

of good taste. But some of the matters that are broadcast are in a sort of no man's land, so to speak. A certain program which I found absolutely shocking from a religious or moral point of view does not come within the provisions of any definite section of the Criminal Code.

But since a great deal of the money needed to sustain the state-owned broadcasting system is paid by the taxpayers, surely they have a right to expect from it a little more toleration for their religious opinions in particular. Surely we cannot be blamed for protesting if our money is used to broadcast very objectionable remarks concerning what is most sacred and most dear to our hearts. I think we all agree that we live in a Christian democracy. We have no right to impose our own religious beliefs on other people. I am sixty years old now, and during political campaigns in the past people have said very unpleasant things against me, but I think no one ever taxed me with religious fanaticism. I believe in religious freedom. I belong to the Council for Christians and Jews. I frankly admit that I may have made errors in the past, but—to use a phrase which Laurier frequently uttered—never knowingly have I raised my small finger to stir up religious or racial prejudice. I say we live in a Christian democracy, but that does not mean that we have no toleration for non-Christians—that my Jewish friends, for instance, are to be persecuted for their beliefs. During the war whenever I could do anything for Jewish refugees who were victims of Nazism, I did it with all my heart, and the gratitude which these people have shown to me will remain one of the great satisfactions of my life.

Our fundamental principles in this country are what I would call our Judaeo-Christian morals, principles which go back to Moses and the Old Testament. Certainly the Canadian people would not willingly spend their money to have these principles attacked. Radio programs which I have occasionally heard have shocked me. I do not claim that all the programs in the series have been of the same kind, but recently many people have protested against programs which they declared to be simply atheistic. Well, I do not want to persecute atheists—as a matter of fact, I rather pity them—but I do not think they have acquired vested rights to the air, or that they are entitled to a right to broadcast their opinions. There should be a prohibition of broadcasts which directly or indirectly tend to undermine the respect that we all have for our democratic institutions. I am not thinking only of the Senate when I say that. Though I am quite accustomed to

abuse I am rather astonished that broadcasting facilities should be so generally put at the disposition of people who make abusive remarks. Of course, in the end these remarks probably do not harm us so much as the people who make them. Insults have never constituted an argument.

Honourable senators, I repeat that we live in a Christian democracy. We want our children and our grandchildren also to live in a Christian democracy, in a land of justice and toleration. Therefore we are anxious that our Christian and democratic institutions be preserved, and we do not want to run the risk of having them destroyed gradually by those who grossly abuse freedom of speech. The least we can expect from broadcasting stations, in particular those of the C.B.C., is that they be true and faithful guardians of our Christian civilization and of the two noble cultures which we have inherited from France and Britain.

Some Hon. Senators: Question.

Hon. Mr. Robertson: Honourable senators, before the debate is closed I wish to make one remark. The senator from Prince (Hon. Mr. Barbour) asked me if I could tell him in what years the C.B.C. has had a surplus and in what years a deficit. That is a very pertinent question, and as I have not the information here I would suggest that it would probably be forthcoming in committee if my honourable friend repeated his question there.

The motion was agreed to, and the bill was read the second time.

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

Hon. Mr. Robertson moved that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce.

The motion was agreed to.

NORTH FRASER HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS BILL

SECOND READING

Hon. Mr. Robertson moved the second reading of Bill 8, an Act to amend the North Fraser Harbour Commissioners Act.

He said: Honourable senators, the amendments in this bill seek to do two things. One is to increase the number of commissioners from the present three to five, and the other is to provide that the chairman and other commissioners may be paid, out of the revenue of the corporation, such remuneration for their services as the Governor in Council may from time to time determine. The present Act does not authorize payment of salaries to the commissioners, although for quite a number of years they have been receiving salaries out of the commission's income from harbour dues.