

S. O. 31

● (1110)

I know for a fact that a coalition of privately owned utility companies from across Canada sent this minister a copy of their document entitled: "Equitable Tax Treatment for Utilities in Canada". It represents a fair alternative that would increase the utility costs by less than 1 per cent for all Canadians instead of a 7.5 per cent increase for Albertans and Nova Scotians as proposed in the budget.

If the minister really is serious about fairness she would seriously consider their ideas before she cuts the private utilities income tax transfer. She would also advise the Minister of Finance to commit to doing this when he meets with Calgary's mayor today.

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CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS

Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the member for Ottawa—Vanier I have the honour of representing the University of Ottawa in this House. The students' federation of the university is about to hold a referendum on whether or not the students wish their campus to maintain its membership in the Canadian Federation of Students.

In its eagerness to have the university remain a member, the CFS may have given the students less than completely accurate information to encourage them to vote yes in the referendum. The federation has claimed that it, the CFS, has forced the Liberal government to stop the social security review.

The students of the University of Ottawa and students across the country should know that the social security review is moving forward. That means the government is still committed to finding better ways of working, learning and providing security for those in need of it.

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MOCHOVCE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops, NDP): Mr. Speaker, the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development is about to make a crucial decision about the financing of the Mochovce nuclear power plant in Slovakia.

Expert sources indicate this nuclear reactor is neither environmentally nor economically viable. Along with its technical flaws and overall concern for safety, the energy output of this nuclear reactor is not necessary to either the current or future needs of the people of Slovakia.

The European parliament, many countries, and all major environmental groups in Europe, the United States and Canada are calling for a delay or cancellation of this nuclear project. Furthermore, more than half the Slovakian population oppose the construction of nuclear power plants.

For Canada to vote in favour of this project would not only waste Canadian tax dollars in a very dangerous energy megaproject but would also subject the people of Slovakia to a huge debt load.

I urge the Government of Canada to vote against this proposal and not waste Canadian tax dollars.

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AGRICULTURE

Mr. Leon E. Benoit (Vegreville, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House I asked for clarification from the agriculture minister on exactly who the Crow payment is intended to benefit: landowners or actual farmers. I did not receive an answer to this very basic question. This is extremely frustrating since western Canadian farmers have a number of other questions they would like this government to answer as well.

For example, is the purpose of the \$1.6 billion payout to compensate for losses in land value, or is it meant to be a transition fund for farmers who have lost the Crow benefit but are still shipping grain? What accommodations have been made within the phase out plan for renters and lessors? How will the money be paid to farmers? When can farmers expect to receive the money? Specifically, what measures will be taken to allow the system to become more efficient and to give farmers more flexibility in marketing?

The government must not keep western Canadian farmers in the dark on these issues any longer. Farmers must be able to plan with certainty and recoup some of the losses which will result from these cuts.

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FISHERIES

Hon. Roger Simmons (Burin—St. George's, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the turbot is a miserable looking little fish. Who in his or her right mind would have ever thought it could have rallied an entire nation and why? Because the latest pillaging of fish stocks by Spanish trawlers has become the straw that has broken the camel's back.

Enough is enough, say Canadians. Canadians right across this country now realize that Newfoundland and Atlantic fishermen and plant workers are the unwitting victims here, not the lazy hangashores they have been portrayed as over the years.

The government of this country has finally done what any government worth its salt should have done years ago when I first raised the matter seven years ago in this House. For that, I thank the Prime Minister for keeping his election promise on this issue. I congratulate my friend and colleague, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, for his handling of the issue.