

Government Orders

map if we do not include predominant Canadian material?

While 95 per cent of Canadians listen to radio, they hear an awful lot more Canadian content material than they do on their television sets. Seventy-one per cent of all programs viewed by Canadians on English television are primarily American. What does that do to our thinking? What does that do to our vision of ourselves, our pride of self, our heritage, the development of our own heroes? Ninety-seven per cent of our screen time is made up with foreign, primarily American material. It is big business. It is billions and billions and billions of dollars of business. Well, let's keep a few of those billions here and use them to promote Canadian content.

Seventy-five per cent of our book market, 71 per cent of our periodical market, consists of imported foreign products.

[Translation]

I wish we could have a measure of protection the way we have in French, even it is not 100 per cent, which of course we would prefer, but at least in French we have some measure of protection and we are proud to be Quebecers, Canadians, French Canadians, because of the quality programming that is produced right here.

[English]

We on the English speaking side are so busy trying to be the American dream because we think that we can market that product, which is really a camouflaged American product, not as first class but as second class, and the minute Canadians produce first class programming and Canadians fall in love and understand the nature of the program produced, all of a sudden, we hit the Cannes Festival and we are very successful, we hit the Montreal Film Festival and we are very successful, we hit all international festivals and our products sell.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that we need this amendment that I have brought in here that does not allow our cable companies and our broadcasters to weasel out and buy less expensive, not that they are less quality, but less expensive American programs, because

they are trying to globalize the world of television and have that income flow to them.

More important, we have to be able to produce our own Canadian shows so that we can have access to top quality material. At the same time, I add my voice to that of the National Film Board when they appeared before us. I cannot for the life of me understand why this government is not prepared to accept the National Film Board's material as a partner in the development of this Canadian content, they have won more Oscars, more international awards than any other agency in this country, or any private sector. We should be so impressed with its accomplishments, particularly in the women's field where Studio D has won international acclaim. I cannot understand why the government is so stubborn that it cannot take an opposition motion that makes good solid sense and include it in this bill so we can have a better made-in-Canada operation. That is the goal of the Canadian broadcasting bill, to have a Canadian broadcasting system.

• (1700)

I will take just a couple more minutes to indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that I would sincerely hope that the government will change its mind and include the National Film Board, with its thousands of wonderful creative programs that look at all the issues that are important to Canada and to Canadians, seen through Canadian eyes, written about by Canadian writers, and add that in the distribution to our screen.

I would call on the government to show an openness of mind and spirit and to accept "predominantly Canadian" which it accepted itself at a unanimously tabled document by the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture.

Mr. Ian Waddell (Port Moody—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak on behalf of the New Democratic Party on this group of amendments. Motions Nos. 8, 9, and 10 are grouped for debate.

Motion No. 8 is the motion of the member for Mount Royal to whom I should also pay tribute for her great work in this area over a number of years. She has been on the communications committee longer than I was and has done a lot of work on this matter.

Having said that I would point out, with a bit of a twinkle in my eye, that my Motion No. 9 is a little bit more specific than her motion. Her motion would substitute: