

● (1405)

AGRICULTURE

BENEFIT OF CAPITAL GAINS TAX EXEMPTION TO OLDER FARMERS

Mr. Geoff Wilson (Swift Current-Maple Creek): Mr. Speaker, the May Budget provided that a farmer, to qualify for the immediate \$500,000 capital gains exemption, had to have farmed the land for at least five years since 1972. Older Canadians who farmed for many years, but not for five years since 1972, expressed concern. I congratulate the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise) and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) for listening to these concerns and acting by eliminating the reference to 1972, thereby expanding the definition of farm property qualifying for the immediate \$500,000 lifetime capital gains exemption.

Now, effective January 1, 1985, land owned by the taxpayer and used by him, his spouse or children in the business of farming in Canada, either in the year of sale or in at least five years during which the property was owned by the taxpayer or his family, will qualify. Older Canadians who may have rented out their land in recent years, but who have farmed for at least five years, will now enjoy the immediate exemption retroactive to January 1, 1985.

Livestock drought assistance, fuel tax rebates, crop insurance, western grain stabilization, crop disaster assistance, the domestic wheat reference, the Soviet grain agreement, and the capital gains exemption, are but a few of the many responsible agricultural initiatives put forward by the Government—a Government that listens and acts.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

CLIMATIC CHANGES—CONSEQUENCES OF PROJECTED GREENHOUSE EFFECT

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, this House and the present Government will be well advised to start plans and policies that will take into account the consequences of the greenhouse effect which, according to scientists, will cause temperatures to rise by two or three degrees centigrade around the globe over the next 70 years. Many will be the consequences of the warming-up trend. For instance, agriculture will shift northward. In southern Canada lands presently used for agriculture could be lost because of dryness. Therefore water will become more and more precious because our needs will increase considerably.

As a consequence of these climatic changes we will have to learn to manage our water better, to squander less and, most of all, not to yield to pressures for export and diversions of fresh water. Water conservation is a practice we should adopt. We should also drastically improve ways of controlling and regulating what we discharge into water so as to protect water quality.

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At present, Mr. Speaker, water is perceived to be an abundant commodity. As our climate warms up, water will gradually become a commodity in short supply. This trend need not be a disaster provided we plan and manage well the transition to a warmer climate by a judicious use of our water resources and by becoming a water-efficient society.

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HUMAN RIGHTS

VIOLATIONS IN IRAN—UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION

Mr. John Parry (Kenora-Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, on December 13 the United Nations General Assembly passed its first resolution expressing deep concern over “specific and detailed allegations of human rights violations in Iran”. The resolution, I am proud to say, was initiated by Canada and the Netherlands, with 10 other countries co-sponsoring it. The resolution comments on the summary executions, torture, and oppression of religious minorities in Iran, and endorses continued monitoring of the situation.

Iran has been asked to extend full co-operation which, up until now, it has refused, including not allowing the U.N. Special Representative on Human Rights to visit Iran. We are told that it is of tremendous help to the Bahai's and other oppressed minorities in Iran to know that they have not been forgotten by the world, even when they are apparently without rights in their own country.

I urge the House of Commons and the Government of Canada to remain fully informed on this grievous situation and to support the Canadian delegation at the U.N. in maintaining the vigilant and courageous international leadership by which it has been distinguishing itself on this issue in its efforts to end persecution and atrocities in Iran.

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[Translation]

VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

FIGHT AGAINST DRUNKEN DRIVING—OPERATION “RED NOSE”

Mr. Marcel R. Tremblay (Quebec East): Mr. Speaker, during the holiday season, in the Quebec metropolitan area, we will have what is known as Operation “Red Nose”, a project initiated by Jean-Marie de Koninck, a professor at Laval University. For the time being, this operation is to be seen as a preventive mechanism. Now in its second year, after only six days there were 715 calls from people who took advantage of the service, and as a result, everyone got home safe and sound. “Play it safe for everybody's sake”. Mr. Speaker, how distressing to recall that according to the statistics of Health and Welfare Canada, 49.7 per cent of drivers killed in accidents had alcohol in their blood. What folly!