

Television Transmission Facilities

Mr. Cadieu (Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, I would say to the hon. gentleman that I would be very happy to be a member of the broadcasting committee. I should like to ask him a couple of questions if I may. Does the hon. gentleman not think we are neglecting the population of the north and northern development in hesitating to bring television into the north?

Mr. Prud'homme: If I may answer, Mr. Speaker—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): Order, please. I hesitate to interrupt the hon. member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) but at this moment the time limit of 20 minutes has been exceeded in his case. It is not possible to recognize the hon. member unless there is unanimous consent of the house.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): I would ask whether the house gives unanimous consent to the hon. member for Saint-Denis replying to this question?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Prud'homme: Mr. Speaker, I do not pretend to be an expert on these matters as is the hon. gentleman. I try to find the best solution to a difficult problem and the answer is that this is exactly the difficulty of the C.B.C. I am sure the C.B.C. is faced with three difficult problems that appear to be of equal gravity, if I may say so. These problems are: Areas not yet served, improvements to existing services, the replacement of obsolete or inadequate facilities.

These are the problems of the C.B.C. and I think they serve as an answer to the question. It is a difficult situation. We need more money to extend services. It is just a question of money and it is not a question of desirability. We all agree it is desirable. We all agree that these services should be extended. However, if we go as far as to say that we should not have colour television in Canada but rather should use all the money for the development and extension of television to northern regions not yet served, I think we are not helping our country.

[*Translation*]

We do not help our country to remain in a competitive position with the country to the south which invades us more and more in every field, radio broadcasting, television, culture, and even the newspapers.

[*English*]

I have tried to give an honest answer to an honest question.

Mr. Cadieu (Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, has the hon. gentleman any idea of the wealth that has come out of the Athabasca region alone?

Mr. Prud'homme: I spoke about that a few minutes ago after listening very carefully to the hon. member. I said I agree that we do receive a great deal in the way of natural resources from this area and the C.B.C. should take this into consideration. I agree completely that the country as a whole receives much more than the country as a whole sometimes is giving back to the northern region.

[*Translation*]

The fact remains that it is a financial matter, that there are three main problems C.B.C. must face.

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Chapleau): Mr. Speaker, I should like to take a few minutes and add a few words to what I already said on this subject a few days ago, during consideration of the estimates of the Secretary of State.

I fully agree with the motion of the hon. member for Meadow Lake (Mr. Cadieu), to the effect that any area which does not yet receive C.B.C. television coverage, should get it as soon as possible.

The motion of the hon. member for Meadow Lake reads as follows:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation should take steps to carry out its duty to provide television coverage by immediately establishing transmission facilities in northwestern Saskatchewan, including Buffalo Narrows, Uranium City and on to Fort Smith, Hay River and Yellowknife.

Mr. Speaker, I am convinced—and we have seen again tonight—that no member in the house objects or would object to the passing of this motion. I assume that the member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) spoke on behalf of the Liberal party, and according to the answers given last Tuesday by the hon. Secretary of State (Miss LaMarsh), on that subject, I believe that the government would also agree to make this radio and television service available in every place where it is possible in Canada.