

[English]

MULGRAVE, NOVA SCOTIA

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Madam Speaker, a David and Goliath battle is shaping up in eastern Nova Scotia.

David is the town of Mulgrave, population of 951. Incorporated in 1923, Mulgrave is a proud town with a proud past. In recent years it has struggled against difficult odds to attract jobs for its residents. Unemployment in the town is between 23 per cent and upwards of 50 per cent depending on the measure one uses.

Goliath is the Royal Bank of Canada, the country's largest bank with assets of \$132 billion and profits of \$983 million in fiscal 1991.

The Royal Bank has decided to close its branch in Mulgrave which has been there for 81 years and consolidate its operations across the Strait of Canso in Port Hawkesbury. As a result, Mulgrave residents will lose the only bank in their community. They will have to travel a minimum of 28 kilometres round trip to obtain basic banking services.

This may be a small matter to the Royal Bank of Canada more accustomed to handling big accounts like Olympia and York, but it is no small matter to the residents of Mulgrave.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am sorry but the hon. member's time has expired. The hon. member for Elgin—Norfolk.

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CORN AND SOYBEAN PRODUCERS

Mr. Ken Monteith (Elgin—Norfolk): Madam Speaker, corn and soybean producers in Ontario have suffered a devastating harvest.

A cold, wet growing season has produced one of the worst harvests in memory. As well, continued wet conditions this fall have prevented many farmers from harvesting their crops. Moisture levels in the crops that have been harvested are incredibly high.

Farmers are spending precious funds to dry corn that may only be suitable for animal feed. Many producers are finding that corn and soybean standing in the fields

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are moulding and will be unsuitable even for animal feed.

I am pleased the Minister of Agriculture is providing assistance to these producers who are unable to harvest their crops. Farmers are devastated by this crop loss. I appreciate the Minister of Agriculture responding so quickly to the needs of the producers in Ontario.

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SHELTERED WORKSHOPS

Mrs. Marlene Catterall (Ottawa West): Madam Speaker, once again the NDP is showing that its pretence to be the conscience of the nation and the protector of the disadvantaged vanishes the minute it holds power and has its hands on the purse-strings.

In a cruel blow without warning, the NDP government in Ontario cut \$5 million from sheltered workshops for mentally disabled individuals. Further cuts of up to \$1 billion in social services may mean the complete elimination of sheltered workshops. In this region alone 200 individuals are on the waiting list and 200 more may soon be out on the streets.

Yesterday, on the International Day of the Disabled, 700 participants, parents, care workers and volunteers, rallied to protest the inhumanity of the NDP government.

I plead with the NDP members in this House. Talk to your colleagues in Toronto. Tell them to stop harassing, punishing and depriving our most vulnerable citizens.

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Madam Speaker, a constituent in my riding left her job in a home for mentally handicapped persons because of the mistreatment of the residents. She reported the information to the licensing board and the mental health officials and applied for UI. She was disqualified from UI for 12 weeks for quitting her job.

Now, a year later, the licensing body having investigated the home has cancelled its licence and removed the residents.