

Oral Questions

• (1150)

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

CONTINUED PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Communications, with regard to the CBC, has said:

There may be services which could be purchased from the private sector at less expense than continued public ownership of stations and transmitters.

I will direct my question to the Acting Prime Minister. Does he agree with the approach of the Minister of Communications to privatization of the CBC? Is this the kind of birthday present they should give the CBC for its fiftieth birthday?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Privatization)): Mr. Speaker, let me clarify the assumption which was made with regard to the future of the CBC. First, I have made it very clear that we are looking at three companies; Petro-Canada, Radiochemical and Air Canada.

The statement made by the Minister of Communications was by way of example of some of the things that might be considered to assist the CBC to fill its public policy role. For example, it may be possible that some of the services could be produced more in the public interest and that of the Canadian people within the private sector.

FUTURE OF CORPORATION

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, following a savage \$85 million cut to the CBC—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mrs. Finestone: Mr. Speaker, if I may, in January, 1985, the Prime Minister made the following comment:

Some people want to buy the CBC. The CBC is not for sale.

It is not our problem if the Minister of State for Privatization wants to have a job and is looking for something to do. The problem is what is happening to the CBC.

Is the Acting Prime Minister going to honour the promise of the Prime Minister and stop this move to privatize the CBC, or will we see the disappearance of another Crown corporation in order to keep the Minister of State for Privatization in business?

Mr. Beatty: The Liberals want to privatize John Turner.

Mrs. McDougall: That's not my department.

Mr. Gauthier: Wonderboy spoke again.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the Hon. Minister could answer the question without any help.

Mr. Beatty: They don't ask me any questions.

Mr. Axworthy: That's because you don't know any answers.

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of State (Privatization)): Mr. Speaker, I would not want to accuse my colleague across the way of being frivolous. However, I think that that which the Minister of Communications said was very clear. There is no privatization of the CBC. This was raised almost by way of a question with regard to how the CBC can best serve the people of Canada.

Mrs. Finestone: In other words what Mr. Mulroney says doesn't count.

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[Translation]

THE ADMINISTRATION

INQUIRY WHY CANADIANS WOULD HAVE CONFIDENCE IN FORMER MINISTER OF REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION

Mr. Robert Toupin (Terrebonne): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. I would like to get back to the issue of mismanagement at the Department of Regional Industrial Expansion.

Could the Prime Minister inform the House why Canadians should have confidence in the former Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion, now that he has taken over the Department of Supply and Services?

[English]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, there have been two reports laid on the Table which are open to study and examination. I hope the Hon. Member will read the reports. The Minister of Industry, Science and Technology has indicated the corrective steps that have been taken. I think he would make officials or himself available to give the Hon. Member a full elaboration on the report. Perhaps then the Hon. Member might be able to come back to the House and ask some intelligent questions.

Some Hon. Members: Shame, shame!

[Translation]

INQUIRY WHY CANADIANS WOULD HAVE CONFIDENCE IN NEW MINISTER OF SUPPLY AND SERVICES

Mr. Robert Toupin (Terrebonne): Mr. Speaker, there was mismanagement. Canadians want to know whether they can have confidence. Could the Deputy Prime Minister answer the question and inform the House why and how Canadians can be expected to have confidence in the new Minister of Supply and Services?

[English]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I remind the Hon. Member that the