

*Television Transmission Facilities*

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Saint-Denis.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis):** Mr. Speaker, I fully share the views just expressed by the hon. member for Meadow Lake (Mr. Cadieu). However, having studied his notice of motion:

That in the opinion of this house, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation should take steps to provide television coverage by immediately establishing transmission facilities in northwestern Saskatchewan, etc.

and the localities mentioned, I would say that numerous representations have been made in this regard by the hon. member for Chapleau (Mr. Laprise), the hon. member for Churchill (Mr. Simpson), the hon. member for Saguenay (Mr. Blouin), the hon. member for Grand Falls-White Bay-Labrador (Mr. Granger), the hon. member for the Northwest Territories (Mr. Orange) as well as by the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate (Mr. Pickersgill).

I do hope that the hon. member for Meadow Lake will not hold it against me if I extend his resolution, which covers only part of the northern region of his province, to the whole northern region of the country. I listened very closely to the comments he made about his notice of motion and I fully agree with him, except for one thing—and I will undoubtedly have the occasion to talk about it at length following this debate—he said that before offering colour television to serve, as he said himself, 60 per cent of the population, we should begin by providing full radio and television coverage, particularly television coverage, to all the areas which are not getting it yet. Here is one of the main objections that come to my mind. If the C.B.C. does not take immediate steps, not to do any pioneering, but just to keep up to date, and spend a great proportion of its budget on research so that we might start today to have colour television, there is no doubt that, at that time, the majority of the Canadian people will become more and more Americanized, because if the C.B.C.—and these are his own words—does not keep abreast of new developments, the American television stations will surely outpace the C.B.C.

It is unfortunate that the C.B.C. is unable to extend its service to the farthest corners of our country, because I fully agree with the hon. member for Meadow Lake that the economic contribution that those remote areas make to Canada as a whole is to the

[Mr. Cadieu (Meadow Lake).]

advantage of Canada as a whole which should ask the C.B.C. to allocate a greater part of its budget, of its research, of its finance to give the regions he mentioned the television coverage they are requesting.

I should like to point out to him that Uranium City, Fort Smith, Hay River, Yellowknife, Buffalo Narrows are not the only centres not served by television. The hon. members for Chapleau and Saguenay, who are now in their seats, pointed out to me that in their regions the only television available was cable television and this was at an astronomical cost, as high as \$200 payable in advance, for a community antenna and up to \$7 per month, also payable in advance.

• (5:50 p.m.)

I think that here also the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation should extend its service. On the other hand, the Fowler commission is abundantly clear in this connection, for it says that the C.B.C. must tend inasmuch as possible to extension of radio and television services to regions not yet served. I do imagine that this part of the Fowler commission report meets the wish of the hon. member for Meadow Lake.

However, and I believe this is one of the government's responsibilities, in its recommendations concerning the financing of such a proposal, the committee does not provide for the steps necessary for achieving such a wish. It makes the wish—I believe it is a general wish—that the Canadian population as a whole must be served by television. However, in its conclusions unfortunately, it remains completely silent and does not say how the financing should be envisaged.

Besides, the C.B.C. has clearly reduced from 4,000 to 2,000 its requirement with regard to the population to be served. It is already a beginning toward implementing the wish of the hon. member for Meadow Lake and of other members I mentioned earlier, whether it be the members for Chapleau, Churchill, Saguenay, and whatever their political affiliation may be.

I found encouraging the statement made in the house by the minister responsible for the C.B.C., when she said, as reported on page 2418 of *Hansard* for March 8 last:

I fully agree, as I am sure every hon. member does, that it should be extended to such regions as quickly as is humanly possible, if it is humanly possible.

And she refers in particular to the many pressures brought to bear on the minister by the hon. members for Chapleau, Churchill, Saguenay, etc. I believe it is the first time she