

Government Orders

go to this minority. If cuts are necessary, they should not be made at the expense of the neediest.

• (1250)

I am surprised that this principle, considered so sound in other areas, should not be acceptable when it comes to francophones. The minister wants to cut \$25 million from cultural minorities in Canada, on top of the other 5 to 8 per cent cut that the Minister of Finance is considering and which will not spare the minorities.

The minister confirmed these cuts in a document he called "Confidence in the future". When I see such a title and when I consider the content of this document, I wonder how the French-speaking minority will make out.

Indeed, like the English-speaking minority, it must decide itself where the axe will fall and it must cut to the same extent as the English-speaking minority in Quebec. Yet, the minister, who has discretionary powers, should make his savings at the expense of those who can afford it, that is the English minority in Quebec.

The minister must cut where the need is least, and not across the board. The English minority has its own school system, its health system and social services, its cultural network. So the minister, ever respectful of social and cultural justice, should put the burden of the cuts on those who can support them, irrespective of the language they speak.

Moreover, all input of public money intended to promote bilingualism: immersion classes, scholarships and so on, should be cancelled. On the issue of cuts the minister is acting like a doctor who can choose between giving a cardiac massage to a patient in danger or teaching a person in very good health how to give a cardiac massage.

The lack of logic in the distribution of jurisdictions between the departments is a threat to Canadian culture. As I said earlier in my statement, Bill C-53 aims at establishing legally the Department of Canadian Heritage. Canadians could rightly expect the government to put some order in its house. One would have expected the government to take this opportunity to organize a bit more strictly the various jurisdictions dealing with heritage. But it seems to be asking too much of the Liberal government. For instance copyright, which is directly linked to culture, will come under the jurisdiction of the Department of Industry as provided in Bill C-46.

Remember that the Prime Minister and the Minister of Canadian Heritage stated officially and unequivocally that the adoption of phase II of the copyright legislation was a priority. Apparently this was only baked wind since by favouring the Department of Industry over the Department of Canadian Heritage, the government is forcing Canadian Heritage officials, who are defending the copyright, to submit to the dictates of

their colleagues at Industry who think first of all in terms of dollar bills.

As a matter of fact, the latter will always be able to argue, during the numerous interdepartmental quarrels that will ensue, that it is their right and that they have the last word since copyright comes under their jurisdiction. The most tragic aspect of that story is what it underlies. The government has already told us in the Ginn case that the cost effectiveness of culture, be it American or another, must come before the need to protect the Canadian culture. In other words, the Department of Industry is willing to sell large segments of the Canadian cultural industry to Americans.

This is why the Department of Canadian Heritage has approved the sale of the important Canadian publishing house Ginn Publishing to an American company. Once more, having to choose between Canadian cultural integrity and its wish to not displease the Americans, this government has chosen to grovel before the Americans.

I remind members that the Minister of Canadian Heritage tried to justify his actions by saying that there had been a verbal agreement between a junior official and Paramount.

For obvious reasons copyright reform that the cultural industry is waiting for so impatiently because it is crucial to its survival will probably be shelved. The same lack of logic which seems to be the trademark of the governing party has prevailed in the case of telecommunications which were cut up into so many pieces. The government could have taken the opportunity to answer the industry's long standing request and regroup the whole of telecommunications in the Department of Canadian Heritage and, in so doing, make up for the mistakes of the Campbell administration.

• (1255)

Even when I arrived in Ottawa, the deputy minister told me that this was a monumental mistake, that he intended to recommend to the present minister that it be corrected when the department was created. Once again, the Department of Industry, no doubt a heavier player in the cabinet, inherited the lion's share of jurisdiction in the field of telecommunications.

Chances are that the Liberal government, who so staunchly defends federalism, and by extension, the duplication of services, continued overlap, and the waste of money, will see this division of the field of telecommunications as an opportunity to form joint committees of civil servants seconded from here and there. It will be an opportunity to increase the numbers of civil servants, committees, meetings, all those things that are a waste of taxpayers' money, but that for the Canadian government, and its deficit in the hundreds of billions of dollars, is the federalist thing to do.

For why simplify when it is so easy to complicate matters? In this bill, the government, true to form, is merely ratifying