

S. O. 31

Founded in 1969 by André and Louise Rochette, the association now has more than 1,000 members. I also would like to draw the attention of the House to the exceptional work done within this organization by Denis Lazure, ex-minister of the Parti québécois, who also sponsored the bill to create the Office des personnes handicapées.

Over the years, AQEPA has managed to regroup parents of hearing-impaired children, to teach them and the other parties concerned, to promote the integration of children in the school environment, to raise funds and to increase public awareness.

We can be proud of these initiatives which our society needs very badly, and we believe it is important to encourage organizations that are dedicated to improving the quality of life of the disabled.

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[English]

NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. Ian McClelland (Edmonton Southwest): Mr. Speaker, yesterday marked the beginning of the seventh annual National Access Awareness Week. This week is important in raising awareness and making Canadians more sensitive to disability issues. This year's theme is "Choices and Challenges".

In celebration of National Access Awareness Week it is imperative that we provide individuals with disabilities equality of opportunity. This means governments must rethink the way we provide benefits to the disabled. Presently persons with disabilities find themselves in a catch-22 position. Many want to work and yet once they find employment we remove the support that allowed them to get a job in the first place.

If we want to ensure that persons with disabilities are net contributors to our society we must remove the barriers that impede their abilities.

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CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD

Mrs. Marlene Cowling (Dauphin—Swan River): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Wheat Board is western Canada's single desk selling agency for the export sale of wheat and barley.

The Canadian Wheat Board has served the interests of western Canadian farmers superbly over the years and continues to do so.

In addition, it provides an unparalleled level of customer service to all the millers and bakers and noodle makers around the world who are the ultimate consumers of our product.

The Canadian Wheat Board is one of the great Canadian success stories in international trade.

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, Canadians are proud their government announced its largest ever anti-smoking drive on the eve of World No Tobacco Day.

If current trends are not reversed smoking will claim the lives of 10 million citizens of the world each year within three decades. In Canada alone 38,000 citizens die each year from smoking related illnesses, the equivalent of a third of most MPs ridings' population.

The challenge to the world is to create a smoke free society. Harmonization of cigarette prices by means of taxation should be part of an international anti-smoking strategy.

Canada has long been a world leader in this area of public health policy. Effective public policy begins with the will of individual citizens.

For non-smokers this day is an opportunity to reaffirm their will not to smoke. For smokers this day is an opportunity for a new beginning to free themselves from the prison of addiction.

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● (1410)

EMPLOYMENT

Mr. Peter Adams (Peterborough): Mr. Speaker, in October past Canadians elected this government with a mandate to create employment. Infrastructure announcements are now flowing steadily. This is helping create employment, a promise we made to Canadians.

I would like to thank the minister for his hard work in ensuring the success of this program.

There are, however, other indicators that we are on the road to recovery. A recent survey by an employment agency indicates that unemployed individuals have a better opportunity of finding employment this summer than they have had in the past four years. This agency also states that one-quarter of Canadian companies plan on increasing staff in the next three months.

I am very encouraged that this will not only help in large urban centres but will have a significant influence on employment in smaller cities such as Peterborough.

This is encouraging news for many Canadians who have been waiting desperately to rejoin the workforce and contribute their work skills to this great nation.

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[Translation]

LANGUAGE RIGHTS

Mr. Louis Plamondon (Richelieu): Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct what was said by the Deputy Prime Minister, who stated in the House yesterday that the Bloc Québécois had voted