

Canadian Policy on Broadcasting

pose the question in the form of a point of order when it is obviously not a point of order but a substantive question. I think we should continue with the debate unless the house is ready for the question.

[Translation]

Mr. Gustave Blouin (Saguenay): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say a few words at this stage in the study of the broadcasting bill.

Contrary to what has been said on both sides of the house since the beginning of this debate, I do not intend to criticize or praise the C.B.C. I think that others have seen to it up to now, and I want to deal with another subject.

Mr. Speaker, almost a year ago, more exactly on November 23, 1966, I said this in the house:

For three years, I have been trying to obtain the extension of a television network on the north shore of the lower St. Lawrence, that is, east of Seven Islands, and unfortunately my efforts have been unsuccessful up to now.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I should like to say now that with the support of the hon. minister responsible for the C.B.C. to this house, my efforts were successful: a few weeks ago, the setting up of a TV station, that is a "frontier package" was authorized at Havre St. Pierre.

First of all, I wish to thank the hon. minister, in spite of what was said in this house the other day, and tell her how much this is appreciated. I now speak on behalf of my electors.

Mr. Asselin (Charlevoix): It is the C.B.C.

Mr. Blouin: I know it is the C.B.C., but what I want to say, for the guidance of the hon. member for Charlevoix, is that the hon. minister, I know, supported my efforts and that is why we now have a television station, a "frontier package", at Havre St. Pierre.

● (5:50 p.m.)

Mr. Asselin (Charlevoix): Would the hon. member allow me to ask him a question? Does he admit that the minister has the right to influence politically the C.B.C.?

Mr. Blouin: I am pleased to answer my hon. friend and point out that we are not dealing with a political influence, but with the extension of the system on the north shore to serve remote places which have no means of communication, and when the minister gave her approval, or in co-operation

[Mr. Speaker.]

with the C.B.C. management gave that authorization, she did not mention—and neither did I—the political allegiance of my constituents.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Blouin: She acted for the community and I would like to express my full appreciation for what has been done.

A little further, on the same day, I said:

Members have often spoken in the house of education and cultural affairs, and I know that considerable amounts were voted for cultural affairs. I must say, Mr. Chairman, that television must nowadays be available to all citizens of Canada and that it must be used also in the field of education and cultural affairs.

Moreover, I quote the following from a brief presented to the parliamentary committee on broadcasting, films and assistance to the arts:

We believe it is extremely important to assert strongly, first of all, that all the countries in the world know that it is neither possible nor practical to choose between education of children and education of adults as far as development is concerned and, secondly, that the main participant in educational television is surely the adult student, in his home.

That is one of the reasons why authorization was given for the building of this television station, and I insist on that because, contrary to what my hon. friend thinks, it is more a matter of education and cultural affairs.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to tell the house that the work is not completed because the north shore that I represent—I repeat it again—is the largest riding in Canada, with the exception of that of my hon. friend from the Northwest Territories, and there is still a lot to do to extend television coverage to Blanc-Sablon and the Belle Isle strait. I received recently from the manager of the municipality of the lower north shore, which is made up of twenty-two villages on a distance of 500 miles, a resolution which pressed for the extension of the French and English television service to Blanc-Sablon. I therefore hope that with the good offices of the minister, who is listening to me right now, and those of her parliamentary secretary (Mr. Béchard), efforts to secure the extension of that service will be continued.

Mr. Speaker, to conclude, I would also like to congratulate the chairman, the vice-chairman and all the members of the committee on broadcasting, films and assistance to the arts who have spent many hours working on