

*Canadian Policy on Broadcasting*

article, termed the postponement of the C.B.C. station "shameful." He said:

I fully appreciate the financial problems of the federal government, but I believe it is shameful that this project, promised by the C.B.C. to the citizens of Saskatoon for several years, should be postponed.

The report continued:

He said a second television station in the city is urgently needed and the general reaction of the public has indicated a preference for a full C.B.C. station.

There are many other comments by people from my city. There is no question but that the people of Saskatoon want alternative service. When we consider that they pay the same amount of taxes as any other region of Canada for support of the C.B.C., we believe they should be entitled to alternative coverage, the same as is now being received by many other cities of comparable size in Canada.

We believe it is mandatory that the government should reconsider its decision and at least as a temporary measure provide alternative service by a C.B.C. transmitter without studio facilities or allow private broadcasting to fill the void that will be left by this decision of the government. The decision to cancel the station is another example of how the leader of the government has frustrated the wishes of the minister in charge. It flies in the face of the recommendation in the white paper on broadcasting, and in the report of the committee on broadcasting which on page 9 reads as follows:

We recommend... wherever practical, in areas now receiving only one Canadian service, if the service is through a private outlet, the alternative should be provided by C.B.C. If C.B.C. is now the sole service, the second service should be private.

Then there appears this significant sentence:

Where there are serious obstacles to such parallel development, however, these should not prohibit the extension of alternate service by other means, at least on a temporary basis.

This is the recommendation of the committee that we would like to see invoked.

At present there are rumours going around in the city of Saskatoon about the premier of Saskatchewan having visited the Prime Minister just before this announcement was made. It is being said that he discussed and made some sort of arrangement to allow a private station in Saskatchewan, incidentally a station which has some feeling for the present government, to put a satellite in the

Saskatoon area, thus helping the private station out of an uneconomic situation. It is up to the government to kill this type of rumour before it gains too much credence in the minds of the people in the city I represent.

Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I could be permitted to make a few general remarks about some other facets of the bill before us. The white paper issued in 1966 stated one of the objectives of the C.B.C. as follows:

The determination to develop and maintain a national system of radio and t.v. broadcasting in Canada as an essential part of the continuing resolve for Canadian identity and Canadian unity.

The report of the broadcasting committee in March, 1967, put it similarly but in different words which I quoted earlier, namely:

A distinctively Canadian broadcasting system is essential to our national identity, unity and vitality in our second century.

Speaking personally, I am happy to see that the bill before us agrees with these two proposals, but I say that I will support this concept only as long as the private sector of broadcasting is also fully available to every Canadian. I will support it so long as those areas not presently covered by the C.B.C. will receive C.B.C. service. I will support it so long as the provisions in this bill are meaningful so far as the full and varied use of Canadian talent—writers, producers, actors and so on—is concerned. I will support it so long as it is truly Canadian and so long as its prime objective is the fostering not only of a distinctive Canadianism but also the encouragement of those Canadians involved in the arts.

The C.B.C. should be an instrument not of propaganda but of education. I must confess that I share the deep concern of the hon. member for Yukon when he referred to that clause in the bill which gives the cabinet power to pre-empt any program and broadcast any other program that either the executive committee or the governor in council deems to be of special significance to Canadians generally. The minister has said, and I note that the distinguished advocate from York South has also said, that the government would never take advantage of this provision for propaganda purposes. If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, then this clause should not be in the bill at all.

A truly distinctive Canadian broadcasting system should be an instrument not only of entertainment but of enlightenment. It should be a means of communication between various regions to promote better understanding between them. It should not become the agent of