

Oral Questions

Party. This Government has done more in two years than the Liberal Government did in two decades.

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ENERGY

JOB LOSSES IN ALBERTA

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister. Yesterday the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources described the situation—the tens of thousands of projected layoffs in Alberta—as being a catastrophe. Does he agree that the situation developing in that province is catastrophic? If so, what does the Government plan to do about it?

[Translation]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, we have acknowledged this situation as being a fact and in the past several months the Government, my predecessor and I have taken a number of measures. I will be in Calgary later this week to discuss further steps to be taken by the Canadian Government, the Province of Alberta and the industry, this time in the field of gas.

[English]

REQUEST FOR ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOVERNMENT MEASURES

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. We have made proposals in terms of a negotiated floor price to protect small operators or small companies in the Province of Alberta and in other western provinces. Since the Minister has agreed that the situation has gone on for many months, when does he plan to take some specific action and make some specific announcements?

[Translation]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): In recent months, Mr. Speaker, the Government has unveiled a series of supportive measures for the oil and gas industry, and we are monitoring the situation. The Government of Alberta has announced and will announce other measures. A federal-provincial conference on energy, the first since 1978, will be convened in January. This Government is concerned over the energy issue, along with all interest groups, the provinces and the private sector.

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HEALTH

SEX EDUCATION—PREVENTION OF AIDS

Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

According to Dr. Everett Koop, Head of US Health Services, sex education is the best way to fight AIDS, which is expected to become twelve times as prevalent over the next five years. Could the Minister inform the House whether his Government intends to set up a prevention program?

[English]

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I know what the Surgeon General said with regard to the program in the United States. We have already taken similar steps. If the Hon. Member looks at the five-year plan of the Government, she will find that it was a plan not only to increase funding for AIDS research, but for education and for a very clear message in terms of the educative need so that people will protect themselves from the spread of the disease.

[Translation]

REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont): Mr. Speaker, could the Minister give the House the assurance that new money will be earmarked for education programs and, more specifically, for sex education programs?

[English]

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is on that committee. The former Government brought in a small program. When AIDS first became known, there was a response at the time. Obviously the issue has grown bigger; there have been more cases. Thus we brought in \$39 million in a five-year program. It is new money, as the Government has indicated, for education and research. I hope the Hon. Member starts supporting it.

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ANNOUNCED CLOSURE OF ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Science and Technology. Both he and the Prime Minister have repeatedly said that it is the objective of the Government to double our efforts in scientific research and development. Given that commitment, why did we learn today that one of our world-class astronomical research observatories will be closed in the very near future?

Hon. Frank Oberle (Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, what the Prime Minister has indicated in his book, and what I have repeated many times is that we will spend as much as is necessary to position Canada and its industries in the new frontier effectively and in every possible way.

Mr. Orlikow: The Minister did not answer my question.