

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

about the findings of such studies. Nevertheless, in the judgment of this government, even though a great deal of money has been spent on the causeway engineering studies and on some preliminary work the economics of the project did not stand up to the reality of the situation.

This, of course, does not detract from the need for the adequate transportation that is required to make certain that the markets of the northeastern United States are properly reopened for trade with the Atlantic provinces. It always seems rather sad that there was a great trade at one stage of our national development, which has dwindled. I do not quite understand how this could be better handled with tariffs which would have to be of a selective or even discriminatory nature, but I look forward to exploring that question further.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I regret to inform the parliamentary secretary that his time has expired.

RADIO-CANADA—ACTION RESPECTING ALLEGED SEPARATISTS AND TERRORISTS ON STAFF

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, on March 2 I inquired of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien) concerning certain remarks he is reported to have made before a meeting of the federal wing of the Liberal Party in Quebec which were strongly critical of the separatist element within the French network of the CBC, Radio-Canada. The minister did not have an opportunity to reply in the House, but outside the House he did comment on the issues I had raised at that time. I did not have an opportunity to comment, so I must carry it further in Parliament at this time. Outside the House the minister, in a Canadian Press report, is quoted as having said that the separatist sympathies of many Radio-Canada employees represent a democratic freedom of which he is proud. By contrast we have the following report of the meeting to which I have referred, at which the minister spoke:

A group of angry Liberals charged last night that Radio-Canada, the French-language network of the CBC, is contributing more to unrest in Quebec than the terrorist FLQ.

The minister is reported as having said:

Perhaps we'll have to put the axe into Radio-Canada some day when we feel the country's very existence is threatened.

The article continues:

Mr. Chrétien urged delegates to draft a resolution calling on the Canadian Radio-Television Commission to look into Radio-Canada operations.

The report states, further:

People who watch Radio-Canada are likely to know more about terrorism in Algeria and other places than about constructive happenings in their own country.

Then the minister is reported to have said:

In my 2½ years in Ottawa I have been given only five minutes on the French-language network, to explain the wonderful things Canada is doing in the north for its native peoples.

Then we find this passage:

[Mr. Danson.]

Mr. Chrétien said he had been invited by Radio-Canada to "spend five minutes on TV to plug a hole between two half-hour separatist programs."

About 100 strong, the group accused Mr. Pelletier of shirking his duties by allowing Radio-Canada "to systematically destroy the country."

Those are indeed strong statements coming from a minister of the Crown. It was because of this I thought it should be read in the high court of Parliament. I think this should be dealt with in a specific fashion because it represents a dangerous schizophrenia on the part of the government which is running in two directions at once. It is the schizophrenic attitude toward subversion in the mass media which has partly resulted in the situation which made necessary the suspension of civil liberties during the crisis in Quebec last October.

Over the past two years protests have been heard before the Committee on Broadcasting from many Quebec Members of Parliament who have raised the same problem. We had the difficulty in respect of the Company of Young Canadians which had become infiltrated by violent terrorist elements which destroyed the usefulness of that creative idea until today it is just a shadow of what it might have become. We have the Canada Council giving a grant to Stanley Gray who spoke not only in violent terms but—this is the important point, because it is not a matter of freedom of speech—led demonstrations in the streets of Montreal.

● (10:10 p.m.)

To all those protests the Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier) replied that it was not his intention to curtail these terrorist and violent activities with reference to the CYC and Dr. Stanley Gray's activities. Those matters, incidentally, have since sorted themselves out. But the Secretary of State also replied to the charges made by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien). I quote as follows:

Mr. Pelletier replied that direct government control of the CBC would be more dangerous than any separatist influence within the network and said the CRTC does adequate job of policing broadcasting.

That, I submit, is begging the question. Nobody wants direct government control of the CBC. What we do want is a consistent policy on the part of members on the treasury benches of this government that will prevent the schizophrenic tragedy which for a few weeks last October placed the existence of this nation in jeopardy.

The point I was trying to bring out in my question was that I trust that the resolution has gone forward to the CRTC which has assumed rather unusual powers of regulation and control on Canadian content, foreign influence and other marginal problems of that kind. Surely it can deal with the situation in such a way that the most powerful media of communication developed by man is used for positive purposes in helping to create national unity rather than for the destructive purposes of which it is capable, as has been demonstrated by the "Chicago Seven" and other terrorist elements in the United States.

Mr. Barnett J. Danson (Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I was interested in the