

Supply—Transport

not come directly under its jurisdiction but it deals with the granting of radio and television licences in part of my riding, namely in the Chibougamau and Chapais area. The minister will recall that I made numerous interventions—

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Chairman, I do not want to limit the hon. member in any way, but may I remind him that the minister responsible to the house for policies in the field of radio and television is my colleague the Secretary of State (Miss LaMarsh).

I believe it might be preferable for the member to make his remarks on this matter when the estimates of that department come up for study, because the minister is not here at the present time; for greater impact, I am sure it would be better for him to speak to the minister.

Mr. Laprise: Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister of Transport most sincerely for the worthy effort he has just made in my mother tongue. I really thought that the granting of licences, with regard to radio and television, was the responsibility of the Department of Transport.

As far as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is concerned, I will certainly have some observations to make, when the estimates of the Department of the Secretary of State come before the house.

At this time, I do not intend to talk about the quality of programming. But, on the other hand, there is one thing on which I should like to draw the minister's attention concerning the issuing of such licenses. The towns of Chibougamau and Chapais are now served by someone holding a permit to operate cable television. Now, those people have to pay twice for television services and, then again, they get poor service.

I think that the minister should recommend that the C.B.C. serve those areas. The report of the Fowler Commission contains a recommendation to that effect.

There is a very interesting article on this subject on page 74 of the report. It says that all Canadians pay for the Canadian radio and television networks, not only for C.B.C. networks but for the whole complex including private radio and television stations.

Their tax contributions represent about one third of the total costs. They pay for the remaining two thirds each time they buy a can of soup, a loaf of bread and, I might add, a cake of soap. Many of them, therefore, pay for a radio and television service that is not

[Mr. Laprise.]

provided to them. There is obviously a great deal to do.

I suggest to the minister that the people of Chibougamau and Chapais are paying twice for those services. To begin with, like everybody else, they pay through their taxes and their purchases, and then they have to pay for the installation of the cable bringing in the programs, plus \$7 a month in rental fees, plus 42 cents a month for the provincial tax, for a total of \$65.04 a year to be served by a television channel which is not always first rate.

Mr. Chairman, those are the facts I wanted to bring to the attention of the minister so that he would recommend the required appropriations to enable an expanded C.B.C. to serve the people of those areas as well as possible.

Knowing that the Minister of Transport advocates equality and justice for all Canadians, I am sure he will give special consideration to my representations.

I do not intend to speak any further today on the administration of the Department of Transport. I will have other remarks to make when the various estimates are called—which, I hope, will be as soon as possible.

[*English*]

Mr. Ormiston: Mr. Chairman, I hesitate to pour yet another transportation problem on the shoulders of the Minister of Transport even if they are wide shoulders. However, even though the problem I wish to talk about may not be a burning issue at the moment it could very well become contentious if action is not taken at the right time. I refer to the C.N.R. run-through program which was mentioned briefly a few moments ago.

The minister will recall the situation which developed in 1964 when the C.N.R. tried to institute run-throughs at Nakina and Wainwright. Because of the action taken in this chamber and the strong representations made by the opposition, which were listened to sympathetically by the then minister, the government appointed Judge Freedman who made a very exhaustive report on the situation, which report was subsequently presented to the government. But up to the present we have no guarantee that the interested parties will tend to abide by the recommendations of Judge Freedman.

It would be some satisfaction to those of us concerned with this problem to get the minister's viewpoint. I am sure he is showing sufficient interest even at this moment to