

S.O. 31

This year, during the Week of the Tree which will be held between May 7 to 13, each Canadian man and woman should plant a tree and use this period to reflect on the impact forests have on our economy, environment, our health generally, as well as on the conservation of our fauna and water resources.

Contrary to an opinion held much too long, Mr. Speaker, this wealth is not inexhaustible and should be preserved through a well thought out forestry policy so that future generations can enjoy healthy and luxuriant forests.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we are no longer referring to lumbermen but forestry workers who fully deserved admiration and to whom I wish to pay here a special tribute. They are the gardeners who through their professional dedication, will deliver the forests of tomorrow.

Finally, I want to pay a special tribute to the late J. Donat Brûlé, a great forestry engineer who founded the "Club 4H" on February 20, 1940, in an effort to teach young men and young women the desire to protect trees.

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[English]

FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

EFFECT ON COST OF FOOD

Mr. Jack Whittaker (Okanagan—Similkameen—Meritt): Mr. Speaker, once again we have evidence of the Government being less than candid and indeed untruthful with the Canadian people in respect of the real effects of the trade deal. In today's issue of *The Globe and Mail*, Galen Weston, food conglomerate chairman and president of Loblaws, says that Canadians should not expect any kind of break at the supermarkets as a result of the Free Trade Agreement.

During the election campaign, the Government promised Canadian families that \$85 to \$130 would be saved annually by a family of four on their supermarket bills due to cheaper imports as a result of the free trade deal. Instead, we have seen over the last year a 4 per cent hike in grocery prices, the largest increase since the summer of 1987. As a result of the 1989 Budget tax grab, we can expect further food price increases.

Again, we have seen the Government mislead the Canadian consumer and have evidenced the Govern-

ment's lack of credibility in keeping election promises. Even the corporate friends of the Prime Minister such as Galen Weston are now saying that the Government has misled the people of Canada on the Free Trade Agreement.

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[Translation]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

REQUEST THAT THE CRTC REVIEW CERTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

M. Mark Assad (Gatineau—La Lièvre): Mr. Speaker, a decision rendered by the CRTC concerning an aspect of telecommunications in Western Québec does not reflect the reality of the Ottawa area and the services that its people want.

The proposal by Bell Canada is the result of several years of consultations with all the municipalities and local agencies. Bell Canada's proposal, in conjunction with the municipalities, is fair and equitable since it gives Western Québec the same services as are found on the Ontario side.

We ask, Mr. Speaker, that the CRTC review the proposals and render a decision which truly reflects the situation in Western Québec.

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• (1410)

[English]

AGRICULTURE

DECLINE IN NUMBER OF FARM BANKRUPTCIES

Mr. Ross Stevenson (Durham): Mr. Speaker, the number of farm bankruptcies declined by 8.2 per cent in 1988, continuing the downward trend established in 1984. Of course, there are many reasons for this positive trend. Ever-improving fiscal management and improvements in prices of some agricultural commodities are two major factors. Major financial support by the federal Government, through stabilization, special grains and drought assistance programs, has also been a major contributor to the improved economic outlook on many of our farms. The economic well-being of our farm families is a concern of all of us. Leadership by the federal Government has and will continue to assist in the continued evolution of a strong agricultural industry in Canada.