

The CBC has informed the commission that, in view of this long standing practice, broadcast time will continue to be made available on a similar basis to any of these groups desiring it for a period of 12 months in order to provide sufficient time for those groups which have not already done so to make other suitable arrangements for their programming in the Winnipeg area. The commission considers this to be a reasonable and equitable proposal.

I commend the commission for giving the government 12 months to set its house in order. But I am still waiting for the government to clearly state its policy on CBC in relation to its position on multicultural programming.

I have a recommendation to make which I hope the parliamentary secretary will convey to the Secretary of State. It is that the CBC should establish a policy whereby these various multicultural groups could use a certain number of broadcast hours for the purpose of multicultural broadcasting. I know that the Secretary of State has been approached by various multicultural groups with this request.

There are radio stations in southern Manitoba such as CFAM-CHSM, which has been exemplary in giving time to multicultural groups to broadcast in the language of the background of the people. We are asking that the people who came here and who are not Francophone or Anglophone, but who became Canadians and good citizens, have the right to some time on CBC in order to maintain their cultural heritage. This is not divisive but is simply a matter of maintaining a heritage. I suggest that in western Canada, at least, these are the groups that have given us a cultural mosaic and a special identity which should be preserved. I suggest that the government should seriously consider a policy whereby the CBC, within a relatively short time, should make time available for multicultural broadcasting.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Marceau (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, in replying to my hon. friend's

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question, I could easily refer him to the reply given by the Secretary of State, but I think to reply thus would be inadequate, and in view of the importance of this matter, I ought to add a few comments.

Although Section 38 of the Official Languages Act deals with the rights and privileges of other languages, I would point out to the hon. member that, in the case he is particularly concerned with, the multilingual broadcasting privileges that this population enjoys were not given to them by the government organization but by a private station. The broadcasting act is explicit on this point, and CBC policy follows it closely. The member is also aware that a lot remains to be done in the field of broadcasting in the two official languages of Canada: there are places where there is no service in French or English, or where these must be improved, which are assignments of major importance for the CBC, and will continue to take priority until all such projects have been realized.

The CBC Board of Directors is acutely aware of the growing need to fulfill the special needs of the different regions, and there is a close link between regional and ethnic programming. The CBC considers that at the present time, its national broadcasting service is not suitable for multilingualism and that the best solution to the problem of programs of an ethnic nature would be for the ethnic groups to continue to try to obtain broadcasting time on a local basis, from stations that do not belong to the network, so that the CBC can concentrate on its major obligations.

The hon. member stressed the CRTC's decision to extend these rights for a year, and I do not intend to comment on this. I can assure my hon. friend that I am convinced, from the way that he dealt with the problem, that he has made some very serious suggestions, and that I shall hasten to inform the minister tomorrow of all his remarks, and we will try to find an equitable solution to the really serious problems which he has brought up.

[*English*]

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10:30 p.m.