

*Government Orders*

• (1600)

I would certainly make an argument that the amendment that was placed before the House 10 or 15 minutes ago deserves full consideration by members on all sides of the House, whether on the government side or not, because it does not seem to me that it offers consumers the protection from those telecommunications companies that they have enjoyed for many years.

If this bill passes without that amendment I will be receiving letters from people in my constituency over the next number of years complaining quite bitterly about how Bell Canada is now charging them for maintenance and repair costs that they never had to pay in the past. I do not think that would do the consumers of Canada any good at all.

**Mr. Lyle Kristiansen (Kootenay West—Revelstoke):**  
Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with Motion No. 1. It reads:

That Bill C-62 be amended in clause 2 by striking out lines 7 to 9 at page 2 and substituting the following therefor:

“(b) the capture, storage, organization, modification, retrieval, or other processing of intelligence or”

It was submitted by my colleague the member for Okanagan—Shuswap. It is an amendment to the interpretation section of the bill. It broadly defines exempt transmission apparatus, which is what we are dealing with in the bill before us and in this amendment. This is one of those sections that was amended in committee by government proposal at that time and introduced in the middle of the whole hodgepodge of other amendments and suggestions the government was making after the long gestation period it took to put this bill together. That has caused some difficulty.

In the current bill before us exempt transmission apparatus is defined as:

any apparatus whose functions are limited to one or more of the following:

(a) the switching of telecommunications,

(b) the input, capture, storage, organization, modification, retrieval, output or other processing of intelligence—

—and that is the section we are currently trying to amend. The definition continues:

(c) control of the speed, code, protocol, content, format, routing or similar aspects of the transmission of intelligence;

Intelligence is defined as:

signs, signals, writing, images, sounds or intelligence of any nature.

In dealing with the amendment of my colleague, the member for Okanagan—Shuswap, by deleting the references to input and output the CRTC is still provided the authority to regulate the installation and maintenance of inside wiring and wiring located on the premises of a user.

Currently the CRTC, as was mentioned by my colleague, has before it a BC Telephone Company application on exactly the matter that we are dealing with. This amendment would, in our view at least, allow the CRTC to decide whether it wants to continue to regulate inside wiring.

My colleague went on at some length to explain in more detail than I care to do some of the broader implications of what is before us and our own suggestion on it. I would just like to point out to the House and to the minister, who took umbrage a few moments ago in stating that after all the consideration that has gone into this surely it is too late to start considering other amendments at this point, that for a government that brought in so many amendments and so many changes during the time the committee was trying to come to grips with this in clause by clause study is a bit like someone in a glass house throwing stones.

The committee had a difficult time trying to come to grips with exactly what it was dealing with when the ground rules were changing every day.

• (1605)

In this section particularly it was attempting to introduce amendments at the very time that the government was introducing changes on the spur of the moment to what we were trying to amend. It was a very difficult process.

I hope it can be sorted out in votes to come by the adoption or acceptance of some of the review proposals submitted by the Official Opposition or the New Democratic Party, so that we will at least in a reasonably short time down the road have an opportunity to take a second look at what is obviously very important and necessary legislation, at least in the broad context, to the future of one of our most important domestic and export industries.

It may seem like a minor change. However we think it is important in order to provide the necessary flexibility so that in the future the consumers of our communications system will be able to rely on an industry that is