

*Oral Questions***CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION**

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

This is a black Friday, finishing off a black week for the CBC. On Tuesday Canadians were told about budget cuts totalling \$140 million.

There were 400 or 500 jobs slashed. Today we get the news of a children's program chopped which is regionally produced in four centres and seen in most parts of the country. This is step by step dismantling of a great Canadian institution. The next thing we know the government will be telling Canadian kids that they cannot watch *Mr. Dress-up*.

Is it the government's objective to preside over the destruction of the CBC? Is that the goal?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I am told by members who attend the respective standing committee that the hon. member made quite a strong case about the fat that occurs in the CBC on Bronson Avenue. He made strong representations. Obviously, his representations have been taken into consideration by the management and they have acted.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Prime Minister has just attacked the management of the CBC. He evades his own responsibility. It is quite clear what is happening. This government has slashed the CBC budget. The CBC has had no choice but to cut its regional program budget and this is not going to be the end of it. Down the road we are going to see program cuts at the network level. Canadians are not going to stand for this. What we are seeing is the slow death of the CBC, death by strangulation.

I ask the Deputy Prime Minister this. When is the government going to take its responsibilities seriously and provide support and leadership and not just a knife to the CBC?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I want to make it abundantly clear to the hon. members of the House that I am not attacking the CBC management. As a matter of fact we are

supportive of the CBC management. We think they are doing a great job.

I would like to ask the hon. member whether he really meant what he said. Is he in favour of the cuts that have occurred on Bronson Avenue? Obviously the management has taken cognizance of his representations and they have acted on the basis of some recommendations that are coming from members of the committee. I think that is the way the parliamentary process should work and I congratulate him.

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GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Ms. Beth Phinney (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, the effects of the 7 per cent goods and services tax are a slap in the face to those Canadians who built this country.

My question to the Minister of Finance is this. How does this government plan to significantly compensate those seniors, including the 27,000 in my riding, living on fixed incomes, when we know the cost of day-to-day living will increase under this oppressive and regressive goods and services tax?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I commented on this yesterday and I will comment again. There are a number of items that are not taxed under the goods and services tax which are of direct interest and concern to senior citizens: basic groceries, meals on wheels, meals served in nursing homes, charges for health and dental care, hospital and nursing-home care, prescription drugs, medical devices. No tax will be charged on residential rents, on municipal transit, passenger ferry service, legal aid services and other financial services.

Eighty-four per cent of seniors will receive the benefit of the goods and services tax credit which is a cheque that is paid in advance four times a year to people who are eligible to receive it. As I have said, 84 per cent will receive that credit. The result is that a large proportion of senior citizens will be better off after sales tax reform than before.

The hon. member is shaking her head. These are the conclusions that have been arrived at by people in the Department of Finance. They have certified these numbers and if my colleague, the hon. member, disagrees with those numbers she has the responsibility to state