

*Telesat Canada Act*

the question of language and of cultural content. This is why one must ask oneself: What is it to be? Which government will participate in this project? The bill is far from being explicit in this regard.

In this particular field, Quebec was the first to innovate. A few years ago, the government of that province began talks with the French government in order to establish a telecommunication system by satellite which would broadcast in French.

I fear that through this bill, the federal government is engaging in a game to the finish with the Quebec government. Whoever has the first satellite wins. Therefore, this point should have been clarified. The language in which the satellite will be broadcasting should really reflect the nature of the country. It is not good enough to repeat the minister's words:

Third, provide an extension of television service in both languages to all Canadians. This satellite, Mr. Speaker, will broadcast both in French and in English, in short it will speak the languages of Canada.

It seems very nice and I could be asked: "Why then get excited, since the minister specifically stated that the satellite will speak Canadian?" But, Mr. Speaker, this is precisely what has been done for a hundred years. What does "to speak Canadian" mean? We have known for a hundred years that to speak Canadian is to speak almost exclusively English. And we know that while television and radio have been in operation for many years, there are still in the country some locations without any French-speaking broadcasting service, even if the Canadian government, had undertaken to establish such a service.

And when such a bill is introduced and the same administration is entrusted with the task of establishing telecommunication by satellite, we are entitled to ask ourselves if the satellite will still be broadcasting in English only.

We are ready to believe in good faith; we have done it before, but we know about the heroic fights carried on to obtain a minimum of justice.

This is why before introducing such legislation, it would have been better to secure the full co-operation of Quebec and other provinces which have important French-speaking minorities, in order to ensure unequivocally that those satellites will really broadcast in French.

• (4:20 p.m.)

That is why the hon. member for Lotbinière asked the minister to advise us further on that point.

We know for sure that negotiations have been held and are still going on between Quebec and France on that matter. What will happen if those agreements become effective? The episode of the international airport will be re-enacted and that must be avoided. Therefore, first of all, we must avoid undue haste in passing this bill, if it is simply to beat Quebec to it, which seems to have been a major concern of the government. It is perhaps for this reason that upon reading the minister's speech a second time, we realize that he very often emphasizes the need for the satellite to be national, from which we gather that if ever an agreement is concluded between France and Quebec for the launching of a satellite designed for transmission in French, it would be an international undertaking.

So, I wonder to what extent the federal government would accept the co-operation of the provinces. In fact, the minister said, and I quote:

During the past nine months continuous and extensive discussions have taken place with all the parties interested: the potential users, and participants including the common carriers and C.B.C.; the provinces; other government departments; manufacturing industries.

What kind of negotiations were there with the provinces? They resembled those who took place regarding the international airport; we know that what was said in the house is not to be trusted, because even though the government claims that it did co-operate, it denied what the minister stated to the house.

That is why before the bill is referred to the committee, we would like the minister to tell the house immediately what type of co-operation he received from the provinces and, particularly, from Quebec. What kind of guarantee was given to the provincial government? My colleague mentioned it a while ago. This is about communications and, therefore, about questions that are based on culture and education. There is necessarily a difference between the form and the matter. Even if the minister does not want to make distinctions, there is an enormous difference. He must not again get into meaningless struggles which do not lead anywhere. To my mind, politics must