

*Routine Proceedings*

everything behind closed doors or somewhere where at least they could not see us at all.

Of the Canadians who wrote to the committee, and there were several hundred of them, the vast majority said yes, indeed, we want relaxed, loosened, enhanced coverage of parliamentary television. The vast majority were also concerned with the cost. They did not want to be burdened with any further cost for the showing of the House of Commons proceedings or committee proceedings.

As far as working in committee and the televising of committee, I think Canadians will see a different aspect. Many of them are tuned in only to Question Period and they see the show time for 45 minutes. That is not the real world. There is a lot of work done in committees, probably the majority of the work. We keep saying this but I think Canadians have to see that.

Also, they would see that there is some collegiality in committee work and there are some non-biased decisions made. I am loath to say this, but you can even make a few friends in committees. Even with their politically warped philosophies, you can still make a few friends in committee. In that light, you are assured that some work can be done. Whereas in the House, especially during Question Period, it is much more confrontational.

As far as the partnership between Cableco and CBC, when I asked the representative from the cable company, why do you want to get involved with this, just for the betterment of Canadians? He said: "Yes, we have only altruistic motives in mind". I had some hardship, and I do not want to be cynical, but I was not too sure of that.

My colleague from Port Moody—Coquitlam tells me that from 1984 to 1988 cable prices went up 6 per cent, which is almost acceptable. However, in 18 months in 1988 to 1989 they went up 29 per cent, which is not acceptable. Canadians wrote in and said that they were getting programs that they did not ask for but have to pay for. I am sure they are having the same reservations about the work in the House and the work in committee.

We would much prefer that CBC go it alone, restructure its priorities, but in reality they are not going to do that. Mr. Veilleux and Mr. Watson were witnesses at our committee and said that they were very excited about this partnership. I am rather convinced that this en-

hanced coverage will not go ahead unless we okay the partnership.

We had another reservation and I put in a minority report on behalf of our party. The C-SPAN that we saw in operation in Washington works extremely well. However, I hasten to point out that there are professionals working for C-SPAN alongside professionals from CBS, NBC and ABC who are working at half the rate. We do not believe it is fair that professionals work side by side at different wage scales. We would like very much that the workers, the professionals who work for this consortium be equally paid with those of the CBC, and that those who work for CBC not be threatened with their positions.

I believe that now the coverage in this House is somewhat sterile. Boring, perhaps, is a better word to describe it. I reviewed the tapes this morning of the visit of Mr. Mandela yesterday. I wanted to see how that was covered. It was covered in its usual sterile way. If Mr. Mandela was not waving his arms in front of the Speaker, we would not have known that Mr. Mandela was there. This is most unfortunate. It did not show the somewhat awe inspiring scene in this House yesterday. Certainly, I felt it in my seat. The Canadian public were not able to share with us that sense of exhilaration and awe that proceeded. As much as we revere the Speaker in the House, the poor Speaker has to be alert at all times because he is in the Chair in front of whoever is speaking, whether it is the Prime Minister or Mr. Mandela. This enhanced coverage would allow the senators in the middle aisle here to be shown on television—and everybody wants to see the senators, I am sure—and the House basically filled on one of the few occasions that it is filled.

• (1230)

As I speak now, I want to tell Canadians that they are not seeing the real thing. They are probably anticipating that there are a lot of people listening to me here. I am glad to see that you are at least smiling, Madam Speaker, which must indicate that you are listening to a certain extent. The member for Mackenzie is listening. I am sure that the member for Port Moody—Coquitlam is listening, at least with his right ear, but there are many people who are not listening to me.