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## HARPER COMMENTS ON THE CBC

JUDY MADDREN (CBC-R): What to do with the CBC appears to be causing some confusion in the Conservative Party. Stephen Harper has suggested government spending on CBC's English television channel and CBC Radio Two should be reviewed. But as Sandra Abma reports, the party's cultural critic says that's not on.

SANDRA ABMA (Reporter): At a press conference in Winnipeg on Monday, Conservative Party Leader Stephen Harper was asked by a reporter if he would scrap the public broadcaster:

STEPHEN HARPER (Conservative Party Leader): No I've suggested that government subsidies in support of CBC's services should be to those things that are not... do not have commercial alternatives.

ABMA: Pressed for specifics, Harper had a couple of targets:

HARPER: And I think when you look at things like main-English language television and probably to a lesser degree Radio Two, you could there at putting those on a commercial basis.

ABMA: Jim Abbott, the Conservative Culture critic seemed bewildered by his Leader's remarks:

JIM ABBOTT (Conservative Culture Critic): There is nothing afoot at this particular point in time to be taking a look at funding issues with respect to the CBC.

ABMA: Abbott says over a decade ago, when he first came to Parliament as a member of the Reform Party, he and his Party believed the CBC should be privatized. But that has changed, and the Conservative Party has an appreciation of how the CBC fits in the Canadian Broadcasting landscape. He says, he made that message clear in a memo to the Party leadership just yesterday.

Sandra Abma, CBC News, Ottawa.

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