

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

seem to be involved in this, but I have been unable to get an answer from anyone concerning what has happened. The press, which seems to know things before members of parliament do, has pointed out that cabinet approval has been held up. If this is the case, then in view of the fact that the government already has stated in the white paper that it is prepared to consider issuing these licences, I wonder why the cabinet could not immediately consider allowing the commencement of construction of a C.B.C. station at Saskatoon.

If this construction is not started soon or is held up much longer, then the program series, which I think was to start in September of 1968, will be held up for an additional year since the transfer between the private station and the C.B.C. station would require some time to enable them to work out the programming. So that there will not be a further delay of one year, some decision should be made very soon so that the C.B.C. can commence construction. This affects not only the Saskatoon constituency but also many of the surrounding constituencies which would be served by the radius of television coverage which I understand the C.B.C. has suggested. Apparently they have in mind a satellite to serve the Kerrobert area. As we all know the hon. member for Kindersley (Mr. Cantelon) has risen in his place from time to time pointing out the importance of C.B.C. coverage for this area and why they feel there should be a C.B.C. station in Saskatoon with the consequent satellite coverage for them.

I should like to know whether in the very near future the cabinet will allow the C.B.C. to start construction of a C.B.C. station. We think it is of vital importance to a city which is the second fastest growing city in Canada and also one of the finest, as my colleague the hon. member for Rosthern (Mr. Nasserden) has pointed out. We believe it is very important that a city which is major in every possible way in western Canada should have this coverage. I would appreciate it very

much if the representative of the government could tonight give us the assurance that in the next few days the cabinet will give favourable consideration to the immediate construction of a C.B.C. station in Saskatoon.

• (10:30 p.m.)

Mr. J. A. Byrne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, just as I had an affinity with the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Choquette) this evening, I should like to assure the hon. member for Saskatoon (Mr. Brand) that both he and I walk in the same wilderness so far as C.B.C. television is concerned within our ridings.

I only wish I could take the hon. member on a trip through the East Kootenay to let him hear of the complaints and concerns of the people in my riding which is served to the extent of 20 per cent to 25 per cent by off air service; that is by C.B.C. television. All other receivers are on a wire line and are paying a substantial amount for this service. As suggested by the white paper, before granting a second license we are first endeavouring to provide television service for the majority of the people in Canada. I might say that the majority of the people in my riding are not receiving C.B.C. television.

Be that as it may, I am sure this matter is being given very careful consideration by the ministers concerned with this matter, namely the Minister of Transport (Mr. Hellyer), and the Secretary of State (Miss LaMarsh). As I am here this evening apparently to make apologies because of the absence of these ministers, who are unable to be in their places because of illness or important business, I will undertake to bring this matter immediately to their attention and indicate the very forceful manner in which the hon. member for Saskatoon (Mr. Brand) has brought this matter to the attention to the house.

Motion agreed to and the house adjourned at 10.34 p.m.