

*Oral Questions***MINING**

Mr. Cid Samson (Timmins—Chapleau): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the minister responsible for energy, mines and resources of the crisis Canada might face in the mining sector. I know that this government is allergic to the word "crisis" but nevertheless it is time we faced reality.

Over the last two weeks we have heard of the closure of three mines; one in Kimberley, B.C. and two in northern Ontario, my very own region.

We have also heard of the plight of fishermen and workers in the fish processing plants on both coasts. Canada still relies heavily on its resources to maintain its economy. There are about 4,000 single-industry towns in Canada and the industry is usually resource-based, be it forestry, mining or even fishing. These towns produce \$55 billion in annual resource exports. I urge the minister to examine the situation of the mining industry in Canada before it is too late. Long term plans and rational thinking are needed.

As a former health minister, surely my colleague understands that you do not put a band-aid on a wound that requires stitches.

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IRAN

Mr. David Walker (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, not much has changed in Iran since the departure of Khomeini and the installation of the new president. Human rights abuses continue. In fact, there has been a dramatic increase in the abuse of human rights and in prosecutions for ordinary offences.

Today marks the end of a visit to Iran by the United Nations special *rapporteur*, Reynaldo Pohl. Mr. Pohl will be presenting a report on human rights abuses in Iran to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights meeting this week in Geneva.

Serious violations have been reported by Canadian friends and families of prisoners in Iran, as well as by over 1,000 Iranian exiles world-wide, who today terminate their hunger strike held in solidarity with the prisoners. Seventy-five of these protesters were Canadian.

We hope that the Canadian government will carefully consider Mr. Pohl's report in Geneva and take leader-

ship for the first time in denouncing these persistent abuses which are intolerable and unacceptable to all Canadians.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[*Translation*]

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

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

Canadian consumers will have to dig more than \$23 billion out of their pockets just to pay the goods and services tax. For the past two years the Minister of Finance has been trying to convince us that consumers will recoup most of that money as a result of the repeal of the manufacturer's sales tax.

However yesterday in the House he finally admitted that he cannot give any guarantee that companies will pass on to the consumer the savings they make as a result of the elimination of the manufacturer's sales tax.

Can the Deputy Prime Minister tell us why the government failed to get from Canadian business spokesmen the assurance that such savings will be passed on to the consumer? If the Minister of Finance can promise that Canadians will pay the new tax, why can he not promise that in turn they will benefit from the repeal of the old tax?

Hon. Gilles Loiselle (Minister of State (Finance)): What my colleague the Minister of Finance said, Mr. Speaker, is that he was convinced the tax would be levied but that he could not give absolute guarantees. I would suggest nobody can offer this kind of guarantee in a market economy and I am sure the Leader of the Opposition agrees with that. But the fact is that competition rules do apply in a market economy. Were only one company involved it could fearlessly pocket the 13.5 per cent and add the 7 per cent, but that is impossible because it is already in no position to beat its competitors because of this regressive tax we have, but it is not the only one— We already have good indications. We will do our best to keep consumers well informed and tell them what kind of impact to expect in every sector. In light of what happened wherever this has been done, I am sure