

ENERGY

BUDGETARY CUTS AFFECTING PHASE III OF NATURAL GAS PROJECT—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Jean-Guy Guilbault (Drummond): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy.

According to the press, the federal Government intends to make budgetary cuts affecting phase III of the natural gas project.

Could the Minister clarify her position on this subject, since the gas pipeline is of vital importance to our area, in terms of economic spinoffs and development?

[English]

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, in reply to the Hon. Member's question, I think I have adequately explained that that project has been deferred, not cancelled. We will be looking at resuming some of that work when the economic conditions permit.

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[Translation]

AIR TRANSPORT

REQUEST FOR DETAILS ABOUT CLOSURE OF AIR SAFETY OFFICE IN MONTREAL

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport, whom I want to congratulate on becoming a Member of Cabinet, a Cabinet that says it is willing to consult.

I would like to ask the Minister why no consultations were held with the authorities of the City of Montreal when the Government decided to close the air safety office in Montreal.

Second, could the Hon. Minister inform the House whether this decision was made by Cabinet, with the approval of the Prime Minister, or whether the decision was made unilaterally and personally by the Minister of Transport?

[English]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, may I first congratulate the Hon. Member on his re-election? It was a squeaker, but it is nice to have him back.

Mr. MacKay: Another week and he would have been gone.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mazankowski: Another week and he would have been gone, right.

In reply to the Hon. Member may I tell him that my colleague, the Minister of State for Transport, in fact had some discussions with the Board of Trade and others interested in this issue in the City of Montreal, before the decision was taken.

Oral Questions

In answer to the second part of the Hon. Member's question, of course the decision was made with the concurrence of Cabinet.

[Translation]

EFFECTS OF BUDGETARY CUTS ON MONTREAL

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the Minister of Transport. Since he has confirmed that the decision was made by Cabinet, is the Minister aware that his leader made a promise during the election campaign in Montreal, at Place Ville-Marie, that he would make Montreal a metropolis again? In light of this promise, is the Minister prepared to review this decision which is at direct odds with the Prime Minister's objective, and also the cutback announced with respect to VIA Rail, which will result in a significant loss of jobs since the VIA Rail maintenance centre in Montreal will be scrapped in favour of the centre in Toronto?

[English]

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I certainly would not want to base the commitments of the Prime Minister on the interpretation of the Hon. Member, because there could be some variance in that, I am sure.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: I would not rely on either one of them.

Mr. Mazankowski: This issue was thought through very clearly. It is very plain that the logical place for the Canadian Aviation Safety Board is Ottawa-Hull, or the National Capital Region, from the basis of working with other Departments, such as the NRC, the RCMP, National Health and Welfare, and other flight organizations. From the standpoint of efficiency, economy, and effectiveness, it was felt that it was in the best interests of all concerned to re-establish the Safety Board here in the National Capital Region.

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[Translation]

CULTURAL AFFAIRS

BUDGETARY CUT-BACKS—CONSEQUENCES FOR CULTURAL COMMUNITY

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview-Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Communications.

First I would like to congratulate the Minister on his appointment in a field that is of great significance to this country.

Mr. Speaker, during the election campaign, the Progressive Conservative Party promised the cultural community that if it