

Oral Questions

over the next three years, when the board of directors of the corporation is about to implement these cutbacks by hiring an outside firm to find ways to cut and slash services at the CBC?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this is an extremely biased interpretation of what is being done by the CBC board of directors. It is not the first time we have heard such interpretations. The board of directors of the CBC is looking for the best possible advice on how the CBC can be made more efficient to deal with the challenges of the information highway.

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MINORITY LANGUAGE COMMUNITIES

Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Last summer, the Government of Canada announced that 26 departments and agencies would be required to prepare action plans for promoting the development of Canada's minority language communities in accordance with sections 41 and 42 of the Official Languages Act.

Can the minister tell us today what measures he will take to ensure that the 26 departments and agencies in question submit their plans before the deadline, that is, before the end of next month?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my colleague's very relevant question gives me an opportunity to inform the members of this House—those who are interested in getting information, of course—that the Department of Canadian Heritage has already received half the proposed action and business plans from these departments and agencies and expects to officially receive all remaining plans by June 30, as requested. Furthermore, the 26 organizations concerned have designated co-ordinators in both Ottawa and elsewhere in the country—for organizations represented outside Ottawa—to ensure that plans are developed properly.

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[English]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Herb Grubel (Capilano—Howe Sound, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, this is the first question about one of many, many broken Liberal promises. It concerns the government's promise to replace the GST with a system that, among other things, is fairer to consumers. The Deputy Prime Minister promised to resign if such a replacement was not completed within one year after the election.

My question is for the Minister of Finance. Why has the government failed to deliver on this promise?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, this government needs no incentive to repair the damage created by the GST, but if we did I can think of no greater incentive than to keep the Deputy Prime Minister in place.

Mr. Herb Grubel (Capilano—Howe Sound, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, Reformers always knew that there exists no GST replacement that quoting from the red book "raises equivalent revenues, is fairer to consumers and small business and minimizes disruption to small business". There is not one replacement that could be created within one year.

• (1450)

My question is also to the Minister of Finance. Is this broken promise symptomatic of Liberal incompetence, or is it a sign of Liberal willingness to promise almost anything in order to get elected?

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance and Minister responsible for the Federal Office of Regional Development—Quebec, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, in listening to the member's citation at the beginning, I will take that as a representation from the Reform Party that we keep the GST as is.

However, it is with profound regret that I say to my colleague that as in many other things we are not going to accept the Reform Party's representation.

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[Translation]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

In another memo dated May 23, the CEO of the CBC informed his employees that 1,000 positions would be cut by September 1995 and that 350 employees would be laid off in the short term.

Mr. Beatty added that the exact number of positions to be cut in the various facilities remained to be determined, since management plans had not yet been approved by the resources planning and allocation committee.

Does the Minister of Canadian Heritage realize how anxious the French network staff, particularly in Quebec, are about the decisions this committee is about to make, given that francophones are a very small minority on this committee?

Hon. Michel Dupuy (Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have explained time and time again in this House that we have several initiatives under way which should lead to fundamental decisions being taken concerning the CBC.