

The Government should accept that improvement is always possible and consider implementing some of the recommendations it has received from those directly involved in delivering programs under the Canadian Jobs Strategy.

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TOURISM

CAPE BRETON ATTRACTIONS PROGRAM

Mr. Lawrence I. O'Neil (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Mr. Speaker, economic renewal in Cape Breton and eastern Nova Scotia remains my top priority. I have worked with members of the Cabinet and my constituents to put in place an economic strategy which requires the enhancement of our indigenous resources and the attraction of investment in the manufacturing sector.

Cape Breton is world famous as one of Canada's most beautiful areas. It is also the home of Canada's richest cultural milieu, boasting a wealthy Acadian, Scottish, and native heritage. Such cultural and physical beauty represent an opportunity for tourism development.

Last week a \$14 million amendment to the Canada-Nova Scotia Tourism Agreement was signed. This agreement was signed at Cheticamp, a picturesque Acadian community in my riding. The amendment introduces the Cape Breton Attractions Program, a program to identify and develop major top quality tourism attractions on the island.

This program underscores the commitment of two Governments to developing a strong Cape Breton economy, and recognizes the significant role tourism must play in the process.

I congratulate the Minister of State for Small Businesses and Tourism (Mr. Valcourt) and the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion (Mr. Côté) for their continuing commitment to enhancing the economic opportunities of the people of Cape Breton and eastern Nova Scotia.

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AGRICULTURE

FARM DEBT—DANGER TO YOUNG FARMERS

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, debt servicing is the number one input cost for agricultural producers in Canada today. This debt crisis, tied to the desperately low commodity prices farmers are receiving for their crops, will result in the bankruptcy of thousands of our younger, more progressive farm families. These farmers are being driven off their land, not because they do not know how to farm, but because they expanded their operations or entered farming at what now turns out to be the wrong time.

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Recent government farm income assistance programs have been welcomed by farmers and have helped somewhat. Unfortunately, however, the Government has not been doing much to address the very basic problem of farm debt.

New Democrats call upon the federal Government to take up its responsibilities to find a solution to the problems of farm debt and inter-generational farm transfers. Swift action is necessary to save as many of these farmers as possible.

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[Translation]

MEN

DISCRIMINATION IN GRANTING LEAVE FOR BIRTH OF CHILDREN

Mrs. Lucie Pépin (Outremont): Mr. Speaker, some time ago, an employee with the Customs and Excise Branch of the Department of National Revenue was denied a request for paid leave upon the birth of his child. He had asked for 17 weeks' leave with pay in July, 1986, but his request was denied, and he was allowed only the usual one day's leave with pay granted fathers at the birth of a child. The employee filed a complaint with the Public Service Staff Relations Board and the Human Rights Commission.

Mr. Speaker, by denying a father parental leave, this Government seems to be suggesting that only the mother should take care of children at birth. Mr. Douglas and his wife are both parents, but according to the Government, the mother bears full responsibility for her children. This policy discriminates against both men and women, because it suggests only the woman should leave her job to take care of the child at the time of birth. Since this Government has repeated many times that it believes in equality between men and women, I think this is an opportunity for the Government to act accordingly.

I would therefore ask the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. de Cotret) to evaluate the general policy of parental leave and I would also ask the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. MacKay) to review this case and to let the father take the parental leave to which he is entitled.

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[English]

CITIZENSHIP

CANADIAN CITIZENSHIP ACT—FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF ENACTMENT

Mr. Ted Schellenberg (Nanaimo—Alberni): Mr. Speaker, 1987 marks the fortieth anniversary of Canadian citizenship, and the week of April 12 to April 18 has been declared the first ever National Citizenship Week by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney).