

tally responsible mining industry that contributes significantly to Canada's economic growth and job creation. We are committed to ensuring in conjunction with provincial governments and the Canadian mining industry that there is a positive environment for investment in mineral exploration in Canada".

A month earlier in Miami, Florida at the investing in the Americas conference, the Minister of Natural Resources stated in her speech to the conference: "The Government of Canada recognizes the importance of the mining industry, its contribution to economic growth and jobs, and the challenges it faces".

During the last Canadian federal election the Liberal Party of Canada was the only political party to release a detailed policy outlining its commitment to the mining industry. This commitment has not wavered. We are proud of our mining industry and we believe its present and future prospects are excellent.

[Translation]

From the statements made by the Minister of Natural Resources, one can only conclude that the federal government is acting in good faith in this matter and, particularly, that it is prepared to help the mining industry, in co-operation with all the other stakeholders.

It even seems fairly clear that our government is already responding to the request made in today's motion, with the intention of keeping government initiatives in the mining industry in line with the present fiscal situation.

This approach was clearly expressed in the response the government gave to the fifth report of the Standing Committee on Natural Resources entitled "Lifting Canadian Mining off the Rocks", which was tabled in the House by the hon. Anne McLellan, Minister of Natural Resources, on May 8, and I quote: "While mining remains a priority of this government, budgetary conditions also require that new ways be sought to deliver quality programs and services at a lower cost. To this end, the federal approach will be to exercise a role that complements that of the provinces and provides a national co-ordination capacity, where required, so that government policies and strategies have the most favourable impact on mining in Canada".

• (1805)

Heads of the mining industry in Canada are quite aware that the federal government cannot do it all on its own and offer a miracle cure for the ills of the mining industry. However, they can count on the federal government's co-operation and total support.

Already in 1994, in its action plan entitled "Building a More Innovative Economy", the federal government had announced its intention to implement a number of measures concerning the

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regulations governing the climate for investors. Improvements are being considered in the following areas: decisions regarding land use; definition of garbage and recycling; regulatory systems north of the 60th parallel; better evaluation of environmental and economic factors in the review of the impact of new regulations—

**The Deputy Speaker:** Unfortunately, the member's time has now expired.

[English]

**Mr. Darrel Stinson (Okanagan—Shuswap, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, as a former prospector and mining consultant I am especially pleased at this opportunity to comment on Motion No. 292.

Hon. members should be concerned that after adjusting for inflation, domestic mining exploration expenditures for 1992 valued at \$385 million were at the lowest levels since 1967. Despite increases in the past two years, they remain substantially below levels of the \$800 million yearly it will take to maintain required reserves.

It is painfully obvious that mineral exploration and therefore the Canadian mining industry is in serious trouble. The question of course is what do we do to correct this sorry fact.

I want to ask my hon. colleagues what they think makes prospectors like myself tramp around in the bush for months on end looking for solid indications that a chunk of northern Ontario muskeg and rock or a Windy Craggy on the mountain-side in British Columbia has enough concentration of minerals that it could be developed into an economically viable mine.

Men like me go prospecting in the Canadian bush because we love it. Bad weather and tough living conditions do not stop us. Worried mothers or lonesome housewives do not stop us. Not even the low prices of the minerals we are seeking can stop us, because we know the world needs those minerals and it will only be a matter of time before prices rebound to profitable levels.

Only one thing has stopped me and other prospectors in Canada, the irrational, short sighted, muddle headed, counter-productive, feeble minded policies of the federal Government of Canada: outrageous taxes, conflicting rules, red tape so endless that it routinely takes three years to get environmental approval for a new mine in Canada, compared to six months in countries like Chile and elsewhere else in the world.

Let me spell out some details regarding what I have labelled as outrageous taxes. I want to be perfectly clear that I believe that everybody who is making more than they need to live decently should pay taxes. That includes profitable mining companies. However, Canadian businesses and industry must face a host of taxes that are not based on profit.