

*Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*

the CBC, which is funded with our money, is the worst offender. I have already given statistics with respect to the dire under-representation of women. For instance, only 5 per cent of experts appearing on CBC shows are women. I suggest that women should be given more consideration which considering the good use of this second channel. However, this would not be a progressive move because I believe all Members of the House would prefer to see women and men treated equally on CBC's main channel. They should be equal members in broadcasting as they are equal members in Canadian society.

Women have had to lobby a very unsympathetic palaeoand-erthal male management at the CBC. The President of the Corporation recently used the parliamentary channel to put forward his case about what he would like to do with this channel. If he would use this parliamentary channel to tout the CBC, I wonder if he should not be according the women of Canada the same opportunity to put forward their case for the use of what available broadcasting space exists on the airwaves, satellite and cable.

I regret that we are unable to deal with a number of other important broadcasting questions which I am sure are of concern to those dealing with this more immediate question and narrow interest. A number of these very urgent matters include Canadian content which is grossly inadequate in its availability to the private networks and the CBC. A high priority would be to obtain a commitment from private broadcasting to commission and broadcast Canadian programming. In my opinion, a high priority would be to eliminate or phase down commercials on the CBC, particularly with respect to drama programs so that we may have high quality public broadcasting.

Another matter of concern to Members of the House is the treatment of employees within the Corporation and indeed throughout the broadcasting system. With respect to the CBC, I receive many complaints from female employees who are discriminated against as well as male employees who do not have the full opportunity to use their talents. For example, their proposals for cost-cutting efficiency measures are not treated seriously by CBC management. These are issues which we may deal with in a broader broadcasting context.

Let me mention one particular matter which was brought to my attention. It concerns a very serious complaint about private broadcasting which was raised by NABET this summer. There are a number of employees in Newfoundland who are on strike for a first contract. There is a notion that broadcasting is an important and glamorous industry which treats its employees well. While it is an important industry, CHUM station in Newfoundland has the lowest media wages in Canada. The average wages for employees there is \$11,700 which is below the poverty line for a family in that area. This shameful treatment of people in that industry not only requires attention by the broadcasting industry, but in labour legislation and other areas that are not the subject before us today.

I believe the motion before us today is very sensible and I generally support it. Before we make any proposals to increase services, we should have an idea of the costs. I suspect that the

additional costs of repeat broadcasts would be very minimal because they are already being borne for the existing videotaping of the proceedings. However, we would have to consider those costs as well.

I think the more important problem involves the available space and how it should be used. Since the motion before us proposes that these matters be considered, I would support it and ask for the consideration of these matters in the hope that a wise decision will be made to increase the exposure of the House and provide Canadians with a greater opportunity to see what is happening here as we try to resolve the practical problems before us in a reasonable fashion.

**Mr. Geoff Scott (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Communications):** Mr. Speaker, in rising to address this motion by the Hon. Member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell (Mr. Boudria), I want to go on record as favouring the greatest possible exposure of Parliament's daily proceedings by the people who sent us here. This is a very important matter for debate, not only for Your Honour and for those of us who sit in the House of Commons, but for the countless thousands, indeed tens of thousands of Canadians who are watching the proceedings of Parliament at this very moment across six time zones in this country alone. Yes, you and I are being watched by approximately 100,000 Canadians right now. Heaven knows how many viewers we have beyond our borders through the miracle of satellite delivery.

One point that I want to make is that you are the custodian of the parliamentary TV service as long as the House of Commons is sitting. These cameras belong to us. They are an integral part of our proceedings. Therefore, through you, I would like to say to the people of British Columbia and the Yukon: If you are picking us up at this moment, it is the middle of the afternoon. They are waiting for the kids to come home from school or waiting for the next appointment in the office or possibly waiting for the next soap opera.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, where the time is now approaching 7.20 p.m., you probably had dinner and are waiting like everyone else for what will be a very crucial game in the World Series.

*[Translation]*

If you are struggling through traffic on your way home, here, in central Canada, at this time of night, 5.50 p.m., forget it . . . You are not listening to us at the moment.

If you are safely home, or unfortunately still at work, or else in hospital or in a retirement home and that you are watching us or listening to us, you are among the tens of thousands of Canadians who are addicted to this television service.

● (1750)

*[English]*

The point I am trying to make and I think other Members have already drawn it to the attention of the House is that there are convenient and highly inconvenient times for addicts of the CBC parliamentary network to watch their elected