

2000.04EM Concentration of Ownership of the Media

Whereas: the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media chaired by Senator Davey in 1970, and the Kent Royal commission on Newspapers in 1980 proposed measures to curb concentration of ownership, yet that concentration has increased; and

Whereas: in 1958, the three largest Canadian Newspaper chains controlled about 25% of daily circulation and by 1997, the three chains controlled 66%; and

Whereas: in the Spring of 2000, one chain controlled almost 50% of the market nationally and dominated the market in three provinces (BC, AB, and SK); and

Whereas: despite the recent proposed sales of local newspapers, there remains a trend towards mergers of different types of media newspapers, radio, television, internet), this results in further concentration of media ownership; and

Whereas: concentration of ownership of the media poses a risk that public access to information and opinion is shaped by limited rather than diverse points of view, thereby affecting the democratic process in which citizens make informed choices; therefore be it

RESOLVED: that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to review recommendations of previous Commissions on the media and to seek measures to encourage diversification of ownership and control rooted in the local community.