

*Oral Questions***REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

MEASURES TO ASSIST WESTERN ECONOMY

Mr. Bill Gottselig (Moose Jaw): Mr. Speaker, in July of 1984 our Party held a major policy conference in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. A review of our record shows that over two-thirds of the Prince Albert declarations have already been implemented. In addition, we have undertaken many other initiatives which support the west.

The Budget presented by the Finance Minister on February 18 reinforces that support. The Government has taken action to restore fiscal responsibility by reducing the deficit and slowing the growth of the national debt, mainly by expenditure restraint and good management. After 15 years of rising deficit we have brought about the first consecutive three-year decline in deficit in three decades.

Effective February 19 the excise tax on motor fuels will be increased by 1 cent per litre but will not apply to farmers. The tax applies to gasoline, diesel fuel, aviation gas and jet fuel, but the existing fuel rebate for off-highway fuel use by farmers will be increased by 1 cent per litre effective February 29, 1987.

Comments made by the President of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture as well as the President of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business indicate that this Budget was good news for all Canadians.

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CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST DEATH PENALTY

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston): Mr. Speaker, Amnesty International recently initiated a world-wide campaign against capital punishment. To begin this campaign Amnesty produced a major report on capital punishment in the United States. The report says the death penalty in the United States has become "a horrifying lottery" in which politics, money, and race could decide whether a defendant is executed.

The Amnesty report also deplored the fact that several people executed or awaiting execution in the United States were mentally ill or were under the age of 18. Executing minors is a violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the American Convention on Human Rights, both signed by the United States in 1977. Since 1980, of eight confirmed juvenile executions, the United States is responsible for three, Pakistan two, and Bangladesh, Barbados, and Rwanda were responsible for one each. There have been unconfirmed reports of teenagers being executed in Iran.

● (1120)

Race also plays an important role in determining who gets executed in the United States. Nearly 90 per cent of the

prisoners executed between 1977 and 1986 were blacks convicted of killing whites.

With a debate on capital punishment soon to take place in the House, I would urge every Member to take the opportunity to read the Amnesty report.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE BUDGET

CHILD CARE FUNDING INQUIRY

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, four million Canadians are living below the poverty line. Those Canadians and millions of other middle-income Canadians in the country are waiting for the Prime Minister to fulfil his commitment to child care funding. Quality child care should not be the privilege of a few but should be available to all who need it. Why was there not a single new dollar for child care funding in his Budget?

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition refers to those who are living below the poverty line. He knows full well that 263,000 fewer families are living below the poverty line as a result of action taken by this Government and the changes in those statistics that were announced at the end of last year.

With respect to child care, the Leader of the Opposition knows that we are now proceeding with consultations with the provinces which have a very major responsibility in the provision of this particular service. He also knows that a parliamentary committee will complete its work shortly and will be making recommendations. I am sure he would not want us to prejudge the results of both areas of consultation because he has expressed his own concern many times that the Government should continue the very good work it has been doing in consulting with interested parties throughout the country.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): Canadians feel that no further consultation is needed on this subject. This issue of child care has been consulted to death and Canadians want the Prime Minister to fulfil that commitment.

REASON FOR BUDGET PROVISIONS

Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Minister knows that there is a chorus of protest about his Budget coming in a non-partisan sense from all regions of the country. His Budget has been unanimously condemned in the regions of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mrs. Maily: That is not true.