

S. O. 21

PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS

CRITICISM OF TAX MEASURES IN MANITOBA BUDGET

Mr. Felix Holtmann (Selkirk—Interlake): Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday evening Manitobans found out what electing an NDP Government means. That Government handed down the biggest tax grab in the history of Manitoba. This tax grab will take an additional \$700 per year from over 80 per cent of Manitobans. The sales tax increased to 7 per cent, hydro increased 4.7 per cent on top of a previously announced 5 per cent. Imagine this, a job tax of 2.25 per cent. Cigarettes, alcohol, diesel fuel, insulation, take-out foods—which the NDP criticized us for in this House—virtually everything consumed by the average Manitoban has been hit hard.

Even worse is the NDP do-nothing approach to agriculture. Last week the Premier of Manitoba gave hope to Manitoba farmers with his speech in Montreal. Two days later he fell flat in a stubble field. It is shameful that while the federal Government continues to pump over \$500 million in direct contributions to Manitoba farmers, the NDP can only spend a measly \$85 million. The NDP disappointed the farmers of Manitoba and of all of Canada, and always will.

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● (1410)

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

EFFECT OF PROPOSED POWER PURCHASE IN UNITED STATES

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, from the world of acid rain we learn that the Potomac Electric Power Company has signed a contract to purchase electricity for 18 years from the Ohio Edison Company. The contract is still subject to approval by the U.S. Energy Commission.

The Canadian Embassy joined the Natural Resources Defence Council in saying that the sale shows how loopholes in U.S. environmental law allow electrical utilities to avoid investing in pollution control measures.

“Our concern and the concern of the environmental groups is that it gives the appearance the utilities are trying to circumvent the intention of the Clean Air Act which was passed to ensure new plants would be built with the best available technology for reducing emissions”, says Jim Wright, top environmental official at the Embassy in Washington.

Evidently, utilities are able to get around the regulations by hanging on to dirty old plants that pre-date the new pollution control standards. I call upon the Government to protest officially this proposed power purchase, which will cause additional environmental damage to Canada.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

ACID RAIN—ANNOUNCEMENT OF UNITED STATES PROGRAM

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound—Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, it appears the mountains may finally be moving in the acid rain issue south of the border.

President Ronald Reagan announced this morning that he will implement a control technology commercial demonstration program by providing \$2.5 billion, to be matched by the private sector. This could be a long awaited breakthrough in acid rain abatement on this continent.

Following the recommendations in the Joint Report of the Special Envoys on Acid Rain, released in January of last year, the President will also provide for an advisory panel comprised of experts from both countries. He is also recommending a review of U.S. federal and state regulations, which could result in additional sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide reductions.

Both the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and the Minister of the Environment (Mr. McMillan) have been seeking action from the U.S. administration on this issue, and the President's promise today could be the first step toward environmental security.

Let us all hope that the President's announcement today is just the thin edge of the wedge in active acid rain abatement.

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FORESTRY

CRITICISM OF BRITISH COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT'S ACTIONS

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, last month, before he was forced to resign, the B.C. Minister of Forests decided to shelve a \$28.6 million silviculture program and said that the British Columbia Government could not afford an increase in silviculture spending this year.

The Minister for International Trade (Miss Carney) referred to British Columbia as a reforestation slum with its woefully inadequate reforestation policies. Only last week the B.C. Government said that it could not afford a \$21 million request package to stop the budworm infestation ravaging the forests of central B.C.

This unwillingness to act is a disgrace. This year the Province of British Columbia will receive \$360 million from the export lumber tax, yet its Government has stated that it does not plan to reinvest this money to maintain and develop the British Columbia forest resource.

A recent poll by Decima Research found that 75 per cent of British Columbians favour putting all or most of the money collected from the lumber tax back into forest related spending.

I urge the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), the Minister for International Trade, and the Minister of State for Forestry