

*Oral Questions*

Given the government's treatment of workers in Canada with its own employees, the Public Service Alliance and now Canada Post, is there any wonder why labour is cautious of the government's initiatives? Will the minister show leadership, follow the advice of his own report and not proceed until labour is a full partner?

**Hon. William C. Winegard (Minister for Science):** Mr. Speaker, there is no question that it is the government's responsibility to try to show leadership in this whole business of making Canada prosperous. That is exactly what we are trying to do.

Labour will be on side on this issue. After all, nobody in this House wants his or her standard of living diminished, nor does anyone in labour.

There is one way to do that, and that is to make the country competitive. That is exactly the kind of leadership role the Government of Canada is taking.

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**CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION**

**Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Communications.

Rumours continue to abound regarding further cuts to both programming and staff at the CBC, including the possible closure of TV stations in Ottawa and Winnipeg and the loss of up to 500 jobs.

The CBC president has projected a \$50 million shortfall and the chairman has warned that by mid-October the CBC will have to begin implementing lay-off and closure strategies. I want to point out that it is now late October and I fear the other shoe is about to drop.

I ask the minister whether he will recognize that the time is up for further delays, that the CBC needs a firm commitment and it needs it now. Will he assure us that the government will not force the CBC to toss people out on the street like it did last year?

**Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of Communications):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member refers to rumours. It would be helpful I think to all involved if he would not spread rumours himself by raising such questions on the floor of the House of Commons.

As I indicated previously in the House, the government is looking at the whole question of next year's budget for the CBC. Obviously it is an area of interest to us, as it is an area of interest not only to the employees and viewers of the CBC but to the private sector as well. When we have something to announce with regard to that we will be pleased to inform the hon. gentleman.

**Mr. Lyle Dean MacWilliam (Okanagan—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, the government has forced the CBC to rely more and more on commercial revenues, competing with the private broadcasters for what is an ever increasing piece of a shrinking pie.

I would like to ask the minister whether he is prepared to correct the mistakes of his predecessor. Will he commit himself to a mechanism of long-term and stable funding for the CBC so that it will be able in future years to fulfil the mandate that it has been given.

**Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of Communications):** Mr. Speaker, we are looking at all aspects of the CBC's budget to try to ensure that it is well and properly financed and that it is able to discharge the mandate that was given to it by Parliament. In addition to that, in early December I will be convening a summit of broadcasters in Canada, the whole of the industry, to try to discuss how we ensure the survival as well of the private sector in Canada.

I expect as a result of the government's internal reviews and as a result of the summit we will be able to make substantial progress in both areas.

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**THE ECONOMY**

**Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton Southeast):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance and is about his high dollar policy. Our exporting resource sectors, oil and gas, farm products, forestry, coal, fish and so on are seeing their competitive position eroded around the world because of a high dollar policy, the higher the better dollar policy.

The minister has received representations from exporting sectors across the country including western Canada. Is he prepared to do something to bring the dollar down? Why does the minister in Japan, for example, sound like he wants an ever higher dollar?