

involved in tourism benefit from the results of its research by recommending initiatives to be taken in the area of tourist infrastructure and the development of their tourist strategy. The creation of a tourist research and development institute would not have to compete with government and private agents already working in this area. It would be an additional tool to promote tourism in Canada.

We also consider, Mr. Speaker, that the work already being done by the various levels of government must continue. We recognize that the federal government has a major role to play in the promotion of tourism in Canada. It should be involved in the establishment of tourism development policies, in publicity and also in the area of tax incentives provided to private business in the tourism sector. We urge the government to inform us as soon as possible of its response to the Powell report recommendations concerning taxation in the tourist sector.

We must also reconsider the approach and the objectives of the federal government when negotiating federal-provincial agreements concerning the tourist industry, to avoid certain waste of public money, and, to be very clear, to avoid repeating the exercise experienced in Quebec where we have spent over \$75 million sprinkling grants all across the province instead of developing one, two or three regions, instead of concentrating our efforts in these regions to attract specific customers.

We must also—and a Progressive Conservative government, I hope, should convince banks—facilitate the access of the private sector to risk capital, because the tourist industry needs large investments which are practically unobtainable because of the unreliability of this supply in public funds.

Also, Mr. Speaker, we will have to review the functions of national parks within a global tourist strategy in Canada. Allow me now to sum up our position. As I have said, our tourist industry is in bad shape and we will have to find a remedy as soon as possible. We believe that the Canadian tourist industry must be included in a large industrial strategy so that it could enjoy the same advantages that other industries already have.

We think that the development of a national tourist strategy must be made in direct consultation with all levels of government and private enterprises operating in that field. In this regard, we hope that the next federal-provincial conference of tourism ministers which will take place later this month will result in better planning and co-ordination of policies and investment.

We also believe that the creation of a tourism research and development institute is a very important move for the development of tourism in Canada. Mr. Speaker, tourism and its development are important resources for all Canadians. The time has come now to develop those resources not only for us but specially for future generations.

The Address—Mr. Gass

[English]

Mr. Mel Gass (Malpeque): I wish to begin by adding my sincere congratulations to the many already expressed to you, Mr. Speaker and to the Deputy Speaker on your reappointments. May you continue to preside over the affairs of the House in the same efficient and non-partisan manner, and with the same degree of fairness you demonstrated in the previous Parliament.

Before going any further I would like to comment on the speech made by the hon. member on the other side. I am glad to know the party opposite is finally showing interest in tourism, which is something it neglected to do over the last 11 years. We support most of what the hon. gentleman has just said.

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As well, I congratulate the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne, the hon. member for Erie (Mr. Fretz) and the hon. member for Cardigan (Mr. MacDonald). I should especially like to express my delight with the speech given by my friend and fellow islander, the hon. member for Cardigan, as his rural constituency is not unlike the one which I have been chosen to represent. I am indeed honoured to be here in the House of Commons delivering my maiden speech. I hope I can serve the constituents of Malpeque as well as they were served for 25 years by my PC predecessor and now premier of Prince Edward Island, the Hon. Angus MacLean.

An hon. Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gass: May I also express my gratitude to the good people of Malpeque for placing me here and assure my constituents that it is my intention to serve them to the best of my ability, whether I am here in Ottawa or at home in my riding.

It could be said that the constituency of Malpeque which I represent is the incarnation of what everyone who is not an islander believes Prince Edward Island to be. The Micmac Indians knew Prince Edward Island as Abegweit, meaning cradled on the waves, and the island has often been referred to as the million acre farm, or Canada's garden province.

We in Malpeque are blessed with fertile rolling farmland, bountiful waters, and beautiful sandy beaches. Thus agriculture, fisheries, and tourism are the three major industries that keep the majority of the people of Malpeque happy, healthy, and employed. The three industries are like a three-legged stool, each leg or industry supporting and complementing the other two.

Every year the land produces an abundance of potatoes, a quality potato which is shipped throughout the world and for which Prince Edward Island has become famous. But we do not grow only potatoes. The spud may be king, but there are other crops and produce such as grain, dairy cattle, beef cattle, and hogs, that are of significant importance to the Malpeque farmers. Prince Edward Island is known as the Kentucky of Canada because of the quality harness racing and the stand-ardbred horses that are raised on the island. However, no