

"The Kid Who Couldn't Miss".—(*Honourable Senator Doody*).

Hon. C. William Doody (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, it had been my intention to stand this order to await the return of Senator Molson who is not in the chamber today. It is my understanding that he will join us tomorrow.

However, I understand Senator Robichaud would like to contribute to the debate on this particular order, so I would defer to him and I will take the adjournment in my name later.

Hon. Louis-J. Robichaud: Honourable senators, I should like to make only a few observations, which may be of some value, on this motion of Senator Molson.

As we know, Senator Molson sits as an independent in this chamber and does not frequently move motions. However, when he does so, they usually, as in this instance, make a lot of sense. Although it is not unanimous, he is receiving wide support in the Senate for this motion.

Honourable senators, I have heard and read a lot about this National Film Board so-called "documentary" called "The Kid Who Couldn't Miss," which disturbed me. However, after hearing Senator Molson's comments on the subject, I am even more disturbed.

Billy Bishop was an idol for many Canadians, including myself. Young Canadians need idols, be it in the political, science, arts, military or sports fields. As a young Canadian, my idols were mainly in the political and sports fields. As a youngster, I somewhat idolized Billy Bishop because of what I had heard and read. He was a star; an aviation ace. He helped us to win the First World War.

Honourable senators, I am not a military person by any stretch of the imagination. My only contact with the military was, because I was too young to be a soldier, to belong to the COTC, the Canadian Officers Training Corps, when I was at college. I might say, respectfully, that I despised the COTC because I had to train when I could have been playing hockey or baseball. Honourable senators, I would rather have been doing that than be involved in a military parade.

Idols are to be respected. Billy Bishop was and remains one of them.

In the United States, for instance, it is traditional for teachers to teach kids at all levels of schooling to idolize Americans such as Wyatt Earp, Davy Crockett, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln and others. They have respect for their own people and they do not discredit their own idols.

In Canada, the National Film Board, on this occasion, has decided that Billy Bishop should not be considered an idol and that we should downgrade him. By this film, the National Film Board is telling us that we should not idolize such a man. The National Film Board acknowledges that he did accomplish certain things, but insists that we must downgrade him. The National Film Board has been successful in downgrading one whom we referred to, until the production of this film, as a national hero.

Why did it occur to Senator Molson to move such a motion and to have this matter brought before the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology? Honourable senators, he did so because it is the proper procedure. We, in the Senate, have a certain role to play in this respect. We have to respect regional and national interests, and this film is of national interest. We have to protect our heritage, and our Canadian idols are part of our heritage. We, as Canadian taxpayers sponsoring the National Film Board, must protect the national interest. If the board did not respond to its obligation to protect the national interest, then we should come to the rescue of the Canadian people. We should do this not by censoring or by chastising, but by making sure that a mistake of this magnitude—and I will classify it in that manner at the moment, although I may change my mind—will not be repeated.

Yesterday, Senator Godfrey made a statement and was told that it is no argument to say that we must prevent further mistakes. I think Senator Godfrey's argument was a valid one.

I know that the National Film Board has made certain mistakes in the past on certain other issues. If we, as members of this august institution, can prevent further mistakes of such an order, I believe it is our obligation to do so.

Therefore, honourable senators, I support the motion of Senator Molson with much enthusiasm. Although I am not a member of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, I will make a point of attending the meetings of that committee.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

On motion of Senator Doody, debate adjourned.

● (1500)

[*Translation*]

CANADA'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE—INTERIM REPORT ON BILATERAL TRADE WITH UNITED STATES AND CANADA'S PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ON STRATEGIC DEFENSE INITIATIVE—DEBATE ADJOURNED

The Senate proceeded to consideration of the Interim Report of the Special Joint Committee on Canada's International Relations pertaining to Bilateral Trade with the United States and Canada's Participation in Research on the Strategic Defense Initiative, tabled in the Senate on 17th September, 1985.

Hon. Jacques Flynn: Honourable senators, I gave notice of this motion on September 17. I preferred to wait until today with my comments in order to give the Senate a chance to discuss the committee's interim report after the government had made a decision, one way or another.

Honourable senators will recall that on June 27 of this year, the Senate adopted the order of reference establishing the Joint Committee on Canada's International Relations and asking it to consider the green paper published by the Department of External Affairs under the direction of the Right Honourable Joe Clark.