

*Government Orders*

The gaps, the errors or omissions, the mechanisms to set in place some corrective measures have been brought to the government's attention through many representations at hearings held across this country, and amendments were suggested. However, the government seems bent, in certain instances, on different directions. Errors of the past are not fully addressed. Remedial solutions are lacking in some of the key nerve centres of this new bill. This is regrettable, for we have this rare opportunity to fix it where it is broken.

The government seems bent on dismantling this country's infrastructure, and we on this side of the House will continue to fight to build and to maintain. My party believes that the development and maintenance of a truly Canadian broadcasting system is fundamental to the future of Canada. I believe the minister shares that point of view, for the most part, and I hope he will see the need for amendments that I am bringing to his attention right now.

As the minister knows, in 1989 Canada is a culturally occupied country. Some 80 per cent of our publishing industry is in foreign hands. Ninety-seven per cent of films shown in Canada are foreign. Eighty-five per cent of records and tapes are based on imported master tapes. In broadcasting, 71 per cent of all programs viewed by English speaking Canadians on television are American. The figure is much lower in French speaking Canada, but as the globalization takes place that too will be impacted.

The minister has given money and a great deal of attention to certain sectors, but here is where he can really do a job. This is where people watch and listen. Therefore, I would suggest that cultural survival will be perhaps one of the most critical problems our generation of Canadians will have to face. I believe that it can be achieved but only by using all the means at our command.

With Canadians spending 24 hours each week watching television and 18 hours per week listening to radio, what we see and hear on television and radio impacts on how we view ourselves and our world, and what our children are going to think. Broadcasting is the central vehicle through which Canadians communicate with one another, a major instrument for Canadian expression in the arts and entertainment and an essential means for providing a Canadian perspective in news, information and programming.

In addressing the broadcast issue of the present and the future, the crucial test will not be just the extent to which the provisions of the 1968 act are retained. The key test will be the extent to which in a more complex world we continue to retain control by Canadians over the system and to provide a reasonable balance between Canadian and foreign programming.

We live in a rapidly developing technological environment. The coaxial cable technology that led to the cabling of Canadian homes revolutionized broadcasting in the 1960s and 1970s, but that technology is now rapidly being replaced and challenged by the development of cheaper fibre optics installed by telephone companies and cheaper satellite communications being bought by individuals, as well as the growing number of Canadians who have VCRs.

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We therefore cannot ignore technology, but we must use it creatively to improve the distribution while ensuring Canadian content through it. Jean McNulty, in a recent article entitled *Broadcasting Policy in the Canadian Context*, sums the situation up very well. She states:

Communications distribution technologies are seen as both potential national saviours and potential Trojan horses.

It is in that light that we make certain observations and the content that is carried on those systems becomes of utmost importance. It is not counting the number of Canadian buttons pushed and saying that is Canadian content; it is the amount of real Canadian content.

While Canadians are technically well advanced in distribution technology, we are far less advanced in the areas of production and marketing of domestic content. This government must act to ensure domestic production. The government could start by reinstating the 100 per cent capital cost allowance of film and video production which was cut in 1987 to 30 per cent, resulting in significant cuts in production moneys available and in production, of course.

Recently we have learned that the Canadian audience share given to Canadian television stations is significantly lower than that which was sought. What will be the impact now upon the revenues from advertising? Will broadcasters lose resources that could have been earmarked for Canadian productions? These are part of our challenges.