

Supply—Transport

in respect of which I have no competence or right to make a decision. Perhaps the hon. gentleman will realize that, if we come to the conclusion that the application for channel 5 is not technically feasible in that it would not give good service or would interfere with some other channel, it could not be sent forward.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Who do you mean when you say "we"?

Mr. Pickersgill: I refer to the Department of Transport.

Mr. Churchill: That is the royal "we", is it not?

Mr. Smith: Channel 6 is not a United States station.

Mr. Pickersgill: I am only a minister of the Crown.

Mr. Smith: As you are aware, channel 6 is a C.B.C. outlet. We in Simcoe county are not anti-American but what we are interested in is preserving the C.B.C. programs.

Mr. Pickersgill: I understand the hon. gentleman perfectly. I am sure I would feel exactly the same way as he does. If there was any question whatsoever about the service to Barrie and Simcoe county not going to be as good then I would fight like a tiger to make sure the change was not allowed. I do not see why any sensible person would not do that, especially someone representing that area. I do not think for a moment that the Board of Broadcast Governors would permit this channel to be moved if it felt this was going to reduce or make worse the service at Barrie. Certainly if I was a member of the board I would not allow such a move under those circumstances.

Mr. Monteith: Do I understand the minister to say that if there was an application by the proprietors of channel 3—

Mr. Pickersgill: You mean the licensees?

Mr. Monteith: Yes. If there was an application by the licensees of channel 3 for a transfer to Toronto or any place else, would channel 3 automatically be thrown open to other interested parties?

Mr. Pickersgill: No. What I said was that the Board of Broadcast Governors could say: We will not allow you to take it anywhere; we gave you a licence for an operation in Barrie and we will not give you a licence for Toronto.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That would not give anyone else an opportunity.

Mr. Pickersgill: No.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That is the joker.

Mr. Pickersgill: I beg your pardon?

Mr. Diefenbaker: That is the tiger in the tank.

Mr. Pickersgill: All the Board of Broadcast Governors has to say in that case is no if they do not feel that it is proper and in the national interest to allow the move. They might also suggest that they think it would be a good idea to have channel 3 in Toronto but that no one has a vested right to it. The Board of Broadcast Governors might say that they would allow the transfer but also allow competition for it at the same time. In that case it would be up to the applicants either to withdraw their application or submit to competition.

Mr. Churchill: Is channel 5 in use now? How does it happen to become available?

Mr. Pickersgill: I do not think it can be said with certainty, as the hon. member for Simcoe North indicated, that it is available but there is an application to use it in Simcoe county.

Mr. Rynard: By whom?

Mr. Pickersgill: By the same interests. This information was all put on record the other day. This application is being evaluated at the same time as the channel 3 application. The two applications are interlocked because the applicants state that they do not want their application for the transfer of channel 3 to go forward unless the other application is considered to be technically satisfactory. That application has not been evaluated so I cannot say that the channel is available. However, when the applicants made their application they must have had some engineering advice which would indicate that the channel might be available and they would not be wasting their money in making the application.

Mr. Aiken: May I ask the minister a question?

Mr. Pickersgill: Certainly.

Mr. Aiken: Is it possible for the same interests to end up with both channels 3 and 5?

Mr. Pickersgill: Yes, that would be possible, but whether it would be desirable or not is another matter.