

board of directors of the Corporation and will then inform Canadians of the outcome of those discussions.

Mr. Cassidy: Mr. Speaker, I have two questions for the Minister responsible for the CBC.

First, could the Minister tell us now how many jobs will be affected by the CBC cuts? There are reports that some 800 jobs in the CBC's regional service will be affected, and this means 800 people. In addition to that, many contract employees will be laid-off, and they will not even be included in those figures because they are not part of the actual CBC staff. Therefore, how many people will be affected, and second, how do these cuts square off with the election promises of the Progressive Conservative Party, namely that no actual cuts in cultural expenditures would be made by a Progressive Conservative Government?

Mr. Masse: Mr. Speaker, so long as the Board of Directors of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has not confirmed the President's proposals, there is nothing official yet. If and when such decisions are made by the Corporation's Board of Directors, I think it will be up to the corporation's President to announce the decisions made by the Board.

[English]

Mr. Caccia: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister's announcement today lead to increased or decreased production by the CBC?

[Translation]

Mr. Masse: Mr. Speaker, the answer to that question will be found in the analysis the Hon. Member will make of Mr. Juneau's press conference, which will be a part of the nuts and bolts of the cuts affecting the corporation.

[English]

Mr. Murphy: Mr. Speaker, coming from Manitoba I have gone through a restraint program with the provincial Conservative Government that was in power from 1977 to 1981. We found that in the Department of Northern Affairs, for example, all the cuts were made to on-the-line people. There was no decrease at all in the headquarters of the Department. It is quite interesting to note that the number of bureaucrats working in the central office actually increased at the very time that there were cuts in the field. What guarantee do we have that the same thing will not happen with the CBC cuts?

● (1230)

[Translation]

Mr. Masse: Mr. Speaker, it has been stated here in this House, at the outset of the discussions on that matter, that the Minister of Communications expected and hoped that all the cuts would respect the whole question of creation both in the regions and within the networks. It is in that spirit and towards that aim that co-operation and consultation with the CBC has been carried out. You will get to know the results of the corporation's work and consultation after the Board of Direc-

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tors will have approved the President's proposals and once these will have been published.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: The questions are going somewhat beyond the actual content of the statement. Some Members may not know our tradition here, which is to have a short period of questions after a ministerial statement. I am trying to get everyone who has risen in for one question. I think that will be the only fair way to use the traditional period of time, if that is agreed. The Hon. Member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mr. Waddell).

Mr. Waddell: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister could confirm that there will be cuts in the Vancouver region and tell me the extent of those cuts, especially in production. In Vancouver, which is an exciting region, there is the feeling that everything is concentrated in the Toronto region and that Vancouver gets the worst deal possible with regard to cut-backs and so on. It is a real struggle to produce programming in Vancouver and to get money for that. Was it not possible for the Minister to set some guidelines to ensure that the cut-backs would be made where the fat is, rather than in the regions where there is a real need?

[Translation]

Mr. Masse: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is asking me to interfere in a rather tactless way, to say the least, with the responsibilities of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

When the Board has approved the President's recommendations, we will then be in a position to discuss the implications of such approval by the Board.

But as long as the Board has not been asked... has not made any decision, I do not think it would be proper to discuss such hypothetical matters.

[English]

Mr. Langdon: Mr. Speaker, most of us welcome the sense of consultation with which the Minister indicates this process is now under way. My question for the Minister is with regard to broader consultation with some of the communities and workers affected. There certainly have been requests, for instance from the Windsor-Essex County area, for meetings with the Minister and people who are responsible for these cuts.

Would the Minister be prepared to make a commitment that such requests will be accepted so that the degree of consultation in these cut-backs can be much greater, particularly for some of the remote communities or communities like Windsor which faces an overflow of programming from the United States which has no competition with the CBC in the form of private stations?

[Translation]

Mr. Masse: Mr. Speaker, I am taking it for granted that the senior officials of the CBC will be able, in accordance with good labour relations, to arrange the necessary consultations within their organization.