

Canadian Policy on Broadcasting

the entire routine of your life in order to catch a certain program at a certain time, if you are that interested in the programming.

For example, let me illustrate how busy we are keeping up with yesterday. At page 3, clause 3(j) of the bill which is before us reference is made to electromagnetic waves of frequencies lower than 3,000 gigacycles. What a word that is. I wonder when this bill was written, because that word is no longer used in the nomenclature of radio and television. The word used today is "gigahertz" and that has been the established expression for some years. I refer to this simply as an indication of how busy we are keeping up with yesterday.

We speak about the great radio and television world of the future. This bill makes practically no reference to it, other than that the commission will license C.A.T.V. and try to make people watch Canadian productions, whether they wish to look at them or not. In my view this interferes with the freedom of individuals, to choose and on that basis alone I cannot support the bill, let alone the manner in which it has been produced.

I sincerely hope that what I say now may have some effect on the introduction of bills in the future. I believe the representatives of the people should be consulted before bills are brought in. I do not for one moment believe that all the wisdom of Canada resides in the brains of the 25 people in the cabinet. I think the people of Canada have ability, and I think their ability should be recognized and the products of their thinking should be used. I would like to see the government of Canada returned to the parliament of the people, and not be allowed to continue on in the hands of a cabinet which does not consult the representatives of the people. There are representatives of the people in Ottawa but they are not asked a thing.

I hope I will not have to repeat the same remarks when the Post Office bill comes down. I have spent 40 years of my life in the publishing business and I am conceited enough to think I know something about it. I have had a great number of phone calls, telegrams and personal visits from newspaper and magazine publishers in Canada asking me about the new Post Office act, what is in it and what the second class rate will be. I say to them, "My friends, why are you asking me, I am only a private member of parliament. Where did you get the idea I would know what is in the Post Office bill? You will probably know before me, because if it is introduced at night it will reach you

over the Canadian Press wire service and I will be able to read about it in the morning paper". I think it is an absolute denial of democracy to have the cabinet do all the heavy thinking, as they are doing in their opinion, and then produce it here and ask private members to vote for it or the government will fall, and that that is a fate worse than death. I do not agree with this. I simply ask the cabinet: In the name of heaven, can you not consult the representatives of the people, who have spent money to espouse Liberal principles and to show they are in favour of them?—and then when they get here, at some expense, which is not covered by the party, they are ignored completely. It is about time that this country, my beloved Canada, was governed by the representatives of the people and not by 25 hand picked souls.

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, I know that we are late in this debate but I think it has been a most interesting and constructive one and has shown, in a way that nothing else would, a concerned and aroused nation. The debate in this past week has had a different mood and temper to it than might have obtained had it been held a year ago. In fact if we recall the early days of the committee hearings into what is known as the "Seven Days" crisis, those who felt there was something wrong with the C.B.C. at a variety of levels were in a very small minority for far too long a time. But as the debate has shown, the situation has changed.

The bill deals with programming to a large extent and with housekeeping to an even larger extent. It proposes the setting up of a Canadian radio commission, which I suspect will be too busy with the housekeeping to spend much time keeping an eye on the programming. I hope that the name, "Canadian Radio Commission", will be changed. I know the government can talk about gold mining assistance without any reference to the international monetary situation, but I do not think it can choose a name for a commission which will govern television without having the word "television" included in the name. I suggested a change in name very strongly at the committee meetings but my suggestion was not taken up in the report of the committee. However, I am happy to see that it is mentioned in the legislation.