

Routine Proceedings

on in Question Period which has absolutely nothing to do with the reality and the substance and the depth of the debate that goes on in all these various committees.

By putting television in all these committees, there probably will be a lot more work for the journalists. Then the people of Canada will be able to judge for themselves whether or not the journalistic interpretation is accurate. Right now it is all blind faith with the national media. Quite frankly, from where I sit, what I see in this House and what I see in committee very rarely represents what I read in the newspapers or the clip I will see on national television. So often they are taking things out of context.

It is going to make for a much better debate and be much more challenging. It is going to make our work a lot rougher and tougher because our preparation is going to have to be a lot better.

I do not support the half measure of this motion. I support the idea of opening up all these committees and televising them. I really think if it is going to set up a system where it is only select committees that are being televised, then I think it is going to hurt the cause more than help it.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for Broadview—Greenwood for making his submission. He has probably saved the House some time because I will not have to repeat all the things that he said. I find myself often agreeing with what he is saying.

It seems to me at times that we in this House live in the dark ages. It is time we started to conduct our business in a more open fashion.

Later today we will be considering another report of the committee that will allow television cameras to pan what is happening in the House. For example, if that report were to carry, we would be able to see representatives of the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party negotiating some type of deal here in terms of whether or not this report—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): There is such a thing as relevancy. If the hon. member wants to ask a question of the hon. member for Broadview—Greenwood, I will allow it. Otherwise, I will go to debate. The hon. member for York South—Weston.

Mr. Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, let me put this question to the hon. member for Broadview—Greenwood. In terms of opening up Parliament so that the public can know what is going on here, would the member not agree that we should leave it up to the parliamentary press gallery to determine what to broadcast from the happenings on the Hill, that all proceedings should be open both to radio and television, and we should let the profitable media outlets in this country determine which committees they want to cover?

It seems to me that they would, if allowed, pool their resources and have television cameras in each of the committee rooms. Then they would decide which proceedings they want to use in their nightly newscasts. As well, the parliamentary channel can use the single feed that goes into each of the committee rooms. Someone would have to make the decision on what feed to use whenever the House is not sitting and all the dead time is on the parliamentary channel to make sure that that information goes to the parliamentary channel. So would the member agree that that is what should happen?

Mr. Mills: Mr. Speaker, I must say to my colleague, the member for York South—Weston, that I agree with him totally. That is a brilliant idea. I never thought of that. In other words, what he is saying is that we would not have to purchase the cameras and we would just let Global, CBC, CTV, MTV, whichever it is, set up its own camera system and just exchange, the same way it is done when sharing the Olympics.

My goodness, that is a brilliant idea and, quite frankly, there is absolutely no cost to the taxpayer. Why would we not do something like that? The physical space is here. If all of sudden we wanted to televise something in the railway committee room we could do it. I know that the cameras come into our caucus rooms from time to time so the physical plant is there and it is ready to go. I think the member for York South—Weston is right on. In that way we are actually not interfering in any way with free enterprise. They can cut their own deal among themselves. All we are saying is that they are free to cover the hearings, which they are able to do as print journalists anyway.

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): You seem surprised, Mr. Speaker, that there might be some members of Parliament who might be interested in debating this matter.