

S.O. 21

In my riding of Lévis for instance, a private company, Versatile Davie, its unionized workers, the Chamber of Commerce, the economic development councils and businessmen have been openly co-operating with their Member and the Government.

Our Government paid close attention to the wishes of people in the constituency of Lévis, and today the Lauzon Versatile Davie shipyards workers know that they need not worry about unemployment for several years.

As a result of this co-operation, Mr. Speaker, the various economic interests in this case will take part in a radio program aired between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. tomorrow over our regional station CFLS.

We are successful, Mr. Speaker, thanks to the co-operation of other Canadians.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

BENEFITS REDUCTION—CONSEQUENCES FOR EARLY RETIREES

Mr. Jean-Claude Malépart (Montreal—Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, the Department of Employment and Immigration has released statistics which prove that once again older Canadians have been had by the Conservative Government as a result of unemployment insurance cut-backs: 34,000 pre-retirees have been had, including 13,000 in Quebec, 8,000 in Ontario, 6,648 in western Canada, and 3,087 in the Maritime provinces.

Those people had been assured by their employers and Department officials that they would be eligible for early retirement to enable younger workers to keep their jobs, but on January 5 the Government arbitrarily slashed their income.

Mr. Speaker, a national organization is being set up to urge all those people to launch an appeal, and I do hope we will have the support of all Hon. Members to help those retired Canadians.

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● (1410)

[English]

FARM CREDIT CORPORATION

COMMODITY BASED LOAN PROGRAM

Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current—Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, the Commodity Based Loan Program represents an innovative approach to farm financing for those existing FCC clients who find themselves in financial stress.

The CBL permits refinancing at 6 per cent interest, while principal and annual payments will fluctuate according to the

percentage increase or decrease in the selling price of the borrower's main commodity.

This is not an interest rate subsidy plan. The purpose is to reduce the number of farm failures among FCC clients by reducing payments, and thus easing demands on cash flow in times of falling commodity prices. Should prices rise greatly, which we all hope, there is a cap. A borrower cannot pay more than the amount called for in the CBL mortgage.

The CBL program will be monitored over the initial two years and a decision will then be made on whether the program has merit and can be expanded to other potential borrowers.

This is a bold initiative, one worthy of consideration. I commend the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise) for this new and imaginative measure.

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OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACES

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, Members of Parliament may have noticed the unhappy story of the de Havilland employee who was forced to work in a smoke-polluted office or quit her job.

The fact that this case falls under provincial jurisdiction and proves the inadequacy of provincial occupational health and safety legislation should give us no cause for complacency.

Federal legislation is no better, as other cases of employees wishing to work and breathe safely have shown. Treasury Board still fights employees and their unions who seek a smoke-free workplace.

Returns from a survey in my riding show 90 per cent support for legislation to ensure a smoke-free working environment, and support goes up to 93 per cent, 94 per cent, and 95 per cent respectively for smoke-free buses, planes, and trains.

With 35,000 Canadians dying every year from tobacco related diseases, 5,000 of them from secondary smoke, largely in the workplace, surely it is time for the Government to bring in effective legislation.

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THE ECONOMY

MEASURES TO ASSIST SASKATCHEWAN

Mr. John Gormley (The Battlefords—Meadow Lake): Mr. Speaker, some recent examples illustrate that Saskatchewan people are being heard in Ottawa.

Despite quite a bleak outlook for Canada's grain exports, the Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board (Mr.