

Canadian Policy on Broadcasting

was passed in 1965, and allowed a television station to be owned by foreign residents.

• (4:30 p.m.)

Mr. Chairman, I know the minister has good intentions but in the past good intentions were not respected. We, in Quebec, would like to see and end to Americans ingrafting their ideas into our heads. We would like our two t.v. stations in Quebec city, the only two—if others are requested, the reply is “There are enough t.v. stations—to become the property of Quebec citizens. The minister must agree with me that the request is legitimate since paragraph (a) of clause 2 reads as follows:

It is hereby declared that

(a) broadcasting undertakings in Canada make use of radio frequencies that are public property and such undertakings constitute a single system, herein referred to as the Canadian broadcasting system, comprising public and private elements;

Mr. Chairman, it is said that the Canadian broadcasting system uses frequencies that are in the public domain, in short that a licence is required to operate a television station.

Three or four years ago, Mr. Jacques Laroche, of Quebec, owner of radio station CJLR, applied for a license for a television station in Quebec. He was refused, because he already had three. It seems that they are limited, and if no more can be given in Quebec, I would ask the minister at least to enable Quebecers to regain control of the two Quebec television stations instead of leaving them in the hands of American citizens.

I see that the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Marchand) is now in the house. He is a resident of the province of Quebec, a citizen of Quebec who should also be concerned with the problems I am bringing up. I see him speaking with a neighbour, yet this is a Quebec problem with which the minister should be concerned. He should see to it that changes are made and that Quebecers become owners of their television stations.

I ask the minister to believe that there are many people in the province of Quebec who ask nothing better than to buy shares in one of the Quebec television stations, since they are probably among the stations which make the most money in Canada. Both the French and the English stations belong to the same company. They make a great deal of money. In fact, since they have no competition, the administrators raise the rates as they wish, and the people

of Quebec would like to invest money in this concern.

Therefore, the amendment I introduced did not ask for very much. I simply asked instead of the words:

—the Canadian broadcasting system should be effectively owned and controlled by Canadians—

I should like the word “should” to be replaced by the word “shall”, so that the clause would read rather this way:

—the Canadian broadcasting system shall be effectively owned and controlled by Canadians.

I should like the minister to answer my question and to tell me whether or not she intends to do anything in that respect? Is it her intention to accept the amendment which would include the word “shall” be effectively owned and controlled by Canadians rather than the word “should”. I am not asking for much. I simply ask her to change one word which would reflect in the text the good intentions she has shown and which do not appear in it at the present time.

I should like to ask the minister if she intends to accept the amendment and to see to it that the present situation changes so that the ownership of the two private Quebec city television stations be controlled by Quebec and by Canadian citizens. I am convinced that many Quebecers would ask nothing better than to have an interest in their own television stations. Is the minister ready to accept that amendment and to change the words in the text?

[English]

Miss LaMarsh: Mr. Chairman, I doubt that this is the appropriate time to make any comments on this matter. I know that a number of general suggestions have been made. The other day my hon. friend suggested an amendment. We have not been debating that amendment, but general speeches have been made with respect to clause 2.

I should say to my hon. friend that I feel I will not be able to support his amendment when the appropriate time comes by virtue of the fact that this is a declaratory clause and we have tried to use appropriate language throughout. The matter has been discussed at some length during the meetings of the broadcasting committee, and I should like to refer my hon. friend to those discussions.

[Translation]

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Chairman, during the committee discussion, I raised the matter, and the minister told me then that she did