

the next leader of this country. Perhaps during that time they will decide to give up this hopeless bill and let us get on with something else.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Bob Wenman (Fraser Valley West): Mr. Speaker, one of the necessities for this amendment is the fact that the minister is not now in attendance, has participated only slightly and has not attended most of the debate in this House. As a result, I suggest she does not understand the issue in this case.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I should like to bring to the attention of the House, in view of the remarks of the hon. member, that the minister in question has been replaced here this afternoon by the minister to my left, so there is a minister in the House in respect of this matter.

Mr. Wenman: I appreciate that observation, and I appreciate the fact that the whip on that side has done an excellent job of making sure that his ministers are covered. Unfortunately, the decisions that must ultimately be made in generating policy must be made by the ministers themselves. The real issue involved in this amendment is one of time. Time should be given for consideration of this bill and this amendment. This amendment will provide the time for the minister to consider the bill and the amendment in order that she will then understand the matter. The minister did not participate in the committee hearings and she has only briefly participated in the debate in the House. While I am sure she may have read some of the speeches, I think her attendance here is of importance. Because of her non-attendance during the debate, her limited participation here, and her non-participation at the committee, this amendment should be accepted in order that she will have the opportunity to hear representatives from the broadcasting area. I would ask the minister who is here to make representations to the minister to determine whether the issue has been thoroughly aired and understood and if justice is being done. I am sure when she does that she will decide there is no harm in giving us more time on this matter.

Many of the conclusions expressed in the speeches of hon. members from both sides of the House would indicate that the main issue has not been thoroughly aired or understood. The fact that this is a regional issue does not seem to be understood. I hope the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the members of his cabinet who are visiting the province of British Columbia will take the time to visit the Canawest production facilities in Vancouver, and perhaps KVOS-TV, in order to have a first-hand look at the situation. If they do not, I am sure when they return they will feel obliged to spend more time on this issue.

The hon. member for Bruce-Grey (Mr. Douglas) not only attended the committee meetings but has done a considerable amount of research and has spoken in this House about those things in which he believes. I congratulate him on that effort. Because the minister has not participated, and in my opinion does not understand the issue, it is even more important that we spend more time on this matter. I hope that the backbenchers who did attend the committee meetings will speak out very clearly to the government

Non-Canadian Publications

calling for the extra time which is required. I hope they will also persuade the government to accept this amendment which does little more than give more time.

While individual responsibility is inherent in any definition of freedom, what is even more true is that freedom is based upon the absence of restrictions. While freedom of movement is perhaps a very basic and important freedom, the most important freedom is freedom of the mind. Freedom of the mind involves, under any circumstances, freedom to hear, to read and to see what we choose. That opportunity is being restricted and limited in this case. I suggest that even if that freedom to choose is limited in the smallest way, we as members of parliament have a right to recognize that this freedom is being eroded or attacked even if in the most minuscule way. That is the case in respect of this legislation.

● (1430)

If I could make any point, I would make this clear point. Fifty-six per cent of the people in the lower mainland area choose to watch and listen to American television. Because of the penalty involved and the proposed commercial deletion we, in effect, are wiping out this choice of the people. This freedom of choice must be retained, because if we do not have it then there are restrictions in respect of what the mind can see and hear. These limitations are completely unacceptable, I would think, to any parliamentary democracy. On that issue alone I ask people to look very closely at this amendment.

According to the government, this bill is tied together; it is one bill referring to broadcasting and periodicals. If we were to relate the two elements and were to find something that has an 80 per cent application to periodicals, if it were applied to television it would be easy to find the 80 per cent. So the most objectionable feature of this periodicals bill could be complied with by a television station. However, we are attempting to wipe it out. The United States government has just begun negotiations with Canada. One unsatisfactory meeting has been held. Further discussion is required. I suggest this subamendment should be accepted so that time would be provided for all the broadcasting media, not just KVOS-TV, to make presentations on this subject to the government and to the CRTC and perhaps, through them, to parliament.

How could anyone object to giving time so that those concerned would have the right to be heard and would be heard? We may not like what we hear. We may not agree with it. We may decide after a period of a year to take the same course of action, but without this sub-amendment we would merely be closing a door which we should be opening. It was stated earlier that this is a subject which concerns all Canadians and has nothing to do with regionalism. I suggest it is related to regionalism and the kind of thing that was demonstrated in *Weekend* magazine this week in an editorial headlined "The Ugly Canadian". This concerned, on a smaller scale, the same kind of impact which Canadians have on the people of northern Washington.

Americans are concerned about the impact Canadians have in that country, just as we are concerned about the impact on Canadians of American broadcasting. Just as we would expect them to be tolerant of Canadians and good