

National Film Act

Mr. Murphy: I wish to make only one observation with respect to this section. I believe this point was raised last year, and possibly the year before and the year before that. I refer to the co-operation we should expect from the national film board in connection with the development of our tourist industry. I have always maintained that we have an opportunity to barter with the film industry on the other side. I have felt that while we may have derived some benefits, we have not really developed it to the extent it should be.

I know the minister and his associates will appreciate that this is a non-political subject because there is not an hon. member in the house whose riding is not affected by the tourist industry. I hope to deal with the tourist industry a little later on the minister's estimates but it seemed to me that somehow or other we are not getting as much as we could. There may be some reason for it. I am not blaming the minister because after all is said and done we are dealing with a country whose population is more than ten times our own and which has much to offer, not only in the way of films but in opportunities for recreation and that sort of thing. All this could be developed through films.

We have great hopes for the present minister who is in charge of this portfolio. This bureau has been kicked around to an extent not liked by any one of us. It was fathered by a former prime minister who was a member of a different party and it has always seemed to me that we in this house and the people in the country have been sort of side-tracked. The development of the tourist industry has been more or less a Topsy proposition, left to grow up by itself. We in this house, irrespective of party, do not like that. We think this industry can be developed much more than it has been today, and this is one avenue that could be explored to a great extent to our benefit. We have so much to offer to so many people.

I wonder if the minister, either now or when the tourist bureau estimates are before us, could tell us what has been done within the last year? We had a report a year ago. I hope he will be able to tell us that we are getting more distribution on the other side for our pictures. Heaven knows we certainly do not get it in the newspapers unless it is complaints about the importation of oil and that sort of thing. You would almost think that we were flooding Texas and Oklahoma. You have to expect that sort of thing, I suppose.

We must make direct contacts and one way of doing that is to bring Canada visually to these people who have money to spend in

[Mr. Brooks.]

this country. If we cannot get it any other way, let us be frank and put it on a barter basis. If they want to show pictures in this country, let them show them, but make sure that we are able to show ours to the people over there who have money to spend in this country.

Section agreed to.

On section 10—*Powers of board.*

Mr. Stewart (Winnipeg North): Does this clause mean that the film board has more autonomy than the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation?

Mr. Murphy: Is the minister prepared to answer the questions I have indicated.

Mr. Winters: I shall be glad to do it, but I think it could be done better when the estimates of the Canadian government travel bureau are before the committee. As my hon. friend knows, the first paragraph of section 9, which we have passed by the way, states that the board is established to promote the production and distribution of films designed to interpret Canada to Canadians and to other nations. We have been making a strenuous effort in that field. Speaking from memory and subject to correction, we have some 63 film libraries and film distribution centres in the United States for travel films. They receive quite a wide distribution and are seen by large audiences. We also get a great number of travel films on television programs in the United States, and some in the United Kingdom. The ones that are shown in the United States are those in which my hon. friend is particularly interested. We produced a number of travel films last year, I believe four in all. This year we have funds earmarked for the Canadian government travel bureau to provide more films designed to encourage tourists from the United States to come to Canada. We realize that this is a fertile field in which the film board can operate and we propose to do what we can to develop it.

Mr. Murphy: I should like to make one further observation. I have a firm conviction that our efforts are not being developed as they should be. I want to be frank about this and I know the minister will take it as I mean it. I feel that this part of the development of the tourist industry is away behind schedule. I have said before that we should have more than libraries in the different cities. We should attack this problem as a selling proposition, as though we were selling Ford or Chevrolet cars or the products of Imperial Oil. When we arrive at a conclusion that we are going to approach the tourist industry on that basis, we are going to get somewhere.