

### *Government Orders*

Since Bill C-136 died we had hoped the new minister would have taken the time to reshape a new bill and to put his own imprimatur on the bill.

However Bill C-40 is not such a bill. It is still the hurried bill of a defeated minister with a few tinkered changes.

We had been hopeful that the new minister and the Department of Communications would have prepared a report on all the suggestions and comments that had been made by so many responsible individuals and groups, by so many experts, and at least explain why their concerns had not been met.

I acknowledge the positive and very carefully considered provisions of the bill and yet I wonder about its absences. On the positive provisions, this new bill adds the question of addressing women, children and cultural minorities. Aboriginal peoples and the disabled are specifically mentioned in the legislation as is the need to portray more accurately the multicultural nature of our society. Bravo.

The special nature of the French language broadcasting environment is recognized. The CRTC will thus be required to make these market differences and to take them into account when making licensing decisions. Originators of program signals and their authorized agents such as cable operators will be able to take action in the courts against commercial pirates stealing their scrambled signals.

Provisions have been included making educational broadcasting an integral part of the law and the Canadian scene. Local Canadian stations will be given priority status when carried by cable. There is provision that the president of the CBC be a member of the CBC board of directors and the definition of broadcasting has been changed to give the CRTC more flexibility in dealing with new types of programming services.

I now come to my critique. Bill C-40 drops the CBC's 1968 mandate to contribute to the development of national unity and provide for a continuing expression of Canadian identity. I heard the minister address this point. I do not agree with his observations.

The removal of the national unity reference I know was recommended by both Caplan-Sauvageau and by my own standing committee. The chairman of the commit-

tee at that time is sitting here. Caplan-Sauvageau and the standing committee had been concerned that this clause might interfere with CBC's ability to ensure that its programming reflect and interpret as fully, as fairly and as accurately as possible Canada's cultural, social, political, economic, linguistic and regional reality and diversity. I think that it did.

Pierre Juneau, former president of the CBC, told the committee that the phrase "national unity" had not caused any problems during his years at the CBC. The CRTC noted that its interpretation of the term never precluded a free political discussion from all points of view.

Last night, the standing committee reviewed the Orders in Council appointments of Mr. Keith Spicer, Mr. Veilleux, and Mr. Patrick Watson. All three indicated their support and recognized the importance of the broadcasting system as being a key agent for the development of national unity, a sense of shared experience and greater understanding of tolerance and exchange.

I would suggest to the minister that I would like to see the national unity clause put back. It should read something to the effect that the Canadian broadcasting system shall contribute to the development of national unity by providing a continuing expression of Canadian identity leading to the development of national consciousness.

I would like to point out another serious flaw, and that is the part-time position of the CBC chairman.

[*Translation*]

Perhaps the shell is more important than the content. And this is too bad! Because the content is just as important, and the chair-person or chief executive officer must take the time to look after that.

[*English*]

Mr. Watson told us that his work week presently needs nine days. I hope that in the future his work week would only need five days, but certainly not five part-time days. I think that was an error, and I hope it will be redressed.

This bill scraps last year's provision giving the board the power to appoint the president of the CBC subject to the approval of cabinet. Under Bill C-40 the president will be appointed by cabinet, a move which *The Calgary Herald* on October 14 of this year said made some CBC