

delay, and that we were following developments very closely. In the last few weeks developments have been very encouraging in terms of commitments from firms and new participants in the project.

I would remind the hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party that not only President Carter but Congress unanimously indicated that the Alaska gas pipeline was of the highest priority to the United States. Therefore, there is no reason to doubt that the new Congress or that the new President would put in jeopardy this strong commitment. I can assure the hon. member that as soon as the new administration takes office in January, we will be in touch with it in order to ensure that the commitment will continue to be as firm as it ever was.

• (1425)

Mr. Broadbent: A supplementary question, Madam Speaker. First, the minister himself said last week that there has been, and I quote, "too much delay already"—referring to the present activity. Second, the minister knows that the pious wish expressed by the U.S. Congress was precisely that—a pious wish that contained no guarantees.

Finally, since president-elect Reagan is already on record as favouring a continental energy policy, which is a marked shift from the Carter administration, I should like to ask the minister why he is expressing no concern at all about Canadian interests in this vital matter.

Mr. Lalonde: On the contrary, Madam Speaker, this government and myself have the interests of Canada very much at heart in all these developments. I should like to remind the hon. member again that he has not reported accurately what I said. The best example is that he said I said this last week, when actually I said it two weeks ago in Vancouver. I could go on to the other aspects which are all on the record. There is a speech on the record and I would recommend that the hon. member refer to it.

As far as the supposed commitment of Governor Reagan to a continental energy policy, I have found in many discussions with United States elected officials that they have a very different concept of the phrase "continental energy" as they use it and as we perceive it. We have indicated repeatedly to them—

Some hon. Members: Order, order!

Mr. Lalonde: —that there is no question about our support for an integrated continental policy.

An hon. Member: Speech.

Mr. Lalonde: There is no question about that at all; this government does not favour that.

Mr. Broadbent: A further supplementary question, Madam Speaker. We are witnessing the same, typical lack of concern from the government which will last until we are faced with a disaster coming from the United States.

An hon. Member: Get up in caucus, Ed.

Oral Questions

An hon. Member: Question.

Mr. Broadbent: Considering that the president-elect has expressed different views on controlling the environment, on the Canada-U.S. automotive agreement and on fisheries treaties, to name just a few—

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. Broadbent: —from the President who now holds office, is the minister telling the House that his government is not concerned at all that there is going to be any departure in American policy as it affects Canadians?

Mr. Paproski: Say yes, Marc.

Mr. Lalonde: Madam Speaker, I do not know how much I can repeat the same answer for the hon. member.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Don't bother. It is too long.

Mr. Lalonde: This government is indeed very concerned about ensuring that Canadian interests come first and are protected under this government. This is what we have been elected to do and this is what we will continue to do. At the same time we have to wait for the president-elect to come into office. Contrary again to what the hon. member said, he is not in office yet, he will be in office only in January.

Some hon. Members: Order, order!

Mr. Lalonde: We will certainly make sure that the views of the Canadian government are well known to the new government of the United States when it comes into office.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN GALLERY OF SPEAKER OF LEGISLATURE OF MANITOBA

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I should like to draw the attention of the House to the presence in our gallery of a colleague, the hon. Harry Graham, Speaker of the legislature of Manitoba.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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SOCIAL SECURITY

EFFECT OF BUDGET MEASURES ON POOR AND ELDERLY

Hon. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Madam Speaker, yesterday the Minister of National Health and Welfare accused me of misleading the House and presenting wrong facts in terms of the comments made by the Canadian Council on Social Development. Yet according to Statistics Canada, those who were forced to live on old age pensions and the guaranteed income supplement have, in fact, fallen behind.