

Government Orders

communicate among themselves in different regions? If we cut back regional programming, we really cut back the essence of nationhood in this country.

The CBC has been asked to make 95 per cent Canadian content in drama. This is good. I mentioned earlier the figures about our sad lack of producing drama. You tell the CBC to do that on the one hand but on the other hand you do not give it any money. What are they going to do? Where are they going to get the money? They will get it from the regional programs. It is not going to cut back its headquarters on Bronson Street or its place in Toronto. It will cut it back in the maritimes, in my area of Vancouver or in the small areas. That is what will happen. The government has to approach this. The government cannot have it both ways. You cannot say the bill is strengthening Canadian broadcasting while at the same time taking money away from the CBC.

There is a problem in Quebec. The French service has to produce more programs on a smaller budget than its English colleagues. As a result, we see fewer and fewer French drama series. I quote Quebec's creative people, *La coalition pour la défense des services français de Radio-Canada*, who came to our committee and told us that they have to stay in their studios. They cannot present their viewers with varied settings because it is too expensive.

If you have to compete with *Dallas*, it takes money and it takes resources. Radio-Canada must have those resources to protect and enhance francophone culture.

Those are some of the flaws in the bill. I have summarized them, I think, as best I can.

Let me conclude by saying this. I have spent the last two months touring 16 cities in Canada—all the major cities in Canada.

Mr. Harvard: Are you running for anything?

Mr. Waddell: No, I am not running for anything. I am just telling the members what I saw.

Let me tell you a little story. On three occasions in Saskatoon, Charlottetown and Edmonton I kept running into American tourists in the hotels where I was staying. They were seniors from the States for a trip. I would say: "How are you doing? Where are you from?" "I am from Kansas—I am from here—". "How do you like it?" They loved Canada. What a country! It is relatively secure. The environment is good. People are friendly, efficient

and relatively prosperous. In each part of the country, while they are all distinctive you could see a common Canadianism. I wonder what created that common Canadianism in a country that is so huge. I think broadcasting played a big part. There are other parts, such as teachers in schools, education and so on, but broadcasting did a lot. Canadians could see each other and have that kind of common Canadianism that is there across the country.

I am optimistic about this country. I know we are going through a difficult period. I stood up in this House of Commons and voted against Meech Lake because I wanted to see a better deal. I am not anti-Quebec, as I heard some people in the Ontario legislature say the other day.

[Translation]

And I can accept Quebec as a distinct society.

[English]

We also have to ensure a kind of equal Canadianism right across this country. We can do it. We have a great opportunity in broadcasting.

Remember what I said at the beginning. Think about Canadians watching 24 hours of television a week. Think about from where they are getting their information. Think about those young francophone teenagers who spend 50 per cent of their time watching foreign programs, while the English kids spend 80 per cent of their time doing the same.

We want an open system. But what we need to ensure by legislation is that there is sufficient and quality Canadian programming. As I said, the public sector is underfunded and Canadians have to realize that. They are not going to be able to keep up that standard.

Second, the private sector is not really doing its job, and this bill is not going to help. We had a great opportunity in this bill. We had solutions set out by the Commons committee, the former chairperson is in this House. We had a way set out.

Canadians must make a commitment in the 1990s to a national broadcasting system, to a renewal of Canadian culture, to a bringing together of Canadians, no matter from what part of the country. In this way the people will feel equal and part of Canada. We have to do it through our young people.