

TRADE

CANADA-UNITED STATES TRADE AGREEMENT—EFFECT ON ENERGY INDUSTRY

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I want to speak about the free trade deal in energy. About a year and a half ago, I stood in this House and predicted that we would have a continental energy policy in a short time. That is exactly what the Mulroney trade deal has done. Now, by law, we must share our energy resources with the Americans.

There are some irritants to access by Canadian resources to the American energy market but in spite of those irritants we always get access because they are going to need our oil, gas, and electricity in the energy shortages which are going to appear in the 1990s. We have given away our ace card, control over energy, which we could have used to diversify the western Canadian economy.

I cannot believe the hypocrisy of ex-Premier Lougheed and the other businessmen like him who would prefer that the American market economy govern our energy policy rather than the big bad easterners, meaning the Canadian national Government. We have a word for that. It is "traitors".

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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[Translation]

SENIOR CITIZENS

GOVERNMENT'S PERFORMANCE

Mr. Marcel R. Tremblay (Québec-Est): Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of representing a federal electoral district that has a high proportion of very active elderly people. Hundreds of projects and community activities are organized by senior citizens in my riding.

To support these activities, from September 1984 to 1987 the federal Government has invested \$128,402 in the riding of Québec Est through the New Horizons Program. Mr. Speaker, this kind of encouragement shows we are prepared to help the elderly improve the quality of their daily lives. Meeting regularly with various senior citizens' groups in my riding, I have found that funds are well spent and well managed and that the projects and activities are a success. This concern for helping the elderly demonstrates that the Mulroney Government is well aware of their circumstances and is trying very hard to improve them.

By appointing the Hon. George Hees as Minister of State (Senior Citizens) last summer and providing funding through programs such as New Horizons, the Progressive Conservative Government shows that senior citizens across Canada have a high priority with this government.

Oral Questions

[English]

FINANCE

ELIGIBILITY OF NORTHWESTERN SASKATCHEWAN AREAS FOR NORTHERN TAX STATUS

Mr. John Gormley (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform Members of the House of a decision made this week by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) which more clearly defines the areas eligible for northern and isolated tax status. After months of meetings, negotiations and presenting petitions and letters on behalf of my constituents on this issue, I am delighted that certain areas of northwestern Saskatchewan will now be eligible for northern tax status. These areas include Meadow Lake, the rural municipality of Meadow Lake, Makwa, Loon Lake, Dorintosh and Rapid View.

This tax status means that, effective the 1987 tax year, people living in those areas will be eligible to claim a special tax deduction of up to 20 per cent of net income to a maximum of \$5,400. It is encouraging to know that the Minister of Finance and his officials have recognized that additional costs do come with living and working in the North. I speak on behalf of all my constituents when I thank the Minister and all of the citizens of the communities involved for their diligence and persistence in this matter.

Merry Christmas, Mike!

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

HEALTH

TOXIC MUSSELS—TIME OF TESTING

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister I will direct my question to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Yesterday in the House the Prime Minister said that the Minister of National Health and Welfare has consistently given the House all the facts and his version of the facts has never been contradicted, either by him or a third party. The Prime Minister did not know what he was talking about. On Tuesday, December 8, the Minister said this in the House:

Dr. Todd received those samples from Prince Edward Island at 8.15 p.m., upon which testing began that evening, Saturday.

Will the Deputy Prime Minister explain why the Minister said that, when no laboratory tests were conducted in Ottawa on that weekend?

Yesterday, Dr. Les Elliott, the Director of Field Operations in the Minister's Department, was asked by a reporter:

You weren't in here, there weren't people in the office Saturday and Sunday testing in the lab?

Dr. Elliott replied: