

Government Orders

Let me say right now that this cannot happen. The Canada Labour Relations Board will not be able to review the decisions of this tribunal, any more than the tribunal will be able to review those of the Canada Labour Relations Board. All appeals will be heard by the Federal Court of Appeal, which will have sole review jurisdiction over the Board and the new tribunal.

[English]

Canadian artists represent a dynamic pool of talent upon which numerous industries draw. Obviously the performing arts, but also broadcasting, book publishing, sound recording and film industries, our newspapers, magazines and reviews, draw upon them. Our education system is learning to draw upon them.

This talent pool is absolutely vital to Canadian interests in terms of our identity, our shared cultures, and our social and economic well-being.

This bill is so elementary, so straightforward, so absolutely necessary that it should not require massive debate. It will finally, after 40 years of discussion and debate, give us the foundation from which we can move forward on a whole range of policies.

[Translation]

—Mr. Speaker, I therefore move:

That Bill C-7, an Act respecting the status of the artist and professional relations between artists and producers in Canada, be referred, after second reading, to the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture.

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Will those members who object to the motion please rise in their place.

[Translation]

And fewer than five members having risen

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Fewer than five members have risen. Pursuant to Standing Order 73(3)(b), the motion is deemed adopted.

Motion agreed to.

[English]

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to speak on second reading of this most needed piece of legislation.

I want to begin by doing something that I do not often do, which is agreeing whole-heartedly with the Minister for Employment and Immigration. The hon. minister said today that this bill should not be taken as the sum total of government policy on status of the artist, that it should be taken as a foundation. What I agree with in particular in his words is when he said it should be taken as a stepping stone. Perhaps the stepping stone analogy is a good one, when we talk about bills of this nature and even when we talk about the process of development of legislation within the Chamber.

I would hope that the stepping stone that the government has introduced to date will be added to with more stepping stones and a stronger foundation when it indeed goes to committee for further review and for possible amendment.

I would like to quote from the Applebaum-Hébert report, the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee of 1982, when it was said: "The largest subsidy to cultural life in Canada comes from unpaid and underpaid labour of artists, from the artists themselves".

That is probably the truest comment that has been made, not I must admit on the status of artists in Canada alone, but on the status of artists of artists world-wide. It is probably true in any country of the world that artists are the major subsidizers of culture and cultural life.

We come to realize this. It was nine years ago that a federal committee made the statement and told us this. The difference is that we have an opportunity to assist the artistic community and to remove some of that incredibly onerous burden of being the main subsidizers of cultural life in Canada.

I think it is particularly apt that this bill should come forward at this stage in our development, at this stage in our history when we are all so concerned with our national identity, with questions of national unity, and when we are all looking for the ties that will bring us together as opposed to those that will push us apart.