. I do not subscribe to the theory that those who gain the valuable special privilege to use as their own an air channel to reach the thoughts and the hearing of the people of Canada have any vested interest in that right, or that a channel once assigned to some broadcasting institution becomes a fee simple which is the property of that institution and that it can do with it as it likes. That is not my appreciation of the position of the private broadcasters at all. They occupy a position of value, they have a special privilege not granted to all

others—a monopoly of the use of certain air channels. They hold a very important position in the community.

**Hon. Mr. Vien:** Would the honourable gentleman apply that principle to all public utilities or people to whom concessions of natural resources have been made by the Crown?

**Hon. Mr. Roebuck:** Well, in a general way. It is a very sweeping question—

**Hon. Mr. Vien:** I speak of vested interests.

**Hon. Mr. Roebuck:** The senator from De Lorimier asks a very sweeping question, whether I would apply that principle to all people who have received concessions of natural resources from the Crown. I would say, in a general way, yes, but subject perhaps to some qualification as to each case that he might mention. My view of a special privilege granted to individuals by a government is that it should be exercised with due restraint and looked upon as a special privilege which may be withdrawn.

Radio broadcasting is in a field by itself, and the necessity for regulation of it is much more apparent and pressing than it is with respect to many other special privileges granted to private individuals—as, for instance, the special privilege to run a railway—because, particularly in times of war, the people who broadcast must be made to conform to certain regulations and restrictions. The power to broadcast is sometimes the power to disrupt, to do great damage; or, on the other hand, the power to do great good, to create mass opinion. The greatest power exercised by the dictators was through their control of the air, so that the people could hear only those things which the dictators desired them to hear.

It is dangerous to allow a private individual or private interests to have a perfectly free hand, a monopoly, in the right of access to the ear of the nation. A broadcasting station is in a different position from a newspaper in this respect. A newspaper's words are on record, in print, and the publisher can be held responsible in a way that a broadcaster cannot. This is not exactly on the point, but it is cogent to what I am arguing. I contend that private broadcasters should be subject to public control, and I oppose giving them an absolute ownership of air channels or the right to use them just as they like.

With that in mind let me say that here, as in all other cases, dictatorial methods are not wise. We live in a democracy, and it is much better to gain our ends by an even-handed justice than by wielding a big stick over the heads of people.