

Supply—C.B.C.

Progress has been made and I know, for example, that civil defence courses are now given to members of the armed forces. Some are actually taking courses at our civil defence college in Arnprior.

Mr. Castleden: I would like to have the minister's statement on the following matter. I believe the prairie region is looked upon as a receptionist area. I know my own province has been co-operating with the government in an endeavour to carry on a training program relating to the rural and city municipalities in the receptionist area. I think there has been a little hesitancy on the part of the government to assist the province in preparing the kind of supplies such as blankets, medical supplies and food supplies that would be necessary in the case of an emergency. I think that in fulfilling the role they are trying to fulfil in the receptionist area more assistance would be of great value.

It must be remembered that we are dealing with the possibility of a type of war about which we know very little. Although the program must be a running one which permits of changes in policy, and although I believe we cannot be ostentatious in what we are spending, I think we should be doing what we can.

I would also say this. Where training has been carried out and where supplies have been available they have been of great value in cases of peacetime disaster. I think there is no doubt that support should be given to this kind of program to take care of peacetime disasters, and on that ground I think the expenditure can be supported.

Item agreed to.

At one o'clock the committee took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The committee resumed at 2.30 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL REVENUE

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation—

54. To provide for the requirements of the sound broadcasting service (to amount formerly authorized by chap. 32 R.S.), \$6,250,000.

Mr. McCann: Continuing the discussion of last evening on the estimates of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the hon. member for Eglinton raised two or three questions which I shall endeavour to deal with before we proceed with the rest of the debate.

He asked about rumours he said he had heard to the effect that the C.B.C. was proposing to sell television news service to those who might be interested in purchasing it. I am informed by the corporation that it is not considering selling television news services.

The hon. member also asked when colour television will be available. I am not in a position to give an answer at the present time on that. I believe that this is one of the questions we shall be able to deal with much better when we have the report of the royal commission.

The hon. member also asked about the commercial operations of the corporation and revenue from advertising. For the revenue figures requested I would draw attention to a breakdown given on page 3 of the section on finance in the annual report of the corporation, which has been tabled. I am informed by the corporation that it is continuing to charge uniform rates.

I wish to put on the record some information with reference to the finances of the company as provided for by vote 54 and supplementary vote 605, the one dealing with sound broadcasting and the other with television. Vote 54 in the main estimates and vote 605 in the supplementaries represent proposals by the government for interim financing of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation pending the report of the royal commission on broadcasting. As hon. members are aware, the royal commission, under the chairmanship of Mr. Robert Fowler, is conducting an exhaustive study of the whole matter of television and sound broadcasting and is examining the operations of the corporation. The government expects that after it has the report of the royal commission it will be in a position to make proposals to parliament regarding a firm basis for long-term financing of the national broadcasting system and its development, both in television and in sound broadcasting. I believe too that members of the house will be in a better position to consider these matters after having had the report of the royal commission which we expect will be ready for the next session of parliament.

As hon. members are aware, the operations of the radio part of the national broadcasting system have been financed for several years from a statutory annual grant of \$6,250,000 together with the proceeds of the excise tax on radio sets and equipment in accordance with statutory provision. In addition the corporation has the proceeds of its commercial activities. In its statement for the year ended March 31, 1956 the corporation shows a deficit in sound broadcasting of some \$287,000 after depreciation.

In the current fiscal year it is estimated that there will be some decrease in the yield of the excise tax on radio sets and a further drop in sound broadcasting commercial revenue. At the same time, to keep services at their current level, there will be some