

MULTICULTURALISM

CRITICISM OF GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mr. Ernie Epp (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, events of the last days increase our concern about the Conservative Government's multicultural policy.

The Vice-Chairman of the Canadian Multicultural Council has described his colleagues proudly as committed supporters of the Conservative Party. This advisory body was presumably responsible for the policies that the first two multiculturalism Ministers expressed in the slogans "Mainstreaming multiculturalism" and "Multiculturalism means business".

Members of many ethnocultural communities expressed their dissatisfaction with such ideas and asked the Government to support the cultivation of culture and language. Conservative Members of Parliament from the Toronto area have recently called upon the Government to take stronger and wiser action in the area of multiculturalism.

I would urge the new Minister responsible for multiculturalism to seek advice from the communities and not just from Conservative partisans. I would urge him to develop multicultural policy by fostering the diversity of Canada as well as encouraging participation in national life.

I would urge him to remember that multiculturalism should not be political football played for partisan advantage.

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THE ECONOMY

ECONOMIC COUNCIL OF CANADA—REPORT STRESSING IMPORTANCE OF CANADA—UNITED STATES TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Mr. Speaker, in the Economic Council of Canada's report *Changing Times*, the Economic Council has indicated to us once again how important negotiating free trade with the United States is to the viability of Canada, to job-creation, to economic future, and to the prosperity for ourselves and our children.

More important, the Economic Council indicates what would happen to us if trade arrangements with the United States continue to deteriorate. It points out very clearly how much damage there would be to employment and growth from measures restricting our access to American markets.

The annual report of the revitalized Economic Council under the chairmanship of Judith Maxwell comes to grips with the real essential problems of our time and should be compulsory reading for all Members. We are in changing times. In its report the Economic Council of Canada gives direction to these changing times.

[Translation]

S.O. 21

DANGEROUS PRODUCTS

EFFECT OF LEAD IN THE ENVIRONMENT—NEED FOR GOVERNMENT ACTION

Mrs. Thérèse Killens (Saint-Michel—Ahuntsic): Mr. Speaker, lead has now been added to a long list of hazardous products. The Royal Society of Canada's commission, which was formed to study the effect of lead in the environment, has just published its report.

The situation is an alarming one for Canada. Four American scientists have identified lead as causing high blood pressure, diminished intelligence and unusual behaviour in some children.

Canada continues to recycle lead from about 15,000 automobile batteries daily, and that number is rising steadily, although 1982 statistics show that 73,000 tons of lead were dumped in the environment.

Mr. Speaker, speaking on behalf of future generations, I ask the Government to take immediate steps to remedy this hazardous situation.

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● (1405)

[English]

CANADA POST CORPORATION

OPPOSITION TO POSSIBLE POSTAL RATE INCREASE

Mr. Bob Pennock (Etobicoke North): Mr. Speaker, it is being reported in the media that Canada Post intends to ask Parliament for permission to increase the rate for letters from 34 cents to 36 cents. On June 14 last year I stated in the House that, once the efficiency and service of the Post Office improved to an acceptable level, I would support a rate increase to tackle its financial difficulties. Unfortunately, neither the service nor the efficiency of Canada Post has improved enough to justify a rate increase.

Absenteeism of Canada Post workers is twice the national average and, according to officials of Canada Post, this problem alone costs the corporation \$70 million a year. In Etobicoke North I continue to receive numerous calls and letters from constituents who are clearly not satisfied with the service. The main problem remains the consistency in mail delivery. This is one Tory MP who would not support a rate increase.