

we have a high regard for Mr. Juneau and his accomplishments. That is a fact.

With regard to responsibility, I think my hon. friend has obscured the clear indications of the responsibility of this committee. It is not empowered directly or indirectly to intrude on, insinuate itself into, or interfere with the operations of the CBC. It is an advisory group to the Minister, empowered to assist him in his proper assumption of his duty to the House of Commons, which is to provide all Members with proper and timely information on the best manner in which government policy can be implemented.

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PIPELINES

VANCOUVER ISLAND NATURAL GAS PIPELINE PROJECT

Mr. Ted Schellenberg (Nanaimo-Alberni): Mr. Speaker, my first question in this House is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. Last summer the British Columbia Utilities Commission selected the so-called southern route from the Lower Mainland to Nanaimo for a natural gas pipeline to Vancouver Island. There is some concern in my riding that the project may be in jeopardy, particularly in view of the perilous financial position in which the new Government has found itself. What is the status of the Vancouver Island natural gas pipeline project?

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Hon. Member on his election to the House of Commons. We welcome him to our PC caucus.

Our position on the Vancouver Island pipeline, which we have conveyed to the British Columbia Minister of Energy, is that the project is on hold until the economic climate improves, as are the Quebec pipelines. We have asked the Government of British Columbia to bring us a more economic proposal with revised figures, which we will then discuss with our officials. Hopefully we will be able to schedule this project for construction but it will probably begin a little later than the B.C. Government had requested.

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[Translation]

NATIONAL PARKS

EMPLOYMENT AT KOUCHIBOUGUAC NATIONAL PARK, N.B.

Mr. Fernand Robichaud (Westmorland-Kent): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for national parks and concerns employment in New Brunswick's Kouchibouguac national park during the summer of 1985. This past summer, 230 people were employed in the park. According to some press reports, the Kouchibouguac national park operating budget will be cut down considerably, to the extent that employment in 1985 will be reduced by some 100 person-

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years. Since the policy of this government is to eliminate jobs, can the Minister confirm the bad news and explain in unequivocal terms why my constituents are the target of such savage and unacceptable cutbacks?

• (1140)

Hon. Suzanne Blais-Grenier (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, it is true that the Department of Environment is reducing person-years. I want to say to my colleague that nobody has yet been sent a dismissal notice and we will do our best to ease the situation, help retrain employees who can be given other duties and proceed as humanely as possible.

It stands to reason that cuts hurt everybody and it is obvious as well that the cutbacks made by my department will be spread throughout Canada; we are talking about 305 fewer person-years out of a total public service work force in excess of 10,000 people.

INQUIRY CONCERNING EMPLOYMENT FOR LAID-OFF WORKERS

Mr. Fernand Robichaud (Westmorland-Kent): Mr. Speaker, is the Minister giving me the assurance that employment will be found for the workers who will be laid off?

Hon. Suzanne Blais-Grenier (Minister of the Environment): I cannot give that assurance to my colleague, Mr. Speaker, because we are now in the process of considering how best to implement our staff cutbacks. What I can say is that the Department of Environment's prime concern is not to create jobs but, before reducing our staff, we reviewed those programs where a minimum of hardship would be caused.

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[English]

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE—FUNDING OF BIOTOXICOLOGY UNITS

Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox-Powell River): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of the Environment and it concerns cut-backs in her Department. One of the cut-backs proposed is in the Canadian Wildlife biotoxicology unit. This unit has undertaken some very important activities in Canada. It was the first to identify DDT as an environmental hazard, and it was responsible for banning a number of dangerous chemicals, particularly in New Brunswick. Would the Minister indicate whether she is prepared to review the cut-backs in the biotoxicology units of the Canadian Wildlife Service, because they are such an important assistance to health and safety in Canada?

[Translation]

Hon. Suzanne Blais-Grenier (Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I think I replied yesterday to one of the hon. members' colleagues who was seeking this information in