

sides. I think mostly, that they should not present the other side. I think it would be unfair to chuck them out and refuse them (sic) to present the other side, but as an instrument of Canadian unity with a mandate to foster Canadian unity, I believe that... Radio Canada... should be promoting Canadian unity and being (sic) on the side of those who want this country united...

Later there is a series of questions and answers. It states:

Q. Mr. Ouellet, what if I were to use the word propaganda?

A. Well, when it comes to the survival of our country I don't think we have to be afraid of words.

Q. Propaganda?

A. Indeed, sure.

It is fairly obvious from the declarations of various Liberal cabinet ministers of the day that their interpretation of the CBC's "national unity" mandate and the government's role in overseeing that mandate goes far beyond what was contemplated by Miss LaMarsh in 1967, and is rather closer to the definition given by Mr. Robert Stanbury at the time.

What happened is that the Liberal government of the day applied the legal weight of the mandate and their own considerable moral suasion—that is, if I can call it that—to try to influence the professional news coverage and editorial judgment of the journalists and producers employed by the CBC. An examination of the record—Mr. Trudeau's attack on the CBC for asking a particular question of David Rockefeller in a news interview; the indictment of Radio-Canada by our late colleague, Senator Marchand; Mr. Chrétien's complaint that his speeches on national unity were not adequately reported; Mr. Ouellet's assertion that Radio-Canada should not act as a neutral body presenting both sides in the referendum debate—yields no other interpretation but that they were applying their political pressure and the full weight of the legal mandate to try to influence the professional judgment and conduct of the journalists and producers at the CBC.

In my judgment, therein lies the danger with this kind of mandate and obligation being put into the law regarding a publicly-owned broadcasting corporation such as the CBC. It is for that reason that I think, and continue to believe, that on balance the broadcasting law is better without such a mandate and such an obligation on the CBC. Such an obligation and such a mandate is always open, in my view, to abuse or to the appearance of abuse. For that reason, I have absolutely no hesitation at all in voting against the amendment and urging others to do likewise.

**Senator Frith:** Against national unity also.

**Senator LeBlanc:** Honourable senators, I wonder if the minister would answer a question. I listened with interest to some of the comments that he made. I was of the school of journalism in the Norman De Poe period. Frankly, I never felt very offended in my freedom as a journalist by any politician. We had some great controversies in my time. If you remember the famous meeting of Mr. Diefenbaker and Mr. De Poe in the corridor, there is no doubt that—

[Senator Murray.]

**Senator Murray:** I believe that happened when Mr. Diefenbaker was Leader of the Opposition, if that matters.

**Senator LeBlanc:** That may be. If it is, I stand corrected. But it is a classic scene. I am sure that it will be repeated 50 years from now—that is, if we still have a national broadcasting system or if we still have a nation.

● (0940)

I would like to know from the Leader of the Government if the phrase "national unity" has become a non-phrase, and if it has been excised from the dictionary—at least from the dictionary of freedom which the Minister pretends to promote. How does identity, and the responsibility to promote identity, differ in the spectrum of freedom of journalists or non-pressure on journalists? What differences does he see?

**Senator Murray:** Honourable senators, as I understand it, the matter was pretty thoroughly canvassed at the committee. I can tell honourable senators this, that those who are on the front line—the producers, the journalists and the broadcasters—feel quite strongly that the obligation to promote "national unity" is susceptible to abuse, whereas the mandate to promote "national identity" is far less susceptible to political abuse. Perhaps the point they make is that the mandate to promote national unity seems to focus largely, if not exclusively, on the news and public affairs component of the network, whereas "national identity" could be seen to be promoted through quite a variety of other instruments, perhaps principally not news and public affairs but culture, drama, and so forth.

By the way, we are not excising the phrase "national unity" from the dictionary. It is an honourable term. We use it all the time and we believe in it. We are committed to it.

**Senator Gigantès:** But you do not know what it means.

**Senator Murray:** We do say that trying to impose a general obligation upon the publicly-owned broadcasting service, particularly on its news and public affairs component, is open to abuse. As I have shown by the record, journalists and public affairs producers in that corporation are vulnerable to exactly that kind of interference and pressure from politicians.

**Senator Stewart:** Honourable senators, Senator LeBlanc anticipated one of my questions. The minister has made a plea for journalistic purity—

**Senator Murray:** No, I am not so naive.

**Senator Gigantès:** Yes, you are. You are naive enough not to know that you are naive.

**Senator Stewart:** I mean in the performance of their journalistic functions.

Let us take the minister at his word. Does that not mean that the whole subclause should be removed from the act so that the CBC would not be required to contribute to shared national consciousness and identity? It seems to me that his argument leads inevitably to that conclusion.

Similarly, the bill the minister is supporting would require that the Canadian broadcasting system serve to safeguard,