

Petitions

thrown out by myself and the Minister of Finance. I simply want to make the point—

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): Order!

Mr. Langdon: —that the change from March of this year to April of this year was a decrease of 54,000 jobs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair finds that this is a matter of debate.

These petitions are signed by several hundred people residing in British Columbia. I am pleased to table their petition in the House.

INCOME TAX EXEMPTION—TOOLS REQUIRED BY
MECHANICS

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure today to table a petition signed by some 1,800 mechanics from the Province of Alberta. They come from our cities and from our small towns such as Hussar, Bassano, Brooks, Vulcan and many other smaller communities.

The mechanics of Alberta would like the Government to pay attention to their request for relief under the Income Tax Act for the cost of their tools. It is a cost of gaining employment which is unique to the mechanics' profession. I hope the Government will give it every consideration.

I might point out that this is the second petition of this kind. Mr. Chris Grieve, a mechanic in the Province of Alberta, deserves a lot of credit for getting over 3,000 signatures from mechanics in our province to sign this petition.

VIA RAIL SERVICE

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the honour and duty to table two sets of petitions, both having been certified correct as to form and content by the Clerk of Petitions. The first is signed by residents of Thunder Bay, Ontario, Kakabeka Falls, Kaministiquia, Gilles, Murillo and rural areas around Thunder Bay. The petitioners point out that an effective and efficient national passenger rail system in Canada is a desirable form of transportation for many Canadians. They go on to note that this Government has refused to provide VIA the necessary support to fully realize its potential to develop the kind of national passenger network that Canadians want and deserve. They conclude by calling upon Parliament to live up to its original pledge to support VIA Rail, to abandon plans for further cuts to VIA's budget and provide the necessary resources to allow VIA to operate as a modern effective transportation company rather than a museum.

The second petition is signed by residents of Trail and Revelstoke, B.C. as well as other parts of British Columbia. The petitioners point out that the Conservative Party of Canada said in its report on passenger rail services that the federal Government has the responsibility to ensure that rail passenger services in Canada be retained, modernized and expanded as an important part

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Hon. Jean Charest (Minister of State (Youth) and Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the Government's response to two petitions.

(Editor's Note: See Today's Votes and Proceedings.)

[English]

SOUTH MORESBY PARK—HYDROCARBON EXPLORATION

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table several dozen petitions. The petitioners state that when the South Moresby Park Agreement was signed the federal Government committed itself to spending \$20 million or more to explore for minerals and hydrocarbons in this first national marine park. Allowing for mining or drilling in parklands sets a completely unacceptable precedent and renders the whole concept of park creation meaningless. Moreover, exploring for hydrocarbons in these waters is too dangerous. The West Coast of British Columbia is Canada's most earthquake prone region, the Queen Charlotte Island Basin has an even higher earthquake activity than the San Andreas fault. Hecate Strait has one of the roughest and most unpredictable seas in the world.

Therefore, the undersigned do not want anymore hydrocarbon exploration activities to take place in the coastal waters, be they at the initiative of the public or the private sector, nor do they want a Government to pay for any such activities from this day on, August 12, 1988.