

*Canadian Policy on Broadcasting*

(i) be extended to all parts of Canada, as public funds become available,

(iii) be in English and French, serving the special needs of geographic regions, and actively contributing to the flow and exchange of cultural and regional information and entertainment, and

(iv) contribute to the development of national unity and provide for a continuing expression of Canadian identity.

I contend that these aims are a far cry from the original thoughts expressed in 1932. In other words, like the expansion of the national budget, our efforts to control the thinking of the Canadian people, to isolate the Canadian people from the world, have grown in similar proportion. In 1932 the then prime minister, Right Hon. R. B. Bennett said—and incidentally, he introduced this bill in the House of Commons—as reported at page 3035 of volume 3 of *Hansard* for 1932:

—it seems to me clear that in Canada the system we can most profitably employ is one which, in operation and control, responds most directly to the popular will and the national need.

I have underlined in my notes the words “popular will.” In other words, the government of the day thought that the object of the C.B.C. should be to provide programming that would meet the popular will of the Canadian people.

I contend that this bill does not take that principle into consideration. This bill sets down parameters of broadcasting that will allow the government to control the thoughts and ideas that are put forward to the people of this country. I think this is just one more stage in the development of the process that is now in progress, namely that of the government controlling all our thoughts in the very near future.

To think in that vein may seem a little old fashioned to some people in this chamber, but I agree with one of the senior statesmen of this country, the recently retired Senator T. A. Crerar, who said in an article written in “Canada Month” of August, 1967:

—the most basic instinct in the human animal—and it is true in all animal life—is freedom. Freedom from being controlled directly—

This is instinctive somehow in all creatures. The whole evolution of society—any study of it—indicates that people are always reaching out for more freedom. Freedom from feudal lords, for instance; freedom from dictatorial kings. And they felt they'd reached it when they got the democratic process, where people were governed with the consent of the governed.

Our democratic process has not brought us the freedom we anticipated. In fact, through the democratic process I fear we are rapidly losing what little freedom we have. I have no

doubt that this bill will go through because it is the experience of parliamentarians in this house that, when a government bill is introduced, while we may change one little item here or there, in the main the bill goes through. So we are limited on this side of the house in making suggestions as to how best to improve the particular piece of legislation that is before us. Many speeches have been made, and I do not want to go over the same points that have been made by several hon. members. I should like to confine myself to one or two points. The last speaker, the hon. member for York East (Mr. Otto), made reference to the problem of community antenna television. This aspect of broadcasting in Canada received only cursory treatment in the government white paper on broadcasting. As a matter of fact the phase of community antenna television in which I am most interested is the one which employs a coaxial cable or a microwave system. I say that this part interests me the most because I come from a part of the country where a large segment of the population consider themselves second class citizens, owing to the fact that they are denied the right to avail themselves of community antenna television programming which is already enjoyed by the people in central and eastern Canada.

● (9:10 p.m.)

It may be of interest to hon. members to learn that 54 per cent of the population of Canada can take advantage of community antenna television which brings in programs from United States stations located close to the border. In the prairie provinces the situation is slightly different. The centres of population in the United States are a fair distance south of the border, while the population centres in Canada are a fair distance north of the border, and it is not possible to bring in a signal directly from a United States to a Canadian station without using either a coaxial cable or microwave transmission. So the people of Calgary, a city of 370,000, the city of Edmonton with a population of over 400,000, the city of Saskatoon, the city of Regina and all the smaller cities in the prairies, are denied programming such as other parts of Canada enjoy.

We are not asking the government to build stations for us. There are many people in western Canada who are prepared to build, finance and run community antenna television systems employing coaxial and microwave systems. The government is denying them the right to build these systems, and yet in the white paper on broadcasting