the Ministers from Quebec to urge the Minister responsible to sign this agreement, which would be in the best interests of the Canadian economy. There are projects involved that would promote job creation, and apparently, this agreement could be signed without prejudice to federal and provincial jurisdictions.

Mr. Speaker, I shall if I may urge my Quebec colleagues once again to recognize the importance of this question and to realize that the 1,200 Quebec municipalities would applaud the signing of this agreement. I therefore trust that Cabinet, which is to examine this question, perhaps today or later this week, will give the affirmative response we have been waiting for in Quebec.

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[*English*]

PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS

BRITISH COLUMBIA BUDGET PROPOSALS

Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the B.C. Social Credit Government announced a vindictive Budget that slashes essential social services, ignores the more than 200,000 jobless British Columbians, and greatly increases income taxes. At the same time as the Government cuts health services and grants to post-secondary education, it is giving a tax bonanza to big business. Mr. Speaker, this is the "tough, mean and nasty" budgetary policy suggested by the federal wing of the B.C. Socreds, the federal Conservative Party.

The Tory Member for Etobicoke Centre (Mr. Wilson) said recently about these Reaganite economic policies that it is something they would be doing if they were in government, something they will do when they are in power again. The Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Mulroney) said that obviously Bennett is going the right way. B.C. Tory MPs have remained shamefully silent on the Socred attack on economic and human rights.

People of British Columbia, be warned. You have been given a taste of federal Conservative policies by the B.C. Social Credit Government. Never forget the words of the official Tory finance critic, the Hon. Member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie), who said that you have to be tough, mean and nasty, and do all kinds of unpleasant things, and that that is why he is not going to outline what their budget measures would be, now.

For the sake of our children, the poor, the elderly, the sick, the unemployed, and the powerless in our society—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member's time has expired. The Hon. Member for Prince George-Peace River (Mr. Oberle).

MINES AND MINING

ABSENCE OF ASSISTANCE MEASURES FROM BUDGET

Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River): Mr. Speaker, in the wake of last week's Budget the prime resource sectors of our economy are heaving a sigh of relief. They did not get any help, but at least there were no unpleasant surprises.

One group that is not happy is Canada's mining sector. Desperate for measures which will help it fight back against lagging markets and increased competition, the mining sector looked forward to the Budget with some hope. Unfortunately, the steps the Government should take to help our mining community are not sexy, like high-cost, high-profile projects in urban areas. They are, instead, adjustments to our tax system to encourage investment, to reduce non-profit taxes which are strangling the industry, and to put in place a northern benefits system and package which will help Canadians cope with the higher costs of working and living in our North.

None of these measures were included in the Budget. In fact, nothing that could be seen as helpful to this massive and vital industry, which operates at 50 per cent capacity, was included in the Budget. This begs serious and painful questions. Can it be that the Government has given up on mining and considers mining a sunset industry? Is it the newly appointed Minister's mandate to help the industry regain its strength, or to preside over its demise?

The mining industry is a vital part of the backbone of our economy. Every region of the country is affected by its present weakness. When the Liberals demonstrate their indifference to it, they are demonstrating their incompetence as economic managers.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*English*]

ENERGY

CANCELLATION OF JAPANESE PARTICIPATION IN BEAUFORT SEA EXPLORATION

Miss Pat Carney (Vancouver Centre): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources I should like to address my question to the Minister of Finance. The Japanese, who loaned Dome Canada and Dome Petroleum $400 million for oil and gas exploration in the Beaufort Sea, are cancelling further participation in the project, according to an announcement in the Japanese Diet.

The Canadian taxpayer has invested $486 million in Dome through PIP grants. In view of the Japanese withdrawal, what steps is the Minister taking to ensure that the Canadian taxpayers' investment in the Beaufort is secure and is not at risk?

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources should be in the