

A new job creation initiative, the Atlantic Enterprise Program, is a major part of the strategy to relieve regional disparity. Under this new program, the federal Government will provide guarantees to private sector investors of loans totalling up to \$1 billion, and interest rate buy-downs of up to 6 percentage points for business start-up or expansion.

● (1405)

The program will be supported by a private sector advisory committee made up of representatives from the region. This program will apply to eligible projects in manufacturing and processing, related service sectors, tourism, and primary industries.

In addition to this new program the 20 per cent investment tax credit in the Atlantic region will not only be maintained but will be extended to communities in the Atlantic offshore. These measures signal continuing Government support for sustained economic growth in Atlantic Canada.

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MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

ALLEGED RACIAL SLUR

Mr. Sergio Marchi (York West): Mr. Speaker, it was unfortunate to hear in the House yesterday the Conservative Member for Nunatsiak (Mr. Suluk) characterize the Hon. Member for Bourassa (Mr. Rossi), who is of Canadian-Italian extraction, as a mafioso. While this may not have been recorded, it does not condone or diminish the severity of such a racist accusation. This community is getting sick and tired of being continuously labelled in such an unjust manner. As a nation we need to stamp out vigorously these humanly degrading remarks.

It is all the more worrisome that the incident occurred in the very institution which must lead by example. I call upon the Hon. Member for Nunatsiak to show leadership, courage, and integrity, admit that he seriously erred, and to offer an appropriate apology. The Canadian-Italian community needs to hear it. But, more important, Parliament and the country need to hear it.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

PRODUCTION OF CHEMICAL WARFARE AGENTS

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, last week the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Nielsen) categorically stated, as reported at page 10889 of *Hansard*: "No chemical weapons are being produced in Canada—". Three sources from the Department of National Defence have confirmed that, indeed, some chemical weapons listed in the 1985 Government of Canada handbook which deals with chemical and biological weapons are produced in Canada. In fact, late last week the Minister's own staff contacted me to confirm that

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Soman, Sarin, Tabun, and VX, all lethal chemical warfare agents which cause death by suffocation, are produced at the Defence Research Establishment at Suffield, Alberta, as well as T-2370 and mustard gas. The first four are listed on page 80 as chemical warfare lethal agents.

It was stressed to me by DND personnel that these chemical weapons are produced in very small quantities. So be it. But they are produced in Canada, and the Minister of National Defence knew it when he made his categorical denial last week.

Let us not forget a bucket of some chemicals, such as dioxin, can kill millions.

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STATUS OF WOMEN

GOVERNMENT MEASURES TO ASSIST WOMEN

Mrs. Mary Collins (Capilano): Mr. Speaker, as we approach International Women's Day it is appropriate for us to recall the positive measures undertaken by the Government to improve social justice for women in Canadian society.

Divorce law has been reformed to simplify divorce proceedings. A registry of maintenance orders is being established to ensure that single parents receive the full child support payments to which they are entitled. A parliamentary task force is examining ways to improve child care. The Indian Act has been amended to eliminate discrimination against women who were unfairly denied Indian status.

Today the Minister of Justice (Mr. Crosbie) announced major changes to legislation and programs to ensure conformity with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

As we celebrate International Women's Day, it is appropriate that we have also reinforced our commitment to women, to justice, and to equality for all.

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[Translation]

THE ECONOMY

GOVERNMENT'S PERFORMANCE

Mr. Gabriel Fontaine (Lévis): Mr. Speaker, on May 23, 1985, when the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) brought down his first Budget, only a few seconds later, the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Turner), seconded by the Leader of the Socialist Party, declared that this Budget would cost us between 200,000 and 300,000 jobs.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the May Budget helped to create 560,000 new jobs, including 156,000 in the province of Quebec.

Obviously, Opposition Members are not used to this kind of performance.