

dispensed by it; as well as the complete and autocratic control which it has, not only over its own national broadcasting stations but over stations which are recognized now as private stations and confined largely to provincial areas in the different parts of Canada. As one who has watched and followed from the beginning the development and application of radio in this country, I say in all sincerity that I can see a trend towards the establishment of greater power in an institution with effects on the public mind of this country that are not wholly good.

That, to my mind, is the whole crux of the situation regarding the enlarging powers that are conferred by this bill on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. I do not believe there is any set of men, young or old, in this country who are capable of administering the powerful influence that is inherent in the complete control of radio and television as an instrument of mass communication in this country. To really comprehend and grasp all that is involved in this legislation, it is necessary to have an historical view of the evolution of freedom of speech and freedom of the press and all that is involved in those terms. It took two hundred years or more of struggle to bring those freedoms to their present status in this country, and a great deal of enlightenment and insistency on the part of growing democratic forces has been required to hold that ground. As a matter of fact the progress of democracy in the world is registered in the degree that the press has been made free and freedom of association and freedom of speech have been accorded.

It is said that the air belongs to the people. The air we breathe belongs to the people, but the ether waves in the air that are operated by radio do not belong to the people and are not controlled by them. The question of the control of this new medium must be considered in the light of the importance of this whole matter; and I think the quality and the character of the programs dispensed throughout this country can be affected for the better only by means of more competition.

I am not going to disparage as a whole the performance of the C.B.C. over the years. Some of the services they have performed, for instance during the visit of Her Royal Highness and the Duke of Edinburgh, were highly creditable, and such as one likes to see a national broadcasting corporation performing. The treatment of the royal visit was a purely objective, excellent reportorial job. On the other hand one cannot say the same of some of the assignments given by the program department of the C.B.C. to various people to make news broadcasts and

commentaries. Undoubtedly the people selected for this work are chosen as the result of an estimate of their abilities, but there have been many instances of objectionable material being presented and objectionable and inaccurate statements being made under these heads over the radio. Some of these instances have been mentioned in this chamber, and in this connection I do not wish to emphasize anything that, from a point of view taken in the Senate, may have a controversial aspect. What I am trying to bring out is that freedom of speech is abused when it is applied to the utterance of statements of that kind. There is nothing anybody can do to correct them. Evidently so far the administration of radio broadcasting is concerned, there is no provision for editing the copy of these people before their statements are broadcast. In connection with newspapers or magazine publications of any standing, the editors and owners have a sense of responsibility for the kind of material they circulate among the reading public. If *carte blanche* is given to somebody to speak on a subject of current interest over the radio, without any previous checking of his material by the responsible person in charge of radio operations, that is not freedom of speech at all, it is freedom of licence; it indicates irresponsibility. This does not, in my opinion, reflect serious appreciation of the great influence which the radio should have as an instrument of education and communication to the people. If there is no organization to control that sort of thing, I see only one way to correct it, and that is by providing opportunity for competition on the part of an agency or agencies whose broadcasts may tend to restore the balance in that regard.

There is so much to be said in connection with this subject that I am sorry we shall not have more time to deal with it. I think the bill should be referred to the Standing Committee on Banking and Commerce to enable us to ask questions of the officials. One question which naturally arises out of this legislation is: What sort of a basis will be necessary for appeal to the Exchequer Court? If a private station or someone else takes exception to a ruling of the C.B.C., will the objector have recourse to the Exchequer Court? On what basis would the appeal be made? These are things I should like to know. I raise these points because I believe this country has reached an important stage in connection with the development of this powerful influence in the educational and informative life of Canadians.

The development of this unknown quantity of television is being left entirely in the hands of the C.B.C., and I think that the expense of this undertaking should be shared