

*Supply—C.B.C.*

that the C.B.C. is very fair with its news releases in connection with all matters that go on in this house, even in connection with something like the controversial pipe-line debate. I was very much surprised that the hon. member did not take to task the newspapers of this country because they made a great many more derogatory remarks regarding the actions of this government than were contained in anything that came over the C.B.C.

It is expected that the Fowler commission report will be presented and be before this house next year. At that time I fully expect there will be a select committee of this parliament set up to deal with those recommendations. I anticipated the suggestion made last night by the minister that we should not deal with the briefs which were presented to that commission at this time, that we should wait until the report has been submitted before we deal with the submissions of the different people and organizations. For that reason I am not going to make any extended remarks this afternoon in connection with the C.B.C. As a matter of fact I feel that in the briefs I have read and the newspaper reports of those briefs there is nothing we have not heard before over the past few years. So if I happen inadvertently to refer to one or two aspects of the criticisms that have been made by some of these organizations, I feel that I shall not be doing what the minister suggested should not be done.

I feel very strongly about what I term the unwarranted criticisms levelled at C.B.C.'s policies and the regulations it uses to carry out those policies. I feel let down that the government, which saw fit to establish the C.B.C. in the first place, a child of the government should allow on certain occasions circumstances to arise which give the opposition to the C.B.C. a great deal of ammunition with which to blast that organization.

I also feel strongly that when accusations are made—in most cases false accusations—the members of the government, who should be supporting their own instrument in many instances fail to repudiate these false accusations that are levelled at the broadcasting corporation by its opponents. Because of that I cannot help disagreeing with even the setting up of the Fowler commission, because I feel that commission was set up in spite of the considered opinion and the recommendations of the government members and the majority of the members who sat on the parliamentary committee last year when they dealt with this whole subject. So I am afraid it was something the government did

over the heads of those members of the committee who ruled against the setting up of such a commission.

Because of this, because of the actions I have pointed out, I cannot but feel suspicious, and I am sure a great many other Canadians must be suspicious, that the government itself is not yet convinced that publicly owned utilities are in the interests of the Canadian economy. For that reason we who support publicly owned utilities in this country as being the best possible method of carrying on business in certain fields are somewhat reluctant, as the champions of such a system, to make the kind of constructive criticism we feel should be made and must be made if the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is going to expand and do the kind of job that must be done in that field in this country, the kind of job that no other organization can do as well.

I am not going to deal with any of the programming aspects of the C.B.C. I have here, as all members have, the annual report of the C.B.C. I should like to commend the minister and the officials of the C.B.C. for the very comprehensive document outlining the activities in the field of programming they have undertaken during the past year. I think that is one of the finest documents the C.B.C. has presented since its incorporation.

I cannot help being somewhat concerned when I hear the suggestion made that the C.B.C. is acting, in broadcasting in this country, as a competitor, a judge and a jury over the private companies broadcasting in Canada. These people who are opposing the C.B.C., and who are so very critical not only of the cost but more particularly of the types of programs the C.B.C. is airing, tell all and sundry that we should have the kind of programs the people of Canada want to hear. They say that all we have to do is take away the restrictions the C.B.C. imposes on the private stations operating across this country, but they do not tell us what they want to do. They tell us only they are prepared and ready to put on the market, as it were, or on the air waves, tailor-made programs which are going to be highly acceptable to the viewing and listening public of Canada.

First of all I should like to say that their past and present performance leaves a great deal to be desired. I am sure, too, that the majority of Canadians are highly suspicious of the kind of programs the private people would be prepared to put on in this country if they had the field to themselves, which, incidentally, they do not want to do themselves. They have made that quite clear.

Then they suggest a regulatory body. I too wish they had an independent regulatory