

*Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*

they do not produce much of their programs. They buy programs mainly from the United States.

[English]

Therefore, the record of the CBC with regard to cost efficiency and with regard to serving this enormous country of ours is actually very, very good and we can be proud of that. We can be proud, too, of the quality of many of the programs and specials which the CBC produces. We think of *Chautauqua Girl*, *Charley Grant's War* and *The Nature of Things*, a program which is sold all over the world, and the lesson is very clear. When the CBC has adequate funds to do the job, it does it very, very well and we as Canadians can be very proud.

I do agree that a re-examination of the CBC is needed. This is precisely what is happening already with the task force on broadcast policy. Quite correctly, this task force is examining not only the CBC but the private broadcasters as well. We have a national broadcasting system which includes the public sector and the private sector, and the private sector broadcasting has been notoriously negligent in producing Canadian programs. If we want an improvement and we want to see a more vital Canadian culture, it is to the private sector that we have to look to make an enormous change to improve the development of Canadian programs. Canadian programming has come almost entirely from the public sector and because we are going to have to depend on that public sector, we need a strong CBC. But we also need a re-examination of both sectors and it is quite clear that for the kinds of improvements we need from the CBC, we have to spend more money. Where I think the CBC most deserves criticism, and I want to spend a little time on this because these facts are still not sufficiently well known, and it is a subject which the Hon. Member for Hochelaga-Maisonneuve (Mr. Desrosiers) did not mention, is the exclusion of coverage of women's issues and events, and the relegation of women in the CBC to roles largely outside the production, direction, and management capacities. This is a subject about which the women's movement in Canada has been complaining, as well as articulating and documenting in great detail, for a large number of years.

The first intervention by the women's movement concerning the CBC came in 1974, more than 10 years ago, and the CBC ignored it. The second intervention, which was joined with an intervention on CTV, and many other groups joined in as well, came in 1978 at the CRTC hearings. At that time the corporation decided that it had to respond to the criticism and it invited representatives of women's organizations to meetings with senior management. These were extremely interesting meetings and at the end the Corporation came up with a so-called plan of action where it was going to reform its act. I have documentation from a 1978 CBC task force on the status of women, its recommendations and implementation. There is a list of concrete measures to improve coverage of women's issues and events, to include women in drama, news, public affairs, sports, children's programs, indeed all the programming on the CBC, to improve women's opportunities to get into non-traditional roles and to rise in the corporation. Unfortunately the CBC has not acted on these recommendations.

This has not been a plan of action, it has been a plan of inaction. It has been a plan on paper, not one in reality. Therefore, we have women's organizations, including employees of the CBC itself, across the country in all of the networks complaining that they have been excluded, that they are not being given fair and adequate attention. Now that we have a Charter of Rights which guarantees equality to both sexes, this situation is not only reprehensible, it is indeed illegal. This is not just the privilege of a male management, old fashioned and traditional, which wishes to have the CBC remain a boys' club. This is illegal now. Women have legal equality with men and this exclusion from our major public network is totally reprehensible. Let me refer to what women within the Corporation are saying. This brief was prepared.

● (1740)

[Translation]

—a preliminary brief submitted to the Board of Inquiry on Employment Equality by the CBC's reporters union. This is a presentation to the Abella Commission, and at that time the CBC was one Crown Corporation that had a so-called action plan. But the results of that plan were something else, and I quote:

We believe there is general discrimination against women within the CBC at all levels. For instance, there are very few, if any, women in managerial positions, or in traditionally male-dominated areas such as the sports department.

We have found that women were systematically underpaid compared with their male colleagues for absolutely identical work. We also have found that the majority of women worked as researchers or research assistants, while the majority of men worked as reporters and interviewers, or M.C.'s, which are better-appreciated jobs within the CBC.

We tried to learn whether those salary differentials were based on objective and rational considerations such as experience or education. Or whether, on the other hand, individual hiring negotiation practices and the absence of established criteria did not awaken old sexist discriminatory reflexes at the employer level.

[English]

This brief was brought out in 1983 but nothing has changed since then. I have a reply from the President of the Corporation to a representative of another women's organization about their so-called plan of action. Let me cite from this reply as well:

[Translation]

The Corporation is proud of having launched one of the first, and also one of the most successful Equal Opportunity Programs for women in this country. However, you will certainly agree with me that, despite all that has been accomplished over the last 8 years, the situation of women generally has not advanced as it should have.

This is sheer hypocrisy, Mr. Speaker, on the part of the President of the CBC, Mr. Juneau, when he says such things, because he has done nothing to put that plan of action in effect. And he goes on:

This is the reason why we have decided to launch as soon as the next financial year a revitalized affirmative action program. This program will be provided with specific targets which management will have to reach.