

ty product which the Canadian Wheat Board simply cannot handle. Organic farmers have had to find their own markets, yet the wheat board insists these farmers go through all its costly red tape.

The fine for bypassing the Canadian Wheat Board on this issue is \$12,000 and two years in jail.

Will the minister allow organic farmers to sell their product without jumping through all the wheat board hoops necessary?

Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, over the last number of months the Canadian Wheat Board has made a substantial effort to find the appropriate regulatory and other means to accommodate the needs of organic producers.

It is my view, which I think is shared by the board, that in the future organic production, whether of wheat or potentially a great many other commodities, will be able to find very significant and valuable niche markets that may over time grow to be much more than just niches in terms of the future marketing potential.

• (1150)

The hon. member may rest assured that we will be endeavouring by all possible means to promote the maximum marketing opportunities because those opportunities are valuable not only to the individual producers of the organic product but also to the entire grains economy.

Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the minister of agriculture.

As he knows, the current system is simply not working. It is penalizing farmers who are struggling to diversify. It is ironic that at a time when the federal government has spent millions of dollars on western diversification, the wheat board is standing in the way of those farmers who have already found their markets and simply want to market their grain.

Will the minister at least amend the Canadian Wheat Board Act to remove organic crops from wheat board jurisdiction and allow this industry to develop?

Hon. Ralph E. Goodale (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. gentleman knows, there is a substantial division of opinion in western Canada on the issue he has just raised.

It is important for all producers, whether they be organic producers or others, to have the opportunity to examine the marketing system and all the various options, all the pros and the cons, all the benefits and the consequences, to understand completely what is involved in the marketing decisions that need to be made in the future.

Oral Questions

The opportunity for that kind of dialogue and discussion among farmers and farm organizations will be forthcoming very soon.

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TOURISM INDUSTRY

Mr. John O'Reilly (Victoria—Haliburton, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question concerns Canada's tourism industry.

Over the last number of years Canada has lost a large part of its tourism business from all over the world, but in particular, from the United States.

Is the current campaign having any effect on our tourist business and at what cost?

Hon. John Manley (Minister of Industry, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, first let me stress for the hon. member the importance of the tourism sector to the government's jobs and growth agenda.

I am pleased to tell him the \$50 million commitment that the government made to the Canadian Tourism Commission has already leveraged an addition \$30 million from the private sector, no strings attached.

The campaigns are under way, both on television as well as in newspapers. The responses are formidable. I would like to mention to the House that in the first quarter of 1995, we already have very encouraging numbers.

Travel receipts are up by 19.5 per cent and the travel deficit figures for the same period are down by 11.3 per cent. Tourism is jobs for Canadians in all parts of the country. It is jobs and growth.

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[Translation]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, BQ): Mr. Speaker, in 1990, the Canadian government banned the export of PCBs to the United States without prior authorization by the U.S. Environment Protection Agency, which systematically refused PCB shipments, thus making any PCB export virtually impossible.

This created an opportunity for a fledgling PCB destruction industry to develop in Canada and Quebec. In the spirit of the Basel convention, Canada now tends to look after the disposal of its own hazardous wastes, thereby avoiding the serious problems associated with long haul shipping of these products.

My question is for the Minister of the Environment. Is she prepared to make a public commitment to maintain the policy position that Canada must manage its own waste, no matter what decisions the EPA may make in the future, and does she undertake to press the U.S. to do the same?