

Government Orders

—the anniversary date of the tragic Twin Otter crash here that claimed seven lives. We have enclosed copies of relevant sections of the Canadian Aviation Safety Board's review of this accident and their recommendations. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that the accident was avoidable, had there been qualified weather reporting and communications here.

I appeal to you, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I have listened with care to what the hon. member is saying, and she has a valid issue. This service may indeed be provided under contract by the CBC, but it is a transport issue and totally unrelated to the consideration of this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Will the hon. member for Western Arctic please complete her statement?

Ms. Blondin: Mr. Speaker, might I say to you and through you to hon. members of this House that CBC provides a service to the people in the north unlike any service it provides in southern Canada. It provides the communication of information for the survival of these people. What happens is that when that line of communication is severed there is the jeopardy of lives. That is exactly what I am saying.

I am sure it is not the intention of any government to jeopardize the lives of any of the Canadians in any other area, but what I cannot understand is why there was no reallocation for a service that is considered basic or fundamental to every other part of this country. Why was that cancelled?

What my constituents and I would like to hear is that the government is sincere and wants to service the north, not only in terms of communications but in every other way. For years in my constituency we never had television. We had CBC radio. The umbilical cord of the north is CBC. It has carried messages to the trap line, to the unilingual person, because it provides that kind of service.

However, the most important service it provided for this one particular group was weather information. There are no roads. I am telling you, Mr. Speaker, it is very important for these people. These people would like the government to reinstate and establish that there is a firm commitment to the north in terms of communi-

cations and other services. We are off the transportation grid essentially. Being the same does not make us equal. Sometimes it takes extraordinary measures to achieve equality, and that is something that has to be recognized.

• (1240)

I think we can have what I would say is a role model for communications in the north. We have trained many people who have left the north and have become outstanding national reporters. The north is a wonderful training ground. It has cultural diversity. The challenge of meeting the multi-lingual system in the north was something that definitely was used as a training ground by journalists coming to the north.

This particular item of communication, transportation and survival is not a light subject. It is something that is very serious. It is something about which the helicopters and airplane pilots delivered a message to my office saying that they were worried. We do not undervalue the commitment or the efforts of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation over the years. We appreciate it, but we also value certain aspects of it because they relate directly to the livelihood and the well-being of those people.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Before I recognize the hon. member for Saint-Maurice, I would just like to go back to Motion No. 14. I think the gremlins were at work yesterday. Being Halloween, I am sure this is what happened. I think we should insert—

[Translation]

“La Société devrait offrir [—en français et en anglais—].

[English]

I am sure that will settle the problem.

[Translation]

Mr. Denis Pronovost (Saint-Maurice): Mr. Speaker, Motion No. 14, in the name of my colleague from Mount Royal, has already caused a great deal of comment today. Nevertheless, I want to speak to this particular motion as well. The hon. member from Mount Royal, who worked very hard on the legislative committee on Bill C-40, should bear in mind that the CBC did not need legislation to create CBC News World. It did not need special legislation. And I may add that we on this side of the House are also in favour of letting Radio Canada create