

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, the action taken by the CBC is no different from that taken by Radio-Québec in 1986, when it closed nine regional production centres, and earlier this year, when it closed its office in Gaspé.

Where the cuts are to be made is the exclusive responsibility of the president and CBC officials. Let them open their books so that members of Parliament and the Quebec public can see for themselves what their assets and liabilities are.

Mr. Speaker, instead of shouting at Conservative members from Eastern Quebec, PQ MPP Jean Garon should tell Quebecers what he ought to have done to prevent the closing of regional stations by Radio-Québec. This message also concerns the federal NDP and its Quebec wing.

* * *

[English]

BRITISH COLUMBIA MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Al Horning (Okanagan Centre): Mr. Speaker, last week the MLA for Okanagan West, Mr. Cliff Serwa, a constituent of mine, was named the Minister of the Environment for British Columbia.

Having known Mr. Serwa for many years, I believe he will do an outstanding job. I know he looks forward to working with our Minister of the Environment as the green plan proceeds.

I am sure all members of this House join me in wishing Mr. Serwa well as he takes on his new responsibilities.

* * *

[Translation]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Mr. Cid Samson (Timmins—Chapleau): Mr. Speaker, in Moncton today, nearly 2,000 Acadians will demonstrate to protest the cuts at the CBC. As a result of these

cuts, there will hardly be any news about the performance of young Acadians at the Jeux d'Acadie.

In Timmins—Chapleau, in my riding, we have lost our voice, making our isolation even more obvious. The government spends several million dollars on a commission on national unity, and meanwhile, the Minister of Communications does nothing to prevent cuts in the CBC network, one of the very tools we need to promote dialogue and understanding among Canadians.

In the case of francophones outside Quebec, these cuts have made them even more isolated and vulnerable. If the Prime Minister is sincere about his efforts to promote national unity, he should ensure that his government supports his position instead of undermining it.

* * *

[English]

RURAL WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, rural weekly newspapers play a vital role in our communities, in our provinces, and in our nation. By communicating information within the community and informing people of the government policies and programs, they play a vital role in news gathering and dissemination. They play an important part in the whole democratic process in Canada.

Last week the Mulroney government declared war on these rural weekly papers by dramatically increasing the postage rates and taxes that these newspapers pay. This has caused an increase in costs of over 350 per cent for one weekly newspaper in my constituency.

The *Manitoulin Expositor*, a weekly paper on Manitoulin Island, will have its postage charges when combined with the GST tax increased from \$17,000 this year to \$57,000 next year. This is an unconscionable increase for this rural weekly newspaper. I am sure that many weekly newspapers will go out of business next year because of these new taxes and postage increases.

I call on the government to stop this destruction of our rural weekly newspapers and roll back these tax and postage increases.