

his White Paper entitled *Challenge and Commitment, A Defence Policy for Canada*.

The White Paper has been heralded by members of the Armed Forces and our allies for the Government's decision to modernize and purchase essential equipment for our land, sea, and air forces.

Canadians and our allies have faith and trust in a Conservative Government that cares about the defence of our great country and freedom throughout the world.

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ENERGY

END OF MORATORIUM ON OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION OFF QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS—POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Masse) and his British Columbia provincial counterpart announced the end of a 14-year moratorium on oil and gas exploration off the coast of the Queen Charlotte Islands in British Columbia.

That moratorium had been imposed because of the environmental and ecological threat which could be posed by such activity. The Minister is aware that those same considerations for that marine life still exist.

The Government is also aware that the Queen Charlotte Islands are the traditional homeland of the Haida people, who have expressed their concern over this development.

A recent full day's debate in the House of Commons resulted in the unanimous recognition of the need to protect the Queen Charlotte Islands.

I trust that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources will respect the will of Parliament as he goes forward with this policy. The people of British Columbia know that with good will on the part of all participants, we can develop our resources while protecting our environment, particularly one of the treasures in this country, the Queen Charlotte Islands. It is an area that is the habitat of one-third of the nesting birds on the West Coast, with limitless aquaculture and one of the great rain forests in the world. I want to draw this to the attention of the Minister of Energy.

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ENERGY

END OF MORATORIUM ON OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION OFF QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS—POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, during the past few years Canadians have demonstrated their

interest and support in preserving the natural environment of South Moresby and Lyell Islands off British Columbia's northern coast.

However, today Canadians learned that the federal Government, along with the Government of British Columbia, plans to support exploration and drilling for oil and natural gas in this area by lifting the moratorium that has barred offshore exploration north of Vancouver Island since the early 1970s.

This callous action will jeopardize the sensitive ecological balance of the area, provide a serious threat to the West Coast fishery, and place the visitor potential of this pristine environment at risk. It completely ignores the fact that this area, now open for oil and gas drilling, is under aboriginal claim.

The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Masse) has said that various jurisdictional problems have been resolved. However, what about the ecological, environmental and cultural issues that originally precipitated the implementation of the moratorium? These have not been resolved. Simply because the multinational oil companies have lobbied successfully is no reason to sell out this unique ecological area to the highest bidder.

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[Translation]

POVERTY

NECESSITY FOR GOVERNMENTS TO ACT

Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont): These past few days, Mr. Speaker, *The Ottawa Citizen* and Montreal's *Le Devoir* have published a series of articles on poverty.

Mr. Speaker, the statistics we see are alarming. Descriptions of the day-to-day lives of between 800 and 1,000 people in our national capital and the poverty which prevails in Eastern Montreal are the symptoms of our society's deep malaise. Such poverty can be seen throughout our country.

I believe that all Members of the House, men and women alike, can only deplore this very serious situation. The elderly had long since been considered as being the poorest members of our society, but things have changed indeed.

Poverty today, besides being more prevalent among women, is the lot of all kinds of people who are often very young, between 14 and 20, people suffering from psychiatric disorders, heads of single-parent families. All these people have precious little chance of ever improving their living conditions.

Many women who are alone and raising a family are caught in a vicious circle. If they manage to find work for which they draw less than the minimum wage, they are no longer entitled to assistance for medical expenses. They have to work an ungodly number of hours barely to make ends meet. Other groups suffering from poverty experience the same difficulties when they try to better themselves.