

Government Orders

I do not know whether he had the occasion to watch *Venture* last night. It was talking about the BBC and the types of programming that the British Broadcasting Corporation has.

When watching the breadth, the depth and the scope of what is allowed to be broadcast in the UK as opposed to what our CBC is allowed to broadcast here in this country I felt slightly ashamed. Here we have a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation that we are literally starving to death and not allowing it to use any amount of intellect as to the type of broadcasting that it can show us.

I had to stop and think that it probably had to do with money. It had to do with the amount of money that we were giving it. If we are going to starve it to death then we might as well put it out of existence. We might as well not have a CBC as to allow it to slowly starve as to what it is allowed to show us.

I think we are being very shortsighted and I would like to hear the comments of the member opposite on this. I think that the CBC was created the same way as our railway system was created in this country because we are such a vast country. We need to know what is happening in Northwest Territories and in Yukon or even in Alberta for the information of the Reform member.

There is nothing more enjoyable to me than driving home at night, I live in the nation's capital, listening to that program broadcast from coast to coast and I can hear what is happening in Newfoundland or I can hear what is happening in British Columbia. I can find out what is happening in this wonderful country.

My question to this member is does he really believe that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has a role in this country in broadcasting? If he does, how does he expect it to accommodate what we as Canadians would like to see on its programming with the type of money that we are allowing?

Mr. McClelland: Mr. Speaker, to the hon. member opposite, the program that we were both watching last night was *60 Minutes*, another American program.

When the hon. member mentioned driving along she was talking about the CBC radio program *As it Happens* that I think many Canadians listen to regularly.

I think if we were to say what model would we have for CBC television it would be CBC radio because we have to make distinction between CBC radio and CBC television. If I were looking for a model it would be CBC radio on television.

How would we go about achieving that? All across this fine nation we have public television. We have Access in Alberta and whatever it is B.C. and we have TVO in Ontario and in Quebec and in the maritimes. They are the educational television networks. They are all struggling for money. They can barely survive.

Would it not make sense for the CBC rather than to be telecasting the dribble that it is telecasting tonight in prime time to be taking some of the programs that are on Access and start working toward that?

The CBC last year started to sell itself as "flash, the public broadcaster". In my view what it is trying to do is live off PBS. It is trying to be a Canadian PBS but it is not.

Let the CBC become a public broadcaster. Let the CBC broadcast BBC type programming and get out of commercial programming. Why is CBC competing with CTV for the broadcast rights of the Olympics?

• (1810)

It has to be either fish or fowl and if it is going to compete in the private sector then let it compete in the private sector on a level playing field and not get one cent from the public purse. If it is going to get money from the public purse and call itself a public broadcaster then stop telecasting this dribble and become a public broadcaster and that is all I am suggesting.

Mr. Joe Comuzzi (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, I rise after my friend who talked about *60 Minutes* and *As It Happens*. There is some confusion here.

I am wondering if my colleague and friend from Edmonton Southwest would mind if I would change channels for a moment and talk about something he discussed about unemployment insurance.

His comments were, and I am sure my hon. colleague would like to correct this, that hundreds of thousands of people are milking the system in Canada who are on UI. I am sure he would like to rephrase that statement because although we acknowledge that there are some abuses in the UI system and there are ways we should correct the UI system, when we have the number of people we have in this country collecting UI while they are looking for other jobs they are very honourable and very fine Canadians who are out looking for work.

I enjoyed very much the personal experience that my colleague had the opportunity to bring to the attention of this House but I would like him to correct if he would the misconception that there are hundreds of thousands of people in Canada who are milking the UI system.

Mr. McClelland: Mr. Speaker, it is a tragic number. There are over 1.5 million people in Canada today who are out of work. There are social costs in being out of work. It is not just the financial costs, it is the lack of self-respect, the lack of self-worth experienced when people are unable to get that job. I know very closely from personal experience that the sense of self-worth and self-confidence really starts to go.

At the same time, while certainly there may not be hundreds of thousands, there are many thousands. We all remember the UIC ski team. We all know of circumstances in which people are