

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, May 29, 1985

The House met at 2 p.m.

● (1405)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[Translation]

MINES

REQUEST FOR REAL POLICY CONCERNING ASBESTOS

Mr. Alain Tardif (Richmond-Wolfe): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Miss Carney) announced recently that the Sherbrooke-Asbestos gas pipeline project was shelved. This unilateral decision is an insult to the Quebec Government which was not party to this decision-making process. The decision will have a dramatic impact: first, although it is planning to invest \$1.2 billion, Domtar will not be supplied with natural gas and, second, J.M. Asbestos Company has just announced 225 lay-offs.

In either case, Mr. Speaker, the Government is not doing anything at all. It is not doing anything with respect to the gas pipeline which would make Domtar's project more viable and pave the way for real economic diversification in the two single-industry towns of my riding.

As to asbestos, the Government's performance is pitiful and will have a dramatic impact on the major city of my riding, Asbestos. The people of Asbestos quite properly expect the Government to implement a dynamic asbestos policy to boost sales and on-site processing.

Shameful though it may be, the Government processes only 5 per cent of the production and simply exports the other 95 per cent. Processing would be just the way to create jobs.

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[English]

ENERGY

GASOLINE PRICES—BUDGET IMPACT

Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, there is much in the Budget of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) which concerns Canadians. The betrayal of the Conservative promise of full indexation for the old age pension was the cruellest cut of all. However, I would like to talk about another broken promise.

On page 97 of the Conservative campaign handbook, the Conservatives promised:

The tax system must be adjusted to help lower the price of consumer oil and gas products.

Was that promise kept? No, it was not. Instead, ordinary Canadians will see yet another hike in the cost of gasoline, not to reduce the deficit as some may claim, but to give more to the oil companies of the land.

Canadians in rural and northern areas are doubly hit. First, they already have to pay higher prices. Second, they have longer distances to travel. That is not all. In addition, because the cost of gasoline is going up, it will mean that each and every product which is transported into rural and northern areas will go up as well.

It is upsetting to many Canadians that the Government does not keep its promises. But it is doubly upsetting to realize that it has absolutely no concern for those people who live in the hinterland of the country.

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[Translation]

THE BUDGET

IMPACT ON THE AGED

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal-Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, I should like to stir the conscience of Hon. Members by reminding them of what the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) expect them to do about the elderly.

The Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister have been urging us to tell the elderly that they ought to tighten their belts to reduce the deficit. When we talk about the elderly, we are referring to my father and mother, your father and mother who were brought up in difficult times. My parents were married during the Depression, they lived through hard times yet paid to send me to school because education was not free in those days, they made a lot of sacrifices to pay for medical care because there was no such thing as health insurance then. Today's generation of Wilsons and Mulroneys benefit from the self-sacrificing achievements of elderly Canadians who are once again expected to do more than their share so that the Wilson and Mulroney children will not have to pay the debt later on.

Mr. Speaker, I should think that all members of the House share my feelings: under no circumstances will I ever ask my parents for more sacrifices. I would rather sacrifice the Wilson