

Supply

dent of the CBC, Mr. Juneau, who was a Minister in Mr. Trudeau's Government and a great friend of his. Is that an arm's length relationship? The head of the National Film Board is a relative of Mr. Juneau's. Is that an arm's length relationship? One of Mr. Trudeau's major aides, Mr. Porteous, was put into an important position in our cultural life in Canada. Is that an arm's length relationship? The granting councils for culture were put on a very short time and planning budgetary cycle in order to keep them in line. Is that an arm's length relationship? I am suggesting to you, Mr. Speaker, that an arm's length relationship never existed with the previous Government.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hockin: And if we are going to change it—and that is an interesting question, perhaps we should change it—we will at least be honest about it. I ask the Hon. Member what his Party's position is on this particular subject?

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Hon. Member's question. Let me respond in two ways; first, even if this Government were to put the \$85 million back right now, Arthur Black is gone from Thunder Bay. That is one of the unfortunate realities. But I raised the whole aspect as an indication, given the arm's length relationship you talk about, that economic decisions made by the Minister and the Government do create programming decisions. I know that the Minister did not make the decision to cut Arthur Black's show in Thunder Bay in half. Nor did he make the decision that three full-time positions and three part-time positions will be cut. We have to recognize, however, that when decisions are made to reduce or increase budgets, those decisions do affect people. It is a fine line in terms of the arm's length relationship and I appreciate what the Hon. Member is saying. I would love it if the Minister had the power to put Arthur Black back in Thunder Bay, but that is not possible or practical at this point.

Mr. Belsher: Mr. Speaker, I have a comment on the remarks of the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan (Mr. Angus). I believe the Minister should be complimented for the way in which he has adjudicated the cuts which he has had to make within his Ministry. The motion with which we are dealing today talks about the cultural community and the tremendous cut-backs which have occurred, but the Minister has definitely taken a very minor portion of funding from the cultural groups. I think that if the Hon. Member were to look at the principal budget for the arts council, he would find that the cuts are less than 1 per cent. Why would the Hon. Member not think that perhaps that is appropriate because he knows we are in a deficit situation and people are looking for a judicious way of spending one's dollars? I would like to hear the Hon. Member's comments on that.

I would also like to echo the remarks of former speakers with respect to the arm's length relationship. I am sure we would all applaud the Minister for his approach in not interfering with how the CBC makes its cuts.

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member's question relates in effect to the need for cuts. The Hon. Member pointed out the small reduction in terms of percentage. But I would suggest to him that his Government per se, and not just the Minister of Communications (Mr. Masse), has not looked at the areas it should have started from. One appropriate example, given the fact that we have been talking about the communications services in northwestern Ontario, and keeping in mind the price tag of the cuts, is that Great Lakes Forest Products Limited, a company whose major owner is Canadian Pacific Investments, owes the Government in deferred taxes \$125 million. Surely some of those taxes could have been brought into the public Treasury in order to prevent, at the very least, the reductions in the CBC budget. I know the Hon. Member cannot respond to me, but I ask him rhetorically whether or not that would be a more appropriate way of getting our house in order?

Mr. Stackhouse: Mr. Speaker, I have enjoyed listening to the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay-Atikokan (Mr. Angus), especially because, like other Hon. Members, I am a fan of Arthur Black. I want to point out to the Hon. Member, however, that Arthur Black is moving to Toronto. He is not really leaving Canada. Toronto is still part of this country. The loss is really not of the enormity suggested by the Hon. Member, and it is not unique. Larry Zolf is in Toronto and not in Winnipeg because he is another example of a success moving to a larger market. Pierre Burton is in Toronto and not in the Yukon. It is characteristic in any country that artists who succeed in one place may well move to where there is a larger market or audience for them.

Second, I want to say that the suggestion that members of our Party want to dismantle the CBC ignores the fact that the CBC was established by a Conservative Government. It has been substantially financed whenever a Conservative Government has been in office. The Conservative Party, under the Diefenbaker administration, for example, steadfastly defended the independence of the CBC in the face of many who suggested that the CBC was showing a political bias against the Government. All that is a part of history. The present Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) has recommitted his Party and his Government to the continuation of the CBC as part of the cultural fabric of Canada. But I think we should face the reality and the logic that it is inconceivable that the various institutions, Departments and agencies of the Crown should be asked to take reductions in their expenditures, so that we could at least begin to address the deficit crisis, but that we should not ask the CBC to take a modest reduction in its expenditure. Indeed, it was much lower than it might have been. I think that in itself, plus the fact that, under this Government, the CBC will be receiving a subsidy approaching \$1 billion, indicates the commitment of the Government and of this Party to the ongoing work of the CBC and what it contributes to Canada. I respect the intentions of the Hon. Member as one who values the CBC. I join him in that respect. But let us face the facts and draw conclusions which are upheld by logic.