

*Bell Canada Act*

management. There is an obligation to look at what is probably going to happen or what could very well happen and provide safeguards against it. One does not wait until the House is burning down before one thinks about fire protection. There is not likely to be a second chance.

Second, if the Hon. Member, as a resident of Alberta, does not like the public corporation, the Alberta Telephone Corporation, which handles Alberta's telephone service, he has, of course, recourse. I am sure he does not want Ottawa to interfere with the Alberta Telephone Corporation. The point is that if the Alberta Telephone Corporation wishes to make some arrangement with any other body to provide television service which Albertans, in the Hon. Member's opinion, are not rich enough, smart enough or industrious enough to provide for themselves through satellite and so on, they can enter into that arrangement. That is a very different matter from giving the whole monopoly in Canada to Bell Canada Enterprises.

**Mr. Stan Graham (Kootenay East—Revelstoke):** Mr. Speaker, as a former member of the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture, I was honoured to be present at the time this Bill, known then as Bill C-19, was examined clause by clause. I feel we have been given an excellent opportunity, or at least I have, to have a second chance to look perhaps a little deeper than we are sometimes permitted when examining a Bill. This is particularly true considering the fact that the Bill dealt with Bell Canada, and to a western Member from the southeast corner of British Columbia, Bell is very far away.

● (1610)

When she introduced the Bill yesterday, the Minister spoke very enthusiastically about the work of the committee. I have to concur with the Minister on that. The committee put in a tremendous effort. Nevertheless, it is not always possible to examine all of the ramifications of the wording of some of the clauses of this Bill.

Bill C-13, the Bill we are debating today, is an almost verbatim copy of the previous Bill C-19. In fact, just a minor change has been made. That change is in paragraph (c) of Clause 6 of Bill C-13. The clause has been changed so it now includes the words: "if the Commission has not otherwise specified". Almost everything else in the Bill is identical to Bill C-19.

My concern is with Clause 7 of the Bill. The Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) more or less skirted this issue. It was dealt with more fully yesterday by the Hon. Member for Mount Royal (Mrs. Finestone). My concerns appear to be somewhat similar to those of the Hon. Member for Mount Royal.

Clause 7 reads as follows:

Neither the Company nor any person controlled by the Company shall directly or indirectly hold a broadcasting licence or operate a broadcasting undertaking within the meaning of the Broadcasting Act.

That appeared at the time to cover all aspects of Bell Canada's operations. It has since been brought to my attention that this does not cover the operations of Bell Canada Enterprises, an unregulated portion of that vast company. It is for this reason that I would like to go on record as being somewhat concerned about, if not opposed to, Clause 7 as it presently reads.

Why am I opposed to Clause 7? A parent company will invariably treat a subsidiary company in a preferred fashion. What will occur down the road with Bell Canada or perhaps B.C. Tel? Would this permit a subsidiary company to have a preferred position? If so, our local community cable operators would be eliminated. Life could be made very difficult for them. Although it is difficult for cable operators to cover all the area surrounding them because of the cost of installation of cable, nevertheless we must hold to the fact that they are community cable companies and as such have performed a very human service over the years. Invariably, a telephone company is much less personal than a private cable company owner, someone who is a member of the community and has a feel for what the people in the community want as opposed to what the large company may decide to do.

As I have said, Bell is a long way away from Kootenay East—Revelstoke, but what is good for Bell is also good for B.C. Tel, Alberta Government telephones and any other telephone company throughout this large country of ours. Therefore, I wish to be on record as believing that Clause 7 should be changed so that it deals also with affiliates of Bell Canada and not simply Bell itself and its employees. This would prevent the elimination of the small community cable companies which should be protected to the best of our ability.

**Ms. McDonald:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Hon. Member a question with regard to the difference between the Bill before us today, Bill C-13, and the previous Bill C-19. The Hon. Member admitted that only one clause of the Bill had been changed, yet Hon. Members who were in the House yesterday will recall that the Minister made a big point out of how changed the Bill was. She said that she and her Department had listened to members of the Opposition and members of the committee and had made substantial changes to the Bill. How does the Hon. Member account for this discrepancy?

**Mr. Graham:** Mr. Speaker, I do not believe there is a discrepancy. As I heard the Minister's speech yesterday, she said that changes had been made and brought about by the co-operation of the members of the standing committee. I pointed out the change that has been made. However, the Bill as is, with the exception of concerns about Clause 7, is more or less satisfactory to the members of that committee including the Hon. Member. The Bill should be satisfactory all the way through except for Clause 7.

**Mr. Gauthier:** Mr. Speaker, indeed, one of the clauses of the Bill which was changed was Clause 6. As I read it, the Bill as it is now worded would allow Bell Canada to charge subscribers for six months of telephone service prior to service being