

Lac-Saint-Jean do not see you in the House. The people of Lac-Saint-Jean are not interested in seeing me hold forth in the House as he does. If I dared speak in this House as he has just done, the people of Lac-Saint-Jean and of all Canada would be embarrassed.

Mr. Rossi: Fine, hide behind the curtains!

Mr. Côté (Lac-Saint-Jean): Two weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, I had lunch with some people from the Canadian Forum—

Mr. Rossi: That is not at all relevant, Mr. Speaker. He wants to tell us about his lunch.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Bourassa (Mr. Rossi) rises on a point of order.

Mr. Rossi: I suggest that the Hon. Member for Lac-Saint-Jean (Mr. Côté) should focus his attention on the current issue and avoid making constant digressions.

Mr. Côté (Lac-Saint-Jean): As I indicated earlier in my comments, Mr. Speaker, I find it difficult to deal with the remarks made by the Hon. Member for Montreal-Sainte-Marie (Mr. Malépart) because he constantly moved from one point to the next. He never referred to the settlement . . . you know, the agreement. About the tax on gas, for instance, he failed to mention that they had defeated a Progressive Conservative government in 1980 by—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member, but the time allocated to questions and comments has now expired. Nevertheless, I am willing to grant 30 seconds to the Hon. Member for Montreal-Sainte-Marie (Mr. Malépart) to reply but very briefly.

Mr. Malépart: Mr. Speaker, I will be quite brief. One member said that my comments are inconsistent. I will point out to him that I was re-elected in a much more difficult period than when he was elected. I was re-elected to defend the interests of 80,000 senior citizens. If the Hon. Member for Lac-Saint-Jean (Mr. Côté) wants to ridicule them, that is his business. I am here to protect the citizens in need of public housing. If the Hon. Member for Saint-Jean does not give a damn, that is his problem, but I was re-elected to defend their interests.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The Hon. Member for Lac-Saint-Jean (Mr. Côté) on a point of order.

Mr. Côté (Lac-Saint-Jean): Mr. Speaker, I have never ridiculed the 85,000 persons mentioned by the Hon. Member.

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: We will resume debate with the Hon. Minister of State for Mines (Mr. Layton).

Supply

Hon. Bob Layton (Minister of State (Mines)): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on the motion under discussion this afternoon, and particularly to represent my dynamic and forthright colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Miss Carney), who is today in western Canada continuing her discussions with industry leaders and investors.

Major changes to Canadian energy policy have been announced by the Government in the past few weeks. First, the Atlantic Accord was reached between the Governments of Newfoundland and Canada just six weeks ago. Then the Western Accord was concluded by the Minister just last week with the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan. These accords mark a clean break with the energy policies of previous Governments. Such a change was clearly required. The previous Government's NEP was, first and foremost, unfair to the Canadian oil industry. It represented an unwanted intrusion into provincial jurisdiction. It embarrassed Canadians internationally through blatant policies of discrimination and exploitation. It cost many Canadians their jobs and resulted in forgone economic prosperity. The economy as a whole was smothered.

These policies of the past have been replaced and now all Canadians will benefit. Of course, energy policy changes must fit within the Government's broad over-all policy approach.

● (1740)

As noted by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) at the Regina Conference of First Ministers, this Government has two fundamental objectives: economic renewal and national reconciliation.

Further, as I have noted, previous energy policies and the policy development process itself conflicted with the foregoing objectives. They deprived the provinces of any strong say in energy management and crippled an industry that could have been a source of strength to the Canadian economy.

The new policies have already begun to work in turning this situation around. Key new initiatives flow from both the Western and Atlantic Accords. For example, I have learned that my colleague, Miss Cavey, at a meeting in Calgary yesterday, was approached by one of the drilling organizations and told that it has already added two new drilling rigs, even without knowing the details of the Western Accord.

The Atlantic Accord establishes a co-operative regime for offshore resource management that will achieve a number of objectives, including increased energy security and economic prosperity for all Canadians but especially for Newfoundlanders. It will also provide for revenue sharing on the same basis as if these resources were on land. It will further provide a stable and fair regime for Newfoundland, rigorous protection of the environment and fishing industries, and will also improve safety for offshore work, all the while ensuring that the Government of Canada has the ability to achieve the national objective of energy self-sufficiency.

I recently had the pleasure of visiting Newfoundland to discuss the mining issues with the Hon. Gerry Din, the Minister of Mines and Resources of Newfoundland. While there as