

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, October 10, 1990

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*English*]

COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Mississauga East): Mr. Speaker, the American radio station WBLK today holds a virtual monopoly on the southern Ontario market for black urban contemporary music.

Toronto has become so lucrative for WBLK that it now has an advertising office in metro. Regrettably, Canadian black artists have no commercial outlet for their music while Canadian advertisers pay WBLK for access to Toronto's large black population.

This summer the CRTC rejected a strong bid from the black community and awarded the final Toronto radio licence to a country and western application. The CRTC has turned a deaf ear to the needs of black musicians and has ignored the fact that other radio stations in Toronto are abandoning country and western due to low audience demand.

If this government is serious about its commitment to multiculturalism, it will reject this decision and send it back to the CRTC for reconsideration.

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AGRICULTURE

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, I have just returned from an intensive five-day tour of one corner of my constituency during which I talked to more than 400 people, most of whom were farmers concerned about their present and their future.

Piles of grain are on the ground, and they are unbelievable. The elevators and bins are full. The grain is not moving anywhere, but the need for movement and sales is evident everywhere.

The message from my constituency is loud and clear. The grain must be moved. The price of grain must be higher. The interest-free cash advance must be reinstated and the government must intervene in the energy crisis holding down gas prices so the oil companies do not make profits at the expense of the cash-starved producers of the prairies.

I call on this government to listen to the needs of the farm and rural people of my constituency and across western Canada, and address these concerns immediately.

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[*Translation*]

AIR CANADA

Mr. Vincent Della Noce (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue): Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, Air Canada announced drastic staff cuts, close to 3,000 lay-offs including mechanics, flight attendants and pilots. These cut-backs will affect all employees and are due to fuel price increases.

Financial circles have long since been asking for this kind of rationalization, even before oil prices began to go up.

When we had the last two increases I praised the oil companies for not raising their prices immediately. Rather I was afraid that companies, wholesalers, air carriers, taxis, and public transit companies would take advantage of the situation to boost prices or cut staff.

Where were these companies when we had a decrease of 12 cents a litre in 1987? What reduction did they pass on to consumers when oil prices went down as low as \$10 a barrel?

Mr. Speaker, I have a very simple question. Will these 3,000 employees be rehired if oil prices decrease to the levels of two months ago? To that I answer I do not think so.