

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, June 12, 1985

The House met at 2 p.m.

● (1405)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[English]

AGRICULTURE

EFFECT OF BUDGET

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, the Mulroney-Wilson Budget is clear proof that the Government has abandoned Canada's farmers. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture and the National Farmers Union, which collectively represent thousands and thousands of Canadian farmers, have clearly expressed their frustration and anger with the Budget.

Across the country there is a growing sense of despair that the Government doesn't really care about farmers, pensioners, the unemployed, our youth, and middle-income families who are struggling to raise their children. As further evidence of the concern, last Thursday 150 of the executive officers of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture held an emergency meeting in Toronto to review the Budget and its negative impacts. They passed a resolution condemning the Budget for betraying the farmers of Canada, and are now preparing an action plan to demonstrate their frustration and anger.

The Mulroney-Wilson Budget does nothing to deal with the farm financial crisis. The 39,000 farmers who, the FCC says, are under severe financial stress, can only look forward now to foreclosure. What happened to the agri-bond program promised by the Conservatives in last year's election campaign? What happened to the promise to lower farm loan interest rates? What about Section 31 of the Income Tax Act?

When you look for winners and losers in the Budget, Mr. Speaker, it seems everyone loses except the multinational oil companies and the rich.

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PENSIONS

OBJECTIONS TO PARTIAL DEINDEXATION

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, yesterday representatives of 11 organizations with a membership of one million pensioners met in Toronto to oppose strongly partial deindexation of old age pensions. They are

mad and militant, and demand that the Government reindex pensions.

They protest that there was no formal consultation with senior citizen organizations concerning fundamental changes in old age security; that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) broke his promise to index old age pensions to the actual cost of living; that seniors, many of whom live in poverty, are being forced to sacrifice to reduce the deficit; that deindexation will mean a loss of over \$1,600 per person over the next five years; that the ranks of the poor will swell due to the measures in the proposed Budget; and that the wealthiest Canadians will have added windfalls from the elimination of the capital gains tax, while Canada's elderly are asked to contribute \$400 million.

Pensioners feel this is a cruel move against Canada's elderly who have contributed so much to Canada. Pensioners demand reindexation.

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SHIPBUILDING

INDUSTRY AFFECTED BY ORDERS PLACED ABROAD

Mr. Gus Mitges (Grey-Simcoe): Mr. Speaker, while the domestic shipbuilding industry is reeling through its worst crisis in 50 years, foreign built ships for the domestic market continue to enter Canada in record numbers. In the last two years alone, this has amounted to over 434,000 gross tonnes. Every time a vessel is built abroad for the domestic market, shipbuilding and allied industrial jobs in Canada are lost to foreign competition.

It is ludicrous to see as well, Mr. Speaker, that export orders placed in Canada by offshore buyers are eligible for subsidized financing through the Canada Export Development Corporation, yet domestic ship owners, Canadian ship owners, do not qualify for these reduced rates. No other shipbuilding nation in the world subsidizes export orders and not domestic orders. Common sense would indicate that if Canadian owners were to be eligible for concessionary financing at EDC rates, increased orders would accrue to Canada, creating much needed employment for domestic shipbuilding and allied industries.

There are some 40 constituencies across Canada which have shipbuilding and ship repairing facilities, and allied industries, in their areas. These ridings, and the industry, have had their hopes and expectations dashed and devastated. We had hoped that at long last something would be done to ease the dire situation in the shipbuilding industry by the introduction of positive initiatives. This has not materialized, leaving our shipbuilding industry crippled, and deeper and deeper in the mire of uncertainty.