

Foreign Control of Canadian Industries

save us from the narrow, mindless emotionalism which often plagues such issues when they are restricted to one country. If we could look at the problem at the international level, I think this would be very effective. We have been asserting that the entire field of corporate ownership in Canada is so important and so complex that we must look very carefully before we leap. We should scrutinize the ramifications of each policy initiative lest we injure the patient's health because of unthinking ignorance. This approach to the problem is also crucial in relation to the evocative question of the preservation of Canadian culture. One of our supreme priorities should be not only the preservation but also the positive stimulus of a vibrant strong culture which is uniquely Canadian.

I am glad to say one of the reasons I and other members of this house were persuaded to support the measure which we have recently given second reading and sent to a committee was this very thought. It does constitute a rampart of defence against what otherwise might be the case with regard to these proposed takeovers. In a country as diverse as Canada, in a country so close to the proud, selfconfident American colossus as is Canada, the people and their government must make a continuing effort to maintain their own culture. But in this area, as in the question of control over economic institutions, we must examine very carefully the relationship between ownership of social institutions and the preservation of a strong and continually developing culture.

The relationship may not be simple; indeed it is probably exceedingly complex. Certainly, it is much more complex than our friends to the left seem to imply in their motion which we are considering today. We must protect our way of life; we must be concerned with the influence of United States ownership of institutions within our society on those ways of life. But we must not be blinded by a raging obsession with the cultural perils of United States capital; we must not raise the emotional cry of universal anti-Americanism. Indeed, we benefit from exposure to ideas, not only cultural ideas but economic ideas, from beyond our national boundaries, even perhaps from American ideas from time to time. We must ensure that the great great American dream does not become the great Canadian nightmare. I suppose we might introduce sleeping with the elephants into this but—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Order, please. I must interrupt the hon. member to inform him that his time has expired.

Mr. Baldwin: I shall finish with that nightmare.

Mr. Alastair Gillespie (Etobicoke): Mr. Speaker, in speaking to this motion this evening I wish to emphasize two aspects. First, to a large extent I think the answer to this problem of foreign domination will be a matter of will rather than a matter of technique. Second, this will involve us in discussions with the provinces rather than discussion with the United States. I listened with considerable interest to the last speaker, the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin). While I share many of his concerns, I am not sure I share his same hope that discussion with the United States will bring about an answer to this particular problem. I think it is very largely a constitutional problem. I believe, as I said in my introductory remarks, that it is a matter of will rather than a matter of technique. The thing I am concerned about is not so much the takeover of our industry, serious as that is. I am not for one moment advocating that we should sit back, passively accepting it. I am very much more concerned about the takeover of the Canadian mind and the Canadian spirit, a takeover which is more subtle and more pervasive, and infinitely more serious and important. If this takeover is ever made, then the takeover will be complete.

That is not to say that I want to speak this evening on the effect of the United States media, of radio, TV films or magazines. Rather I want to talk about our political independence and the fact that it will depend on Canadian attitudes toward our own originality, our ability to do our own thing. Our political survival as a country will depend on our ability to harness the energies and excite the imaginations of our Canadians of both official language groups and of the cultural diversity which is Canada. It will depend on our ability to build a society which is different from that of the United States.

We must approach this distinction in a positive way and not in an anti-American way. We must do this in a way which sets out the fact that we have many interests and aims which are similar to those of the Americans; that we are different; and that our interests are Canadian interests, even when they happen to coincide with the United States interests.