

Government Orders

That the House continue to sit beyond the normal hour of adjournment for the purpose of continuing consideration of Bill C-62, an act respecting telecommunications.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The House has heard the terms of the motion moved by the hon. minister. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): According to the provisions of Standing Order 26(2) if 15 members rise in their places to object, the motion is defeated. Shall the motion carry?

And more than 15 members have risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Since more than 15 members have risen, the motion is deemed to have been withdrawn.

Mr. Raymond Skelly (North Island—Powell River): Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons I attended today was to listen to the Minister of Communications speak in the House. I find it stimulating and invigorating.

I am really amazed by his ability to illustrate oxymorons, probably the best examples of contradictions in terms that have been heard anywhere. One of them, of course, is Progressive Conservative and the other is Conservative credulity. Maybe we will have something more entertaining from him later on in the day as he rises again in this fruitless endeavour.

The Minister of Communications on these amendments simply fails to recognize the efforts of my colleague from Okanagan—Shuswap in trying to protect Canadian employment. The motions before us are concerns yet the minister instantly dismisses them as fortunes of war. BC Telephone company laid off 820 employees because of the policies of the Conservative government. This is irrelevant to the Minister of Communications and I am sure to the entire Conservative government.

The issues in the amendments of my colleague have been put forward again and dismissed out of hand. I love the minister's presentation to this House. He says not to worry about building these kinds of protections into the legislation through these amendments. "Trust me. Your cheque is in the mail. We will take care of you."

We have been taken care of by this particular government for the last nine years. If there is anything left of Canada when it is finished at the end of this term there will be a lot of very surprised Canadians.

The amendments before us today put forward by my colleague from Okanagan—Shuswap are designed to protect Canadian employment in this legislation and in this industry. He also points out that there is a very real opportunity to protect and enhance Canadian culture, something the Conservative government has simply sold down the river with everything else in this country.

The issue before us today has been very interestingly described by the Minister of Communications as not being Americanization of yet another Canadian industry, driving in an enormous wedge. We know we have been condemned by the degree of foreign ownership. Previous Liberal governments allowed it to expand to enormous proportions.

Most British Columbians regret that GT&E controls the BC Telephone Corporation.

• (1655)

When the NDP government was there from 1972-75 it tried to deal with that anomaly to enhance and improve the positions of Canadians and British Columbians with BC Tel. Unfortunately the Liberal government under Pierre Trudeau completely thwarted that effort but in the thwarting of it he did not sell it down the river the way the Conservatives have done.

We are faced with a foreign-owned corporation in British Columbia whose American ownership levels are really offensive to British Columbians. We would like to see that changed.

The previous Liberal government under Pierre Elliott Trudeau blocked the NDP government in BC from strengthening the Canadian position in that company. Now we find the Minister of Communications says this is a *fait accompli* anyway so let in Unitel and allow it to sell 25 per cent of its action to AT&T.

We have a situation now where the Conservatives say that we have the Americans in here, the whole thing is lost, let us get a war going between the giants of the United States—GT&E and American Telephone and Telegraph. Let them fight for jurisdiction and control of