

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, March 23, 1983

The House met at 2 p.m.

● (1405)

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 21

[Translation]

AGRICULTURE

REINSTATEMENT OF SECTION 16 OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE REGULATION

Mr. Marcel Ostiguy (Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot): Madam Speaker, the Fédération des producteurs de pommes du Québec, the Quebec Farm Producers Union and a number of other agricultural organizations in Canada recently asked the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy) to reinstate Section 16 of the Unemployment Insurance Regulations, which defined the conditions under which farm workers became eligible for deduction of unemployment insurance premiums. Section 16 prescribed that farm workers had to work a minimum of twenty-five days or earn \$250 in wages before premiums could be deducted under the Unemployment Insurance Regulations. Because this provision no longer exists, workers will now qualify for premium deductions from their wages after only fifteen hours of work or earning \$70 in wages.

Madam Speaker, although the new regulation simplifies forms for farmers and allows exemptions of up to seven days for farm workers, it is highly impractical for apple growers, because it cannot be properly implemented. The large number of pickers who work on a daily basis and picker turnover during the short harvest season makes it impossible for apple growers to keep proper records for each worker.

Madam Speaker, I would therefore ask the Minister of Employment and Immigration to reinstate the provision of Section 16 of the Regulations that was ideally suited to apple growers and farmers in general.

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[English]

HEALTH

TRAINING OF HEARING-EAR DOGS

Mr. Geoff Scott (Hamilton-Wentworth): Madam Speaker, let me tell you about a wonderful idea from a remarkable constituent of mine. Jacqueline Harbour loves dogs, and she has devoted her life's work to making the lives of the deaf and

hard-of-hearing much more tolerable through her hearing-ear dogs.

The lady's concept is simple. If a person is blind, you know it. If a person is deaf, you may not know it. The hard of hearing hide it, or they become experts at lip reading. Blind people frequently find "sight" through seeing-eye dogs.

As Jacqueline Harbour says, dogs always answer the door anyway. Her dogs have been trained to answer the front door bell, notify someone when a baby is crying, or alert deaf people to anything from a telephone ringing, to a timer on a stove, to a smoke detector going off. All you need to do is teach them to respond to any sound. Hearing-ear dogs can be trained to lead those people who are deaf out of the fear of moving about and living in a world of silence.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, I would urge the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss Bégin) and this House of Commons to use whatever means possible to ensure that hearing-ear dogs are accorded the same privileges and treatment as seeing-eye dogs.

Jacqueline's mother, who is deaf, offers this pertinent and poignant quote:

People should be helped in a way that allows them to remain on their own. It's a lot cheaper for the Government, and better for them, than putting them into hospitals and homes. If a dog like this can help them manage on their own, they should be allowed to have one.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

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OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

COMMISSIONER'S ANNUAL REPORT

Mr. Laverne Lewycky (Dauphin): Madam Speaker, the Official Languages Commissioner of Canada, in his annual report released yesterday, points out that Canada's Constitution is being violated constantly with respect to the guaranteeing of language rights. Bilingual service in areas where they are warranted are often not available at federal Government agencies. For example, Air Canada has refused to install French-speaking staff at its offices in Timmins, Ontario, even though 37.4 per cent of the residents are francophones.

[Translation]

Corporations such as Petro-Canada and Via Rail have seriously breached the legislation on bilingualism, and the Federal Government must insist that the law be complied with. In a bilingual country such as ours, that principle must be respected and enforced. Minority groups, be they French, English or of