

Interim Supply

philosophy. When considering the news aspect, I think we must agree that the C.B.C. is providing adequate coverage. I am sure every member of parliament watches the C.B.C. news programs closely and will agree that that organization has done very well in covering local, national and international affairs. Some of the outstanding events that have taken place throughout the world have been brought to the attention of Canadian viewers as quickly as possible through the facilities of the C.B.C. The demand in Canada for coverage of international events as quickly as possible has increased, and the C.B.C. has met this demand.

In considering the field of entertainment one must keep in mind the difficulties which arise because of the likes and dislikes of viewers. Sometimes I think advertisements are more entertaining than the programs. The C.B.C. has done a good job in this field.

The great difficulty which any organization providing a communications service must face is in the field of culture and philosophy. One of the previous speakers suggested the C.B.C. should be sold. In the event such a thing took place we would only have private television and radio outlets throughout this nation. What kind of culture or philosophy would we then have on our programs in this non-competitive but private system? Certainly such programs as "Quest", "Festival" and "This Hour has Seven Days" would not be possible, because the private systems are dependant entirely upon sponsors. Can anyone visualize a sponsor agreeing to sponsor a program such as "Festival"? I do not hesitate to say that I do not like that particular program, and I think the people who take part in it are a bunch of nuts. That is my personal opinion. I have not been trained in the school of drama, or in the field of culture. Perhaps that is why I think the way I do; but I realize there are a great many nuts in this country who believe this is a very worth-while type of program.

In any event, Mr. Chairman, this type of cultural and philosophical program in a private communications system would have to be sponsored, and I cannot visualize a sponsor sponsoring that type of program, knowing that he would probably have a telephone call the following morning cancelling 40 or 50 contracts because of it. Just because I do not like that kind of program I do not see why it should not be presented. If I were the almighty in the field of communications I would know and be able to pick out what was good for people and what everyone would like, but obviously I am not. I have made no

[Mr. Peters.]

pretense in this regard, nor do I believe the C.B.C. has given any indication that it is the body which should decide what is good and what is bad. The C.B.C. has made a tremendously successful attempt to provide controversial subjects. Controversy is not bad for Canadian people, and I am quite proud of the program "This Hour has Seven Days".

Mr. Habel: You should not be.

Mr. Peters: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member says I should be proud of it.

Mr. Habel: I said you should not be proud of it.

Mr. Peters: I think I should be proud of it because it is a highly controversial program. Perhaps it creates controversy in a sensational way, but it deals with actual problems which face the world today.

Mr. Habel: It is destroying the world.

Mr. Peters: The hon. member suggests this type of program is destroying the world. This type of program is providing information to the people, and I believe it is by hiding information that people are destroyed.

I should like to refer to one statement made during this program the other night. The speaker was a man with whom I violently disagree. In his statement he asked what would happen if a segment of a population from another country was dumped into one of our major cities. I would suspect that anyone who did not think about that question, in the light of the way we solve our own problems, must have turned the set off. Certainly it was a controversial suggestion which in my view warranted some consideration.

With the advent of an entirely private television and radio system in this country we would have a lack of controversy, as a result of which we would be even less colourful than we are. Sponsors of programs would demand that they be non-controversial, because they want to sell their products to every viewer watching the programs. Those members who say they believe in free enterprise and freedom of initiative must have their wires badly crossed when they suggest that we should have a monopolistic control over this medium so there will not be controversy. Those are the kind of people who suggest there should only be one government or one political party—the one they support.

I have no objection to controversial programs. While the C.B.C. has made mistakes we must remember that the C.B.C. is