

S. O. 31

Mr. Althouse: They took heart. They thought that at last the government was withdrawing a bad bill and that they had succeeded in getting their message through to the government, as the senior citizens had done before them in stopping the deindexation of pensions many years before. I will continue my remarks after Question Period.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being eleven o'clock, we will proceed to statements by members with the hon. member for Elk Island.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[English]

MANUFACTURERS' SALES TAX

Mr. Brian O'Kurley (Elk Island): Mr. Speaker, some of the most important manufacturing industries in the province of Alberta are located in the riding of Elk Island. These industries provide tens of thousands of jobs in our riding.

• (1100)

The existing federal sales tax, the MST, is an unfair, unworkable tax on production. The MST is unfair because it results in more taxes on Canadian made goods than on goods from other countries. The MST is unworkable because it taxes some while allowing tax avoidance for others.

The Canadian government must take a leadership role in improving the tax system. Our government must prepare this country for the economic challenges of the future.

The MST is wrong for Elk Island. The MST is wrong for Canada. The MST must be replaced. Let us work together in this House to get rid of the MST. Let us work together to prepare our country for success in the competitive world of international trade. Let us work together to build a stronger economy for a better Canada.

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CAPE BRETON ECONOMY

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, the economy in industrial Cape Breton and indeed all of Cape Breton is at an all time low.

This is coupled with the fact that the Nova Scotia Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency recently released a demographic forecast for all of Nova Scotia to the year 2006, which states: "The population forecast for Cape Breton County, which includes the seven towns and the City of Sydney contained therein, forecasts an average population decline of 936 per year for each year from 1986 to the year 2006."

This news coupled with the tragic economic situation in Cape Breton calls upon the Government of Canada to provide the kind of economic leadership that this region of Canada needs.

I have asked the minister responsible for the Cape Breton Development Corporation to give us a clear and unequivocal commitment to maintain the operations at the Lingan mine in Cape Breton. I have asked this minister to give us a clear commitment with regard to the promotion and the expansion of the Donkin coal mine, on which the Government of Canada has spent close to \$80 million.

This is a time for the Government of Canada to intervene in the economy of Cape Breton in order to provide economic opportunities for those citizens.

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ACID RAIN

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, the all-party Standing Committee on the Environment will travel to Washington, D.C. next week to encourage our colleagues in the U.S. Congress to strengthen their clean air legislation and resolve to reduce acid rain from U.S. sources.

The proposed cuts to sulphur dioxides are just barely in the ball park to help Canada. The proposals on nitrogen oxides are not helpful; the caps on emissions need firming up; reductions of transboundary flows of toxics need targets and timetables.

Canada also has much to do. New dirty coal fired plants are proposed in western Canada. Further actions are required in central Canada. New Brunswick and Nova Scotia have yet to bring in much needed regulations. To the great embarrassment of Canada, New Brunswick Power has been pushing for two new Columbian coal fired thermal plants without scrubbers at Belledune. The emissions from such plants are unacceptable to Canada, and as though by political witchcraft these plants are as of yesterday proposed to be fired by low sulphur oil or natural gas.