

*The Disabled*

this goal. Also, the CRTC noted that alternatives to the imposition of technical standards could be implemented, such as modifications to the design of hearing aids themselves and modifications to the design of and rates for portable acoustic couplers. The latter permits the amplification of the voice signal received at the handset receiver and acts in a manner similar to the volume control amplifying handset which is provided free or for a nominal charge by the majority of the telephone companies.

● (1630)

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the Commission noted that Bell Canada reiterated its commitment during the public hearing to continue to provide telephones on a lease basis which are equipped with a flux coil, the additional feature which is favoured by the hearing impaired associations. The British Columbia Telephone Company had made a commitment to continue to provide, upon request, amplifying handsets to residence subscribers at no charge and to business subscribers for a nominal monthly charge.

Based on all these considerations, the Commission decided not to require that all telephones meet technical standards which ensure hearing aid compatibility. However, in so deciding the Commission also encouraged the Terminal Attachment Program Advisory Committee to explore additional means by which the access of hearing impaired persons to telephone service can be improved.

Subsequent to the release of Telecom Decision CRTC 82-14, the Public Interest Advocacy Centre presented a petition to the Governor in Council requesting the CRTC Decision 82-14 be varied to require the CRTC to issue an order to the effect that, within 90 days, all telephones authorized to be attached to a public telephone network be compatible with hearing aids. The Centre is acting on behalf of four associations representing the hearing impaired—the Canadian Hearing Society, the Canadian Co-ordinating Council on Deafness, the Hard of Hearing Club of Ottawa and the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association.

Representatives of the hearing impaired are concerned that the technical standards approved by the CRTC do not require manufacturers to make their telephones compatible with hearing aid devices and are of the view that an additional component, a flux coil, should be mandatory in telephone receivers to ensure their compatibility with certain hearing aids. Also, the associations feel that this component should be treated as a basic part of the telephone network, the cost of which all users share in order to preserve universality of service.

The Governor in Council will, Mr. Speaker, be dealing with this matter very shortly. As I said at the outset, I support the idea that disabled Canadians should have access to the mainstream activities which characterize Canadian life. I am sure that every reasonable Canadian accepts that concept.

As for compatibility of telephones and hearing aids, there is considerable work going on in Canada and in fact all over the world. The Comité consultatif international télégraphique et téléphonique, the international organization concerned with

devising and preparing recommendations for international telecommunications standards, practices and procedures, is currently studying the question of developing an international standard for the coupling of hearing aids and telephones. This is complicated by a number of factors.

**Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I have been watching the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay-Nipigon (Mr. Masters) reading word for word his intervention. I wonder whether it is appropriate that there be some originality somewhere if he feels so deeply as he does about this matter.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** The point raised by the Hon. Member for Esquimalt-Saanich (Mr. Munro) is completely in order. It is a point of order because the rules of the House require that Hon. Members should be able to make use of notes, but in that sense it does not include the possibility that a speech may be read entirely. The purpose is simply to encourage debate rather than accept set speeches.

On the other hand, I have a great deal of sympathy for the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay-Nipigon (Mr. Masters). A number of Members throughout the House on both sides do read speeches. But when the point is drawn to the Chair's attention, I think it is the responsibility of the Chair to remind Hon. Members that they should, if possible, attempt to avoid reading speeches verbatim.

**Mr. Masters:** Mr. Speaker, I quite agree with the point of order. It is not my normal practice to use notes. I usually do not use them except on the rare occasion when one is presenting items that are technical. I think this item does require some clarification in the technical sense of what is going on and of what the inhibitions are in providing the hard of hearing couplings which the Hon. Member has suggested should be mandatory through legislation.

While I am certainly sympathetic, as I have said in the read speech—and I grant the Hon. Member that I have been reading verbatim—I accept the principle of trying to provide that kind of service to the hearing impaired. Like other Members in this House I, too, have intimate knowledge of the difficulties that the hard of hearing have inflicted upon them.

I had almost come to the conclusion of my read remarks on the subject. However, I do believe that from time to time—and this is one of those times—when we have the crossing of jurisdictions, when we have various regulatory bodies that come into play, when we are dealing with a situation that technically is controlled directly by the CRTC and all of those companies that we control in a regulatory sense by the CRTC, they have in fact lived up to the letter of the intent of the Hon. Member's motion.

I do take very serious note of the Hon. Member's representation. I hope that by trying to bring about an orderly procession of facts and figures and the history of what has been happening, I will be forgiven for reading my speech. I hope it has helped—perhaps it has not enlivened debate—to have information available to all Members of the House in a