

Canadian Policy on Broadcasting

Health and Welfare—representations respecting cigarette advertising and smoking education; the hon. member for Saskatoon (Mr. Brand), National Defence—use of reserve officers as language instructors; the hon. member for Parkdale (Mr. Haidasz), Pollution—request for committee consideration of proposed legislation.

I understand there is some disposition on the part of the house to suspend private members' hour. Is it agreed that private members' hour shall be suspended today?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The house will resume its work at eight o'clock. I do now leave the chair.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at 8 p.m.

BROADCASTING**IMPLEMENTATION OF CANADIAN POLICY**

The house resumed consideration of the motion of Miss LaMarsh for the second reading of Bill No. C-163, to implement a broadcasting policy for Canada, to amend the Radio Act in consequence thereof and to enact other consequential and related provisions.

[Translation]

Mr. Asselin (Charlevoix): Mr. Speaker, when we rose I was asking the minister's help in convincing the authorities of the C.B.C. to build in my constituency a satellite station that could rebroadcast the signal to every voter in my constituency. As a matter of fact, the minister should know, if she does not and the people in C.B.C. should also know, that several municipalities of my constituency are served by a community cable which is excessively expensive to receive the signals of a private television station. Now, as the minister indicated a while ago, she might wield a certain influence and enjoy some prestige with the administration of the C.B.C. So I ask her to use the prestige she has shown for the hon. member for Saguenay so that the people of my constituency may receive the signal from the C.B.C. and have the broadcasting services to which they are entitled.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]

I noted in my intervention that the people at home are paying the same taxes as the other citizens of Canada and that they should not be penalized by being forced to receive the signal of a private station, the owners of which charge hundreds of dollars yearly, to have the C.B.C. television service.

As the minister has already stated when she introduced the bill in the house, the air waves belong to the whole community, they are part of the common wealth of the Canadian people and I believe that I am justified as the representative of a constituency removed from the large centres to intervene and to demand of the authorities of the C.B.C. that their services be extended at the earliest possible moment so as to avoid discriminating against a population far removed from the major centres.

Mr. Speaker, if I take part in this discussion today it is naturally to refer to the statements and charges by the minister against the administration of the C.B.C. We, on this side of the house, have repeatedly asked the minister for details about the charges against the leadership and administration of the C.B.C. And as representatives of the electors of the province of Quebec, we are somewhat concerned over the way the minister worded her charges against the C.B.C.—particularly when we realize that the C.B.C. is under the management of a French Canadian.

I am not here, Mr. Speaker, to defend the C.B.C. management; or to say that the minister is wrong, because we know nothing of the charges made by her against the C.B.C. management. On several occasions, as I said earlier, we have asked the minister to specify her accusations against the management of this crown corporation for which she is responsible to parliament.

Up to now, the minister has refused to give details; she kept the discussion very general, implying that the management was rotten in several sections of the C.B.C.

We, in the opposition, cannot of course accept such a gratuitous accusation. That is why, during the debate this afternoon, the member for Saskatoon (Mr. Brand) asked the house to refer the bill to a committee of the house so that we might get more information on the accusations of the minister against the C.B.C. management and also study some of the provisions of the bill which, to our mind, seem rather nebulous and do not contain all the information the public—