

Fisheries, he told us that he and the department were refusing to issue any new broadcasting licences because a royal commission was then investigating radio matters and the country was preparing for a national policy on radio. Accordingly no new licences were issued in 1930, and no new licences were issued in 1931. During the session of 1931 this parliament enacted legislation which is known as the Radio Broadcasting Act, nationalizing radio. We unanimously supported the legislation which the government brought down, and under that legislation this new radio commission, which was supposed to be absolutely non-political, was to supervise the issuance of radio broadcasting licences. As a matter of fact, there is a clause in the act which authorizes the commission even to cancel existing licences and which provides that no new licences can be issued without the approval of that commission. I asked a question in the house the other day, and I was informed that that commission was appointed on the fifth of October, 1932. The committee may see at page 1915 of Hansard the answer that was given to my question. The commission was appointed on October 5, 1932, and sworn in on October 31, 1932. But on October 28, 1932, three days before the commission was sworn in and twenty-three days after it had been appointed, the Minister of Marine issued the radio licence I have mentioned to *La Patrie* in Montreal. I say that that was an insult to parliament, a violation of the pledge given to parliament, and a violation of the law. It was an insult also to the members of the commission. Either they agreed to it, which they should not have done under the circumstances, or if they did not agree to it, they are not the men who should be members of that commission if they acquiesced in the issuance of the licence notwithstanding. The licence was issued between the time of their appointment and the time of their swearing in as members of the radio commission. I protest against this thing having been done obviously for political purposes—I do not hesitate to say that—after the unanimous stand which the House of Commons took last year on this radio broadcasting question.

Mr. DURANLEAU: I understand, Mr. Chairman, that we are considering items 139 and 140 together. Perhaps item 247 might be discussed at the same time.

Mr. CASGRAIN: That is not the same thing. That item has to do with the organization of the commission. The one we are now considering has to do with radio broadcasting.

[Mr. Lapointe.]

Mr. DURANLEAU: I thought that the observations of my hon. friend from Quebec East might be considered as coming under item 247.

Mr. LAPOINTE: They come under item 139 as well.

Mr. DURANLEAU: Just a word in answer to the observations of my hon. friend from Quebec East in regard to the licence issued to *La Patrie* Publishing Company a few days before the radio commission was sworn in. Montreal is the largest city, the metropolis of Canada.

Mr. LAPOINTE: We all know that.

Mr. DURANLEAU: In the city of Montreal there were only two licensed broadcasting stations, while in other cities of Canada with smaller populations there were at least five stations with greater power than had those in Montreal. In my absence the acting minister of my department saw fit to grant a licence to the newspaper in question. There is nothing wrong in that; I can see nothing wrong in it. At the present time there are only three stations in the city of Montreal. In my view that is not too many, and I do not believe the commissioners would object to it. If they wish to object, it is their privilege to do so.

Mr. LAPOINTE: Were they consulted?

Mr. DURANLEAU: Of course they were not consulted, because they were not in office at the time. I want to say this, further, that even to-day licences are granted by the Minister of Marine.

Mr. LAPOINTE: Yes.

Mr. DURANLEAU: Yes, they are granted by the Minister of Marine, so I am suggesting that there is nothing extraordinary in the matter.

Mr. LAPOINTE: But the granting of a licence has to be approved by the commission.

Mr. DURANLEAU: The hon. member says *La Patrie* is a Conservative paper, and that the licence was granted because of that fact. I do not believe the hon. member is sincere in that statement. I am not here to defend *La Patrie* and its attitude in politics, but I shall say there is another paper in Montreal which has a broadcasting licence.

Mr. LAPOINTE: And has had it for years.