

GASOLINE ADDITIVES

Mr. Len Taylor (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, the federal government's announced intention to remove the excise tax on the ethanol portion of blended fuels is an important step in the development of this new industry, but additional action needs to be taken.

I recently toured the Poundmaker ethanol plant and feedlot operating at Lanagan, Saskatchewan, and I must say that I am impressed with the development of that industry in Canada. We have the ability to reduce our dependence on imported light crude, restore confidence in sustainable energy and agricultural economies and improve environmental quality.

Ethanol plants can be developed in various prairie communities such as Big River, Saskatchewan, in my constituency, but the industry needs a greater federal commitment, a commitment that includes greater promotion of ethanol blended fuels, a legislated mandatory 10 per cent blend for all automotive fuels and new start-up incentives for community development of grain fed production plants like the one in Lanagan.

The economy and the environment will benefit from ethanol-related development and I urge the government to continue what it has started, and to do so quickly.

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U.S. UNEMPLOYMENT

Hon. Alan Redway (Don Valley East): Mr. Speaker, have you watched American television news lately?

I did last week, and what did I see? I saw story after story about unemployment, permanent lay-offs, plant closings and manufacturing jobs disappearing forever. No, they were not Canadian jobs. They were American jobs.

In fact, between June of last year and this past January, there were some 350,000 industrial, retail and service jobs lost in the United States. General Motors is laying off 74,000 American employees and closing 12 U.S. auto plants. IBM is reducing its American staff by 40,000 and 22,000 American jobs have disappeared at Pan-Am.

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Could this be the result of free trade with Canada, the GST or cross-border shopping? What do you think?

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WOMEN'S EQUITY

Mrs. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal): Mr. Speaker, if women really counted for this government and if public policy promoted fairness and equity, our sons and daughters would be given equal opportunities.

Women would earn the same as men for doing the same type of job instead of the current 67.6 per cent, and the government would not refuse to meet its pay equity balance.

The face of poverty would not be female with many elderly women on tea and toast and mother-led families the poorest, occupying over half of the social housing in Canada.

Public policy is about choices. This government says it is cutting taxes, creating jobs and encouraging housing, yet since 1990, it axed co-op and cut social housing by 50 per cent, leaving 1 million in desperate need. It decreased by 1 per cent the personal income surtax, saving just 2 loonies per year for a one-earner, two-parent, two-children family making \$15,000 while a single taxpayer with the same income saves \$7. Big deal.

It has deep-sixed its child care program.

I find it hard to understand the choices this government makes, increasing interest rates by close to 1 per cent which ups mortgage costs and takes away up to \$1.8 billion to service the debt. Instead, it could have reinstated social housing and introduced a national child care program, that basic building block for women's equity.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member's time has expired.

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HALTON—PEEL SURVEY

Mr. Garth Turner (Halton—Peel): Mr. Speaker, my constituents have been offering me some pretty good advice lately.

Jerry Horak of Burlington writes: "I would like to see changes to the Income Tax Act, to allow equal profit-sharing for spouses, even though only one is receiving income and the other is raising a family".