

*Routine Proceedings***ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS***[English]***BARRIERS TO WOMEN IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

TABLING OF TASK FORCE REPORT

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table today, in both official languages, the report of the Task Force on Barriers to Women in the Public Service.

[Translation]

I would like to thank the members of the task force Jean Edmonds, Edna Mackenzie and Jocelyne Côté-O'Hara for their work and their contribution to this very important issue.

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*[English]***PETITIONS**

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8) I have the honour to table in both official languages the government responses to 192 petitions.

[Editor's Note: See today's Votes and Proceedings.]

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*[Translation]***NATIONAL CONSUMER WEEK**

Hon. Pierre Blais (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Minister of State (Agriculture)): Madam Speaker, I am pleased today to proclaim the week of April 23 to 29 National Consumer Week. This is the first time it has been observed, Madam Speaker. From now on, it will be held the last full week of April every year.

The main purpose of this very special week is to highlight the partnership that must exist in the Canadian market between governments, the private sector and consumers.

This Week is the result of many initiatives taken by the ministers responsible for consumers at the federal, provincial and territorial levels. It is inspired by the many activities organized by consumers' groups in the last several years to protect Canadian consumers and improve the many products available to them on the market.

[English]

Businesses, business associations, consumer groups, schools, community groups, trade and professional associations as well as municipal governments are organizing a wide variety of activities that will further increase the public's awareness of consumer issues.

To this end Consumer and Corporate Affairs Canada has put together and published an organizers' manual that was distributed to all those interested in organizing special events in their community on the theme of National Consumer Week.

The theme chosen for this first National Consumer Week is "Team Up for a Stronger Marketplace: Consumers, Business, Government". We want to show the extent to which the co-operation of all sectors is essential for an efficient and functional marketplace.

[Translation]

Throughout the week, Madam Speaker, I will participate in many activities across the country. Tomorrow in Montreal, I will take part in the launching of a food labelling guide. This is a very practical small guide designed to help consumers better understand the sometimes arcane language of labels.

This guide has been produced jointly by my department and many companies in the private sector and a million copies of it will be distributed everywhere during the National Week. I cannot overemphasize the co-operation and partnership behind this initiative.

Still on Tuesday, I will give a speech in Toronto to a conference on intellectual property. I will be in Western Canada on Wednesday and Thursday, where I will address the Environmentally Sound Packaging Coalition in Vancouver. I also plan to visit the various offices of my department throughout the country and to meet many of my provincial colleagues to further strengthen the partnership required to make the Canadian market more dynamic.