

Business of Supply

have an effect on me as I am sure it would have an effect on other members.

I hope that Mr. Speaker would take control of the televising of the debates of the house, the same as he now has control over the *Journals*, *Hansard* and other facilities which affect this chamber. I hope that the type of media we provide for the public will help them regain their lost ability to participate. I believe it is desirable that the public be able to see what is going on in parliament on a continuous basis rather than be fed, as we are now through the news media, fragments and sections which do not seem to have any beginning or end. Mr. Speaker, I believe, would be the agency best able to protect our rights as individual members and also our rights as a parliament, as well as the right of the public to make a fair evaluation of what was said.

Mr. Ambrose Hubert Peddle (Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador): Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether I am in a position to make any great contribution to this debate. The subject has been kicked around for some time. Many different views have been expressed. I believe it is a good idea to air this subject in this chamber today without any great amount of party discipline or any great amount of acrimony. It is a subject which at this point can be freely and openly debated. Some people have suggested it is not an important subject at this time. I disagree. I believe it is an important subject, indeed a very important one.

Television I suppose has become the most powerful single effective means of communication today. This is the parliament of Canada and a few hours spent in determining the relationship between parliament and television, in my opinion, should be a few hours well spent. At this point I believe I should say that with very few exceptions, I personally would be opposed to allowing a television camera or television cameras in this chamber. The exceptions to my mind should be confined to such events as the delivery of the budget speech and perhaps other noteworthy and newsworthy events.

Television has many possibilities in the field of education; but at the moment I regard it primarily as a source of entertainment, although up to a point it is also a source of information and education. I speak for myself, although I believe many hon. members feel the same way. We are not here as entertainers, and the majority of us did not come here as educators. Here again, I speak

for myself. I certainly did not come here to make like an Ed Sullivan or end up as a national exhibit of some kind. I do not think this should be one of the prerequisites of becoming a member of parliament. Undoubtedly it will be if television eventually is allowed in the chamber. I think it would naturally follow that the greatest television performers in many cases would probably end up as members of parliament. I do not think television can necessarily be considered an honest media. As an example of what I mean I might refer to the occasion a few years ago when the late John F. Kennedy, who was campaigning for election, engaged in a great television debate with Mr. Nixon. I think it is conceded all over the world that it was not what the gentlemen had to say but their appearance on television which was the winning factor in the campaign. I do not think that should necessarily be the situation. I do not think the best material is necessarily selected in that manner.

I had a little parliamentary experience in a provincial legislature, and in the short time I have been here I have watched what I would refer to as the fragmentation of this parliament; it has been chopped up in little pieces. An example of this was seen the other morning when four very important committee meetings were scheduled for the same time, 9:30 in the morning. We all remember the house leader saying that we would have plenty of opportunity in committee to voice our opinions on matters. Where are the opportunities? And now the suggestion is that we televise this fragmentation, that we televise what is left of this parliament. I might have been a little more kindly disposed six months ago when this parliament was in fact a parliament and when the business of the country was conducted right here in this chamber. I could very well have been more kindly disposed then, but I am certainly not kindly disposed toward giving television coverage to the fragments that are left.

● (5:30 p.m.)

I would not for a moment recommend the closing of the galleries any more than I would recommend the closing of the galleries in our courts of law and Supreme Court. By the same token, I would not agree to allowing television into our Supreme Court. They are separate matters, and I do not think one has anything to do with the other.

The hon. member for Wellington (Mr. Hales) gave some pretty alarming estimates