

Financial Administration Act

Rights and Freedoms, whether he knows it or not—and that is the frightening thing—he is advocating censorship. He is advocating censorship when it suits his own political, philosophical and ideological beliefs. Can the Hon. Member ensure us—because I am concerned—that that is not the position of the Conservative Party of Canada? Also to assign to a board responsibility for what may be carried by a network, to imply that the board sets up programming in the various private networks of this country, including the CBC, is an unfair, dangerous and very loose allegation. Would he please clarify his statements? Mr. Speaker, I am concerned.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I wish the Hon. Member and his Party would be a little more concerned about the people of this country and less about the corporations. When pay-TV was introduced, thousands of people wrote to the Minister, wrote to the Hon. Member and many other people. We are not talking about censorship. We are talking about decency. It is not what I think and it is not what the Hon. Member happens to think. We are not talking about censorship. When thousands of Canadians object to programs being aired because those programs will ruin the lives of their boys and girls, government has a responsibility to reflect that thinking.

Has the Hon. Member ever heard of democracy? No, they do not practise it over there. Democracy is supposed to reflect the thinking of the greatest possible number of people—not tell them what is good for them, but reflect their thinking. This Government is not doing that. Censorship is not part of our policy, but we certainly want to make sure that we reflect the thinking of the people because that is democracy.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Foster: Mr. Speaker, I was very interested in the comments of the Hon. Member for Bow River (Mr. Taylor), because it seems to me that the Hon. Member for Rosedale (Mr. Crombie) was castigating the Minister of Communications (Mr. Fox) just a few weeks ago, saying that the Government would have the power to direct the CBC and the National Film Board. In fact, the Bill really exempts those cultural organizations from directives as to the program content. I am not sure whether the Hon. Member for Bow River is arguing against the Hon. Member for Rosedale in his comments, but it seems to me that they should get their mutual acts together.

The other thing I would like to ask the Hon. Member about is that the Bill sets out and gives responsibility to the board of directors on exactly the same basis as it is given to the board of directors for the efficient and effective operation of these Crown corporations and to every other corporation under the Canadian Business Corporations Act. I think that that is spelled out very clearly in the Bill. I would like to know why he thinks that the board of directors has less responsibility to effectively manage and operate the Crown corporations than any other business corporation under that Act.

The other point that the Hon. Member made is that Cabinet does have the power effectively to override a by-law made by

the corporation. He is arguing on one side that they should not have that power and on the other side he is saying that they do have that power. It seems to me that he has got to go down the middle and clarify exactly where he stands on this Bill and those provisions of it.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, in connection with the first question, the Hon. Member is talking about political interference. No government should say: "We want the CBC to carry programs just telling our side of the story". When talking about the absence of common decency that will effect the lives of boys and girls in this country, the Government has a responsibility. If Hon. Members cannot see that difference, there is something wrong with them.

Second, no one is advocating censorship and no one is advocating political interference. We are not saying that the board should have the power to broadcast pornography that will be distasteful to 90 per cent of the people of Canada. I do not agree that the board should become the government of this country. It does not in practice either. When it comes to the duties of the board of directors, they are so limited that they cannot do anything. The Cabinet does all of the real work. Why are you paying the board of directors? They should have some authority. They cannot even hire their own chief executive officer. They cannot fire him. They cannot hire their own auditor. Nor can they fire him. If we must have a board of directors, let it be like the private sector where they have some authority; put some teeth into it.

● (1140)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): That is the end of the ten-minute period for questions and comments. To continue debate, the Hon. Member for Western Arctic (Mr. Nickerson).

Mr. Dave Nickerson (Western Arctic): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to enter the debate today because it will take my mind off the cheque I have to write in favour of the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Bussi eres) later on today. It is a hell of a birthday present, Mr. Speaker!

Before I go into the details of the Bill, I would like to lay out my credentials as an expert on Crown corporations. Coming from the Northwest Territories one cannot help but be an expert on Crown corporations, as you will see when I read out the list of those we have to deal with. In the transportation field, our railway is CN. If you want to travel by water, Mr. Speaker, you can use the inland river system and the freight services made available by Northern Transportation Limited. I must here congratulate the Minister of Transport (Mr. Axworthy) on his initiative in promising to privatize this corporation. We had that in mind when we formed the Government in 1979. It is certainly a logical choice for privatization.

If you want to ship your freight by truck, Mr. Speaker, you have the opportunity of using Grimshaw Trucking, a subsidiary of our famous NTCL. I hope that is privatized at the same time as the parent corporation. If you want to travel by air,