

Non-Canadian Publications

[English]

Mr. Epp: Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like an explanation as to whether the minister rose for the purpose of asking a question of one of her own backbenchers or whether she has been recognized by the Chair to participate in the debate. If that is the case, then I would think that the order of speaking has been determined well in advance, that after a government member has spoken a member of the opposition has the right to speak.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): It has been common practice to recognize a minister when a minister wants to participate.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sauvé: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

● (2110)

[English]

Mr. Brisco: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, it has been common practice since I have been in this House for Speakers, including Madam Speaker, to draw to the attention of those who are debating that they are wavering from the point that is up for discussion. Frankly, I do not think the minister is dealing with the amendments which are before us.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): We are studying motions Nos. 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 and I am sure the minister is speaking on one of those amendments.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

Mrs. Sauvé: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Indeed I rose to participate in the debate on Bill C-58 to discuss the amendments under study tonight, to answer the arguments of hon. members of the opposition as well as those of the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. Holt) and I shall come to the statement she made during her intervention a moment ago.

An hon. Member: The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway is not at her desk.

Mrs. Sauvé: Nevertheless I wanted to say that our policy in opposing the amendments moved by the opposition is important because how could we require, Madam Speaker, what we require from Canadian broadcasters if we did not have at the same time a policy to protect their income? The Canadian television and radio industry is in a precarious situation in many ways. We do not have as large a market as our American neighbour. It is not possible for us to get as large an income as that which feeds the American industry. If we want to develop a Canadian industry in this country, it is absolutely necessary for us to protect its income, because without income there cannot be any really Canadian production; there cannot be any original production in this country; above all, there cannot be any possibility for us to protect the income of the many Canadian actors, artists and artisans involved in the professions related to television and radio.

If we want to attain a certain level of quality in our production, a certain level of excellence in our—

[English]

Mr. Friesen: On a point of order, I am sure the minister would not want to mislead the House in the remarks she has made in that there would never be any money for the film industry in Canada. If she had listened to my speech very carefully she would have noted the proposal made by KVOS TV in Bellingham. The proposal was that \$100,000 would be invested in the film industry—

Some hon. Members: Order!

Mr. Friesen:—which would not be tax money but would be direct investment on the part of the company.

[Translation]

Mrs. Sauvé: Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the speech of the hon. member. The compensatory payments suggested in his amendment, that is that a foreign company which received authorization to obtain revenues in Canada would contribute to a compensation fund which would be allocated to Canadian production, will never have the value of a truly Canadian production, made with Canadian funds, by Canadian workers and producers. In spite of the optimism of the hon. member, this fund could never reach the proportions which will be possible if we protect our industry in such a way as to allow it to sponsor its own production. The hon. member is much too optimistic concerning the possible effects of this fund, which would moreover be created by foreigners.

I reread Motion No. 7 in which it is stated that this fund created by foreign production companies could even aim at increasing television and radio coverage of the Canadian territory.

I do not think that the hon. member should like to delegate to people who are not Canadian these responsibilities which are essentially ours. I believe that these responsibilities must remain solely in the hands of Canadians who know their own territory and the coverage requirements of their own country. We are the ones who must decide what our priorities are and how we can best serve Canadians. In the place of the hon. member, I would be ashamed to leave that up to people who are not Canadian.

These amendments as well as the others proposed by hon. members constitute for all practical purposes unfair competition for Canadians companies which try to produce acceptable programs in Canada with the means provided by the market.

The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. Holt) suggested that the provisions of Bill C-58 are negative. Of course, legislation aimed at forbidding something always seems negative. But we took those steps for positive reasons, precisely to protect the Canadian industry. All countries in the world protect their cultural agencies, the creativity of their country, their cultural activity. Canadians should do otherwise? Specially when one is aware of the existence of a neighbour to the south, endowed with considerably more powerful means of developing its cultural production, its radio-television production? Extremely powerful countries do so; there is therefore that much more need for us to protect our Canadian production.

These measures are not negative; on the contrary they are positive; they are designed to help Canadian industry,