

sovereignty, but that we come together with proposals that will keep Canada solidly bound together.

• (1440)

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, the fact is that before the Prime Minister heard Mr. Remillard on television, he instructed his representative on the commission to abstain and not to vote against a proposal to have a referendum on sovereignty in Quebec as early as 1992. And he has not explained that fact.

I ask the Prime Minister, why did he instruct his representative on the Belanger-Campeau commission to abstain on the final vote, and therefore to take a position which indicated indifference to the future of Canada? That is not leadership; that is not fighting for unity.

Right Hon. Brian Mulroney (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, this may be quite embarrassing for my hon. friend. He is suggesting that there is something really extraordinarily anti-Canadian to have voted in favour of that proposal. He will have to explain to his Liberal colleagues in Quebec his chagrin at their conduct, because all of the provincial members voted in favour of it.

Has the member told Mr. Bourassa how offended he is at his anti-Canadian conduct? The last time this gentleman rose in the House it was to say that Mr. Bourassa's proposals guaranteed Canada a solid last chance to come together in one united nation. And that is exactly what we are trying to do.

Now, I did not give any instructions to the member. That only happens in other parties. But I can tell him this—

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Mulroney: Mr. Speaker, I simply mention that my hon. friend's question is predicated on the assumption that what Mr. Remillard has already said is false.

Mr. Remillard is quoted very directly as saying that indeed there may not be a referendum on sovereignty. I think that if my Liberal friends can put aside their partisanship for a minute, they will agree that the

avoidance of that referendum would be important for all Canadians.

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CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): My question is to the Prime Minister, who has had no mandate to do what he has done to the CBC.

At a time when this nation is at a crossroads, at a time when our collective future is at stake, the Prime Minister with a swing of his financial broad axe has decimated the CBC as an instrument of national identity.

I want to ask the Prime Minister, when will he finally begin to listen to the people of Canada? When will he learn that the bludgeoning of the CBC will only jeopardize Canada's future as a nation? And, when will he give back to the CBC the level of funding that it deserves to serve as the heartbeat of Canada?

You've got no mandate to do what you've done. No wonder we are on life support.

Hon. Gerry Weiner (Secretary of State of Canada and Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship)): Yes, Mr. Speaker, all of us did listen to the CBC this morning and do appreciate what they do.

But, Mr. Speaker, the budget of \$1.4 billion, global receipts which have been increasing constantly since 1985, is apparently enough from what I read, the chairman-designate of the CBC having said so in the month of February. Now, this is only one month later. I am assuming he must still feel the same way.

The CRTC has been holding some hearings. Today is its last day. I imagine that we would want to give them a chance to report on their hearings.

Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap): The members continue to laugh. But CBC president Gerard Veilleux has warned that the next round of cuts and the loss of 500 more jobs will make it impossible for the CBC to do its job as Canada's national voice. Then it is going to be up to the government to decide the fate of the CBC.

With the Federal Court's decision today that the political will to maintain the CBC in fact rests with