

Supply—C.B.C.

However, I am assured by the officials of the corporation that continuing studies are being made of these problems and while detailed studies may not have been made in certain areas the situation there has been reviewed in some detail by the corporation. We hope that in due course those people who are affected will get some measure of satisfactory television service. I hope, also, that this time will not be too far away.

Mr. Batten: I have one or two comments I should like to make on this item, but before doing so I point out that we have got well into this item already and since it is one which includes a large amount of money I wonder whether before we go any further the minister intends to make a statement.

Mr. Nowlan: As the hon. member says, we got into this item quickly. Far be it from me to try to delay my own estimates, but I do have a preliminary statement here which perhaps I could make at this minute. It is very brief, and it would at least lay the foundation for other matters which might arise.

This is a brief statement dealing with a tremendous corporation and one which is among the largest spending corporations in the government service. I think it can be said that during the year we have improved the over-all broadcasting service through strengthening our Canadian produced programs and through continued development of the radio and television services.

In radio, C.B.C. station schedules were started one hour earlier in the day for the benefit of the early morning audience and I am sure that includes hard working members of this house. In television the program service was started one hour earlier in the afternoon during the fall and winter schedule. C.B.C. coverage was improved. Twelve new low power radio repeater stations were established. Radio coverage was further developed in the north country with the establishment of five additional C.B.C. stations located at Fort Smith, Hay River, Churchill, Fort Nelson and Watson Lake. The C.B.C. is now operating nine of these stations in its northern service and expects to add another at Inuvik by September of this year.

In television, four new low power stations were brought into operation. In addition, C.B.C.'s national program service was further improved for viewers of ten private stations affiliated with the C.B.C. when the corporation replaced television network recordings with microwave service to each of the stations.

Members may recall that the corporation forecast some years ago that the greatest coverage problem to be faced by the national

service would arise in attempting to bring television service to the final 10 per cent of the population.

We have now arrived at that stage. I am told that just about 16.5 million Canadians now live within the A, B and C contours of at least one Canadian television station. This means that about 94 per cent of all Canadian homes have Canadian television coverage available. It is significant to note that 80 per cent of all homes in Canada actually have television sets.

This brings me to a quick look at the year ahead. The corporation expects to start work on new low or medium power television stations at various centres as well as continuing its studies of the problems and costs involved in making television available to other still unserved areas. The corporation does not expect to further increase its hours of regular program operation in the year ahead, other than a move toward equalization of the programming hours of the French television network with those of the English network.

In radio, the corporation expects to establish about 12 new low power repeater stations and to also continue work on the further development of the northern service. The experimental C.B.C.-Radio Canada FM network between Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto will be continued.

Referring now to the vote before the committee, hon. members will note that the appropriation they are being asked to approve represents an increase of \$2,131,000 over last year's amount. This figure includes an increase in operations of \$3,681,000 and a decrease in capital requirements of \$1,550,000. The increase in operating requirements represents demands on the corporation as the result of union negotiations, artists' fees and wage scales, the development of broadcast coverage, as well as continued program development.

That is a very brief indication of the work of the corporation and the reason for the expenditures which are before the committee at this time.

Mr. Batten: Mr. Chairman, I want to assure the minister that I have no intention of delaying his estimates but I did feel that upon an item of this size and particularly one of such importance to the people of Canada he would want to make a statement and I thank him for the statement he has made. I wonder if the hon. gentleman would now give us a break down of the \$62 million covered under this item?

Mr. Smith (Calgary South): Mr. Chairman, I am indebted for the applause with which hon. members have greeted me. I should like