

*Supply—C.B.C.*

before the house protests that reach the ears of members from time to time in regard to various programs. When these are put before the house it is not with any thought of censoring. In a year when the radio committee is not meeting how otherwise can members discharge their duty of bringing protests of the Canadian people to the forum to which the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation is responsible, namely this Canadian parliament?

In the short time that remains I do wish to mention one thing for which the C.B.C. is responsible. I hold in my hand what is commonly referred to as the house publication of the corporation, the *C.B.C. Times* for the week of April 29 to May 5. This is the organ that is issued by the corporation itself, and if I recall correctly the evidence given to the committee a year ago by Mr. Dunton its cost is about \$75,000 per annum. On page 6 of the issue to which I have referred a letter is printed containing the following statement:

C.B.C. television, through its shows of the journalistic type, is doing a great deal to deflate the exaggerated respect in which our public figures, businessmen, politicians, publicists and experts of all kinds, have been hitherto held; and this is all to the good.

Now, sir, I do not hold any brief that public men should be held in any higher esteem than they deserve to be held, but I just wonder whether it is a proper use of public funds to publish letters in which C.B.C. television is commended, rightly or wrongly, because it does a great deal to deflate the exaggerated respect in which our public figures of all kinds have hitherto been held.

**Mr. McCann:** I could not agree with you more.

**Mr. Fleming:** I think it is well that this should be brought to the attention of the corporation, because that kind of publicity is being issued by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation at public expense.

The news service is a very important matter in the programming of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. It subscribes to three services, Canadian Press, British United Press and Reuters, and the television and radio coverage of news is a very important feature of C.B.C. programs. There are rumours floating about that the C.B.C., having developed this news service, is now proposing to sell the service to those who may be interested in purchasing that news service from it. I think the house should be told whether there is any foundation for these rumours in any respect, because if there were any measure of truth in the rumours it would mean that a public subsidy is being provided under which the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation will be competing with

[Mr. Fleming.]

news agencies in the provision of news services, and it seems to me that is not fair to the press. It would be an unfair form of competition.

As to the propriety of such an enterprise on the part of the C.B.C., I should just like to quote what the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar had to say in the 1942 committee on radio broadcasting, at page 730. After a review by Major Murray, then general manager of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar is reported as saying:

I have a comment to make on this. I am in agreement with Major Murray. It may surprise some of you to know that. I think there are certain fields in which the government ought not to be the subsidizing agency or a controlling influence. I think the publication of news, the gathering of news and the publication of newspapers is something that ought to be preserved to co-operative organizations that are not in any way controlled by the government, so that we may have an absolutely free press and free public opinion. The moment government steps in to subsidize the gathering of news, suspicion is immediately aroused as to colouring the news, and undoubtedly that might happen any time. I think the co-operative system of gathering news today by the Canadian Press is quite excellent.

Let me say in conclusion that there are two questions I hope the minister will answer in the course of his further statement. The first one obviously is when it is expected that colour television will be available. There was an earlier estimate that was widely publicized that it would become available in the autumn of 1956. I would ask the minister to make an informative statement as to the progress that is being made, and the cost.

The other point is the matter of advertising policy. There has been a good deal of criticism, not least of all before the royal commission, in regard to the advertising policies followed by the corporation, and there has been expression of a great deal of dissatisfaction in some quarters about the way in which the C.B.C. has been handling commercial advertising. I ask the minister to give a report on that subject, indicating what revenues are being received, and to tell the house whether the commercial sponsorships are fully sold and if the rates the C.B.C. is proposing to charge are remaining uniform.

My final observation is this, that I consider the relationship between the corporation and parliament a very important relationship, so important to both parliament and the corporation that it should be kept vital and contact should be kept close. That is why I think the committee sitting annually or almost annually is so necessary and so important.

It is one reason also, sir, why I have argued in the past that the C.B.C. should be required to come to parliament each year for its grants. I do not think it is a sound thing to