

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[English]

MINES AND MINING

IMPACT OF MINE SHUTDOWNS ON SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

Mr. John A. MacDougall (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, it has been just over one year since I first informed the House that the Adams and Sherman mines in my riding had announced temporary three month lay-offs of 800 workers. When I inquired of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) whether he was going to offer various tax incentives to help the Canadian mining industry he said:

I have heard the representations of the Hon. Member. Obviously I will put them together with other representations I have received, and examine them seriously.

Two months ago the mines announced that again this year they will shut down for three months, putting the same 800 people out of work. The impact that this shutdown will have on the local economies of surrounding towns will be devastating.

I urge the Minister of Finance and the Minister of State for Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Chrétien) to implement long-term effective programs to help the communities which are plagued by shutdowns in the mining sector. I urge the Minister to put employment programs in place which will not only get regular miners back to work but will help students, who normally rely on the mines for summer jobs, to find alternate employment.

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[Translation]

SHIPBUILDING

TRUMP PROGRAM—POSSIBLE CAPITAL BENEFIT TO QUEBEC

Mr. Gaston Gourde (Lévis): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the Government that workers at Davie Shipbuilding are anxiously awaiting an agreement between the federal Government and their employer relating to the conversion of four destroyers for the Department of National Defence.

On June 29 last year, it was announced that the shipbuilding part of this \$650 million project would go to the shipyards in Lauzon, in the riding of Lévis, for whom this contract alone is worth nearly \$170 million. I trust that negotiations started between the parties will have positive results within the next few months, so that the level of employment at Davie can be brought to normal levels in the medium term.

We have been informed that the Trump Program team in Ottawa has already been in touch with Davie, and that negotiations may be finalized early this summer. I therefore urge the owner to propose a reasonable price and the Cabinet to take this opportunity to give the Quebec City region a major injection of capital by awarding this contract.

S.O. 21

[English]

BANKS AND BANKING

FLEXIBILITY IN PAYMENT OF MORTGAGES

Mr. Doug Lewis (Simcoe North): Mr. Speaker, during the high mortgage interest rate crisis which was created by the Liberal Government in 1980, Canadian home owners received precious little in the way of help from the Canadian banks. Banks and mortgage companies dumped thousands of Canadian homes on a depressed real estate market. During the Liberal recession we saw very little in the way of innovative thinking from the Canadian banks. As the interest rate pressure eased, Canadians found themselves stuck with mortgages at very high interest rates.

There is a need for flexibility that will help the Canadian home owner. The Bank of Montreal has been allowing extra payments up of to 10 per cent against the value of a loan once a year, without penalty. It has now moved to allow home owners with a mortgage to increase their monthly payments and thus reduce interest rates. I compliment the Bank of Montreal on its innovative thinking which will help Canadian home owners. I encourage the other banks to come up with similar plans.

To the rival banker who was quoted as saying he "couldn't get terribly excited" about the plan, I would suggest that this Parliament has not been terribly excited about the actions of the Canadian banks during the Liberal recession. We welcome this action.

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IMMIGRATION

SUGGESTED REPAYMENT OF HEAD TAX TO ELDERLY CHINESE IMMIGRANTS

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, Canada's Charter of Rights states that every individual has the right to equal protection under the law without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, or colour. This should protect ethnic minorities from future discrimination. However, it will not remove intolerable past injustices and acts of discrimination which were perpetuated by the Canadian Government, particularly against people of Asian origin.

Last summer I met an elderly Canadian who asked, in view of the new Charter, that the Government compensate for the \$500 head tax which he was forced to pay in 1919 to come to Canada because he was Chinese. I forwarded his request and receipt to the Prime Minister, who has not seen fit to reply.

Soon afterward a lonely, sick, old man aged 81 told me a similar story. At age 15 he paid \$500 to work in Canada so his family in China could survive. His wife was later refused admission under the Discriminatory Exclusion Act.

On the occasion of the Chinese New Year, Mr. Speaker, I ask the Canadian Government, as a symbolic gesture, to undo these past wrongs and compensate Chinese immigrants who