

Mr. MITCHELL: Mr. Chairman—

Mr. POULIOT: The minister is just rising. It is the hour of the rising sun.

Mr. DURANLEAU: All I can say to my hon. friend is that an application was made and a licence was granted.

Mr. POULIOT: I thank the minister, but my mind is not yet satisfied. Who recommended the application to the department? I am sure the minister was not aware of the fact at the time the licence was granted, because he was not in Canada, but he must have learned since. His acting deputy, who is present, can tell him who recommended the granting of that licence. After I have learned this, I shall leave the minister alone on that point; my mind will be satisfied and I shall take his word. Was it Senator Webster?

Mr. DURANLEAU: I cannot say that any recommendation was made by anybody in favour of La Patrie. I have not the record before me. It may be there was some recommendation, but I cannot say whether there was or from whom it came. But La Patrie Publishing Company was such a well known firm that I do not think it was necessary for the acting minister to ask for recommendations. Conditions in Montreal were well known; as I informed the committee, we had only two licences there. The acting minister was aware of that fact; he knew that in other cities a larger number of licences had been granted previously, and it was only fair to such a large city as Montreal that it should have three licences. I do not think he needed any recommendation.

Mr. POULIOT: Then would the minister be kind enough to tell us who made the application on behalf of La Patrie?

Mr. DURANLEAU: I suppose it was La Patrie itself; it is an incorporated company.

Mr. POULIOT: Who signed the application?

Mr. DURANLEAU: I think the application was signed by the manager of La Patrie, Mr. Bender.

Mr. POULIOT: The manager had bien de l'air.

Mr. YOUNG: Was the application made before the minister left for Spain?

Mr. DURANLEAU: I think so. I would not say yes or no definitely.

Mr. YOUNG: The minister did not see it, anyway?

Mr. DURANLEAU: I am informed that the application was made on August 20.

[Mr. Pouliot.]

Mr. LAPOINTE: Was the minister surprised when he heard that that licence had been granted?

Mr. DURANLEAU: I cannot say that. I had heard of it, but I know no regular application had been made before my departure.

Mr. MITCHELL: I want to make just this observation. In connection with radio broadcasting, an important principle has been established this evening. When this side of the house charged that this licence was granted because the newspaper was a Conservative one, members or supporters of the government said: Why not? Why shouldn't the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation or the Labour party, or, for that matter, any other party, be granted a licence for a radio station?

An hon. MEMBER: Why not?

Mr. MITCHELL: Somebody says: "Why not?" Possibly, because we have not the money to operate one. Someone suggests that that is a good reason, and it is a good reason for what I am going to say now. With the development of radio broadcasting, we have reached a stage in this country where there should be rigid control of broadcasting of a political nature.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

Mr. MITCHELL: The people who have the money say: "Oh, oh!" The people who are in a position to monopolize broadcasting facilities prior to an election say: "Oh, oh!" Now that we have set up a radio broadcasting commission along the same lines as the British Broadcasting Company, why not carry the matter to its logical conclusion and give every group that seeks the support of the electorate in an election equal opportunity of making its views known? I believe the government has created a dangerous precedent. The minister says: Why should both sides not be represented? Why shouldn't all three or, for that matter, all four sides, be represented? In my judgment, it is not an answer to the question for the minister to say: I left it to my deputy. That is ducking the responsibility of responsible government, and I believe it would be well if this house took the matter into consideration and even went so far as to recommend to the commission that rules be laid down governing the broadcasting of political matter, let us say, in the next general election.

I appreciate the fact that most progressive movements are composed of poor men. I am not unmindful of the power of money in an election, nor of the possibility and practicability of the people who have the money gaining almost a monopoly beforehand of the