

Canadian Policy on Broadcasting

not object to T.V. stations being controlled by Canadians, as it is in fact printed here. But the big problem is that this is not the present situation, and she should change it.

Now, the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. Marchand), could perhaps, as a fellow Quebecker, support my suggestion to that effect. The minister could perhaps second my proposal that the Quebec city television stations become truly owned by Quebeckers. He does not appear very interested, perhaps because he is too engrossed in his conversation, but I am asking him if he would perhaps second my proposal to give effective control of T.V. stations in Quebec city to Canadian citizens, perhaps even Quebeckers.

A minute ago, I named the actual owners of those two private stations; indeed, they are Americans, and they have majority control of the voting shares. I fail to understand why such control is left in the hands of American citizens, especially when clause 2(b) states that:

—the Canadian broadcasting system should be effectively owned and controlled by Canadians—

Now, the amendment I suggest is as follows: the term "should" would be removed and replaced by the term "shall". At this time, there are two private stations in Quebec city, and they are the ones I am concerned with—and they should also be the concern of the minister of manpower, since he is a Quebecker—because their majority ownership is held by two American residents who make the decisions about station policy.

I do not think it is decent when it comes to the point where Famous Players Canadian Corporation Limited, of which 51.8 per cent of the shares belong to American residents, decides of the programming for us.

● (4:40 p.m.)

Then I ask the Minister of Manpower and Immigration whether he would support my amendment to replace the word "should" by the word "must" so that the Canadian broadcasting system is effectively owned and controlled by Canadians. Would the minister of manpower be ready to support my request for that?

I put the question to the minister of manpower: Would he be ready to second the amendment I now move?

Mr. Marchand: Mr. Chairman, I am among those who favour Canadian control of all undertakings and I would surely like to have television stations as well as any other

[Mr. Grégoire.]

undertaking under the control of Canadian citizens. But I do not believe the way to achieve this is by an amendment to the clause, as the member for Lapointe (Mr. Grégoire) has suggested. There are much more effective and democratic ways of proceeding.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Grégoire: If the minister of manpower permits, I should like to point out to him that it would not be creating a precedent and I should like to remind him of a case which occurred here in this house less than a year ago during consideration of the Bank Act.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) moved an amendment to the Bank Act providing that any chartered bank wishing to operate in Canada shall be owned—there was then no question of "should", the word he used was "shall"—be owned to the extent of 75 per cent of the voting shares, by Canadian residents and citizens. This is a precedent that was adopted here and for which the minister himself voted. I also voted for this amendment which was agreed to and which set the precedent.

At the present time, in the field of television in Quebec city—perhaps the minister is not aware of it—there are quite a number of people who ask nothing better than to buy shares in those television stations because they are probably the most profitable in Canada. There are two private stations in Quebec city and they both belong to the same company, namely the Télévision de Québec (Canada) Limitée, which is controlled by Americans. They are probably the most profitable television stations because they have no competitors.

Two or three years ago—I repeat it because the minister was busy earlier—a Mr. Jacques Laroche applied for a license to operate a television station in Quebec city. His application was turned down and he was told: There are two already, that is enough.

Mr. Marchand: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. It was not refused on those grounds but rather because C.B.C. had also made an application and, at the time the hon. member for Lapointe was not there, but with a great many Quebec citizens I fought so that the license be granted to C.B.C. and not to private enterprise.

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Chairman, I was there. I also fought so that the license would be granted to C.B.C. but I carried on another