

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, April 13, 1988

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 21

[English]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

CAPE BRETON CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY UNEMPLOYMENT—
FEDERAL OFFER TO WORKERS

Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I rise once again to bring to the attention of the House the plight of the workers represented by the Cape Breton Building and Construction Trades Council. The Minister of Labour (Mr. Cadieux) will know that I addressed this issue on November 2, 1987, requesting that he take action with respect to an older workers' adjustment program.

In the last 24 hours it has come to my attention that the Minister is expected to offer workers approximately \$1,020 a month exclusive of any other income they might have. The Government has not made a formal commitment on this matter, but the federal Minister of Labour has apparently given a Nova Scotia Cabinet Minister, the Honourable Edmund Morris, his word that the offer will stand.

I call upon the Minister of Labour to confirm to this House that the present offer to the Cape Breton Building and Construction Trades Council workers will stand. Should he be able to do this, it will alleviate many concerns and worries of the unemployed Cape Breton construction workers. I trust and hope that the Minister of Labour will respond favourably to this request.

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RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

SIKH RELIGION—ANNIVERSARY OF FOUNDATION

Mr. W. Paul McCrossan (York-Scarborough): Mr. Speaker, on April 13, 1699, the tenth and final Guru, Gobind Singh, laid out a code of conduct which established Khalsa in the Sikh religion. This new religion stressed the equality of humanity regardless of caste, creed, or sex. Each Sikh has a clear obligation to serve particularly the poor or oppressed. At

the same time, Guru Gobind Singh established the distinctive dress code of Sikhs to remind them of their religious obligations each day.

There are approximately 200,000 Sikhs in Canada who have added significantly to Canadian life. Today in Parliament members of all political Parties will be meeting with Canadians of the Sikh religion. I am particularly pleased to bring to public notice, Mr. Speaker, that you are representing Parliament as guest speaker at today's reception.

I am sure that all Members of Parliament would wish to extend their best wishes to the Sikh community in Canada on the anniversary of the formal birthday of their religion.

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RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

SIKH RELIGION—ANNIVERSARY OF FOUNDATION

Mr. Ernie Epp (Thunder Bay—Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, today Sikhs around the world are celebrating the anniversary of their faith, Baisakh. On behalf of my colleagues in the New Democratic caucus, I wish to speak in recognition of that great event.

● (1405)

It was on this day in the year 1699 A.D. that the tenth prophet of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh, challenged a great gathering of Sikhs to rededicate themselves to the faith. His call brought forward the Five Beloved Ones in symbolic sacrifice. It also led to the institution of baptism into the Sikh faith, and produced the five Ks of commitment to the faith.

In the succeeding 289 years followers of the Sikh faith have become a distinctive community in many countries of the world. Canada is honoured to be the home of one-quarter of a million Sikhs.

On this Baisakh, I join with Canadian Sikhs in celebrating a New Year of dedication to their faith. May this be a year of good understanding like that manifested by the people of Woods Harbour, Nova Scotia, when they welcomed the Sikh refugee claimants to Canada's shores.

May this Baisakh call us to renewed regard for the lives of our fellows, and respect for the rights of their communities.