

*Supply—C.B.C.**(Text):*

Mr. Chairman, this 5 per cent efficiency of reception given to my constituents in the islands only angers them to the point where they wish to know why people living in this area are not entitled to television reception given other parts of the country.

To establish the policy that television will first be brought to those areas where the per capita cost is the lowest is, to my thinking, a good policy so far as the mainland of Canada is concerned. But when we think of those people who live 50 to 150 miles from the mainland I believe closer scrutiny should be given to their problem and we should consider very favourably an exception to the rule and bring at least a little bit of comfort to these people who spend from November until May almost completely isolated from the rest of Canada, with the exception of one plane service per day.

Would the solution be the extension of the microwave system of the French network from Moncton, first of all by increasing the output from that station and bringing it to the closet point to les Iles-de-la-Madeleine? From that point would then be a satellite which could bring to the Magdalen islands the reception which they so ardently desire, and we would like reception from the French network because 95 per cent of the population speak the French language. It would thereby bring to those few islands in the gulf of St. Lawrence, so often referred to as the gem of the gulf, television service which they deserve and so ardently desire.

I should like to speak at this time in the name of the hon. member for Gaspé who is unavoidably absent from this committee due to illness. As the minister may know, the station at Carleton, CHAU-TV, at present gives 65 per cent French television and 35 per cent English television service. That serves only a very small part of the Gaspé peninsula, and I, along with the hon. member for Gaspé, have received numerous representations asking why that part of the lower St. Lawrence should not be given television service when so much has been given to the area immediately to the west. I am thinking now of approximately 2,000 English speaking families in the Gaspé peninsula who enjoy this 35 per cent English television at about 35 per cent efficiency. I think also of the other 2,000 English speaking families and the 2,000 French speaking families in that area who have no opportunity whatever of enjoying television in that remote but beautiful area of Canada.

I trust that the engineers of the C.B.C. will immediately begin to study the problems which I know exist, and that they will look

[Mr. Keays.]

at this request favourably, put forward as it is on behalf of these two areas which are so far away from the main centres of Canadian population. I can assure the minister that the people there will be very grateful and they will feel they are getting their just due and not having to pay a penalty for living outside the urban areas of the province of Quebec.

(Translation):

Mr. Lambert: Mr. Chairman, on behalf of C.B.C. authorities, I wish to thank the hon. member for Magdalen islands (Mr. Keays) for the sound remarks he made tonight, because he explained the situation with regard to television in the Magdalen islands. The same situation also prevails in several other places in Canada. However, the hon. member must realize that certain technical problems cause serious difficulties at present. Anyhow, I can tell him that C.B.C. officials are aware of the situation and that, even if they have not yet inquired on the spot, the problem concerning the Magdalen islands and the Gaspé peninsula has been reviewed and is still being carefully looked into.

Moreover, it must be realized that some stations mentioned by the hon. member have rather low transmitting power and, since they are operated by private interests, the C.B.C. is not in a position to interfere and boost that power.

At all events, I can say to him and to other members who would like to raise similar matters, that the C.B.C. is doing its best to improve the service.

(Text):

The hon. member for Iles-de-la-Madeleine has raised a somewhat serious problem with respect to certain areas of Canada. I hesitate to use the term fringe areas to describe them because we do not like to consider them as being beyond the centres of civilization, if we can call it that, of Canada. They are an integral part of Canada and they are entitled to the services which are provided to their fellow citizens. However, it will be realized that because of the population pattern and the long distances involved there are severe technical problems which have to be faced not only by the corporation but by private radio facilities. I know that the same problem exists in certain areas of western Canada and in those regions where the corporation is not represented by television stations from which it can operate satellites where private stations are faced with similar problems, and the technical difficulties that arise from them.