

Interim Supply

different viewpoint from what has been taken by previous speakers. I would like at this time to comment on some of the things said by members who have taken the opportunity in this debate to speak on the C.B.C. and to express my opinion that they have contributed a great deal in making this a real, parliamentary debate. I pay tribute to speakers from both sides of the house who have dealt with both sides of the question. I think this is as it should be when we indulge in real, parliamentary debate. I believe a great deal of very useful information has been brought out in the debate and is on the public record in regard to this most important topic.

This afternoon I would like to speak in direct support of a parliamentary committee being set up to look into the question of broadcasting. I do so because I had the privilege of sitting on a previous broadcasting committee in which we had the opportunity to hear from officials of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. I believe this served a most useful purpose, because many of the questions that were in our minds and which we thought were very vital indeed were answered to our satisfaction by the representatives of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. This was not always the case, but it was true in a good many instances. We had an opportunity to meet with and question the various officials who face this tremendous responsibility of satisfying the people of Canada as far as broadcasting is concerned. I believe this is all to the good.

Some accusations of a very serious nature have been put forward in the various speeches delivered in this chamber. These accusations have concerned the activities of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. I would think, sir, that the members of this crown corporation would themselves welcome an opportunity of having a forum in which to present their side of the story; that they would welcome an opportunity of answering these various questions. They have a great responsibility in providing programming for Canada because this is a very complicated subject. Certainly the men who handle this tremendous sum of money do not make these decisions or undertake these huge expenditures without real consideration and a definite policy in view.

I fail to understand why the government, in its wisdom, would refuse to consider setting up such a forum in which the corporation could make known to members of parliament its views, purposes and contemplations with

regard to future expenditures. Naturally, when we speak of \$100 million and are considering such large amounts of money, every member of parliament is concerned. This is a great deal of money. I believe that the way in which questions have been answered, where no definite information is given, causes members of parliament to wonder whether something is indeed not as it should be. As far as I can determine, Mr. Chairman, out of the debates and the general opinion across this country, there is a growing opinion that parliament has absolutely no control over this crown corporation; there is a growing opinion across this country that they have a blank cheque as far as the government is concerned. In other words, no matter how much money they want, all they have to do is put in a requisition and it is given to them. There is a growing opinion across this country that this corporation is an entity unto itself; they make all their own decisions, they go their own merry way, they do not have any regard for anyone as far as their responsibilities are concerned, and the people of Canada will pick up the cheque.

This is what is bothering the people of Canada; this is what bothers people in my riding. We are in just a little different position than people in some of the ridings of hon. members who have taken part in this debate. This is because of our geographical location. Many members have said, "If you do not like the programs, turn them off". This is exactly what happens in my area. Because of our close proximity to the United States we have seven or eight alternate channels, some of them being United States stations, and this gives us a variety of programs. What happens is that people turn off the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation program and turn to American radio and television. This is why we who live in the area are so vitally concerned that the C.B.C. programming be of the very finest calibre, in order that our children and the people in the area get the Canadian news, the Canadian facts and Canadiana; so we are not constantly subjected to American views and the American way of life. This is a problem as far as we are concerned.

It is true that there is much discussion about the quality of the programming and some of the programs that have been termed off-colour. Certainly there must be some degree of dissatisfaction or we would not have received these complaints. I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that for this reason a committee on broadcasting should be set up, so that the men responsible for the programming of the