

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, April 4, 1990

The House met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S. O. 31

[*Translation*]

ANNUAL REPORT OF COMMISSIONER OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Vincent Della Noce (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Revenue): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Commissioner of Official Languages submitted his annual report to us. To everyone's surprise and great disappointment, he does not mention the city of Sault Ste. Marie, which nevertheless attracted a lot of attention earlier this year, and which I have denounced publicly.

I would point out to him that since 1987, about fifty Ontario municipalities have openly proclaimed themselves unilingual English. This is horrible! However, he does not mention that in his report.

Although the Commissioner is not a prophet, he could certainly have felt, like many French Canadians, this great linguistic malaise that exists in Canada and is rampant in some towns and cities, but he did not even see fit to mention it in his preliminary remarks.

A city or town like Sault Ste. Marie which declares itself to be unilingual English needlessly humiliates its French minority. Groups like APEC, the Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada, a reactionary association that feeds on the fears and prejudices of past centuries, now seem to be spreading across Canada. There is also the COR (Confederation of Regions) Party, which like all the others propagates racist, anti-French ideas that are dangerous for our democracy.

We will probably have to wait until next year, Mr. Speaker, to know the extent of this concern. All I hope is that it will not be too late.

[*English*]

4-H NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP SEMINAR

Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque): Mr. Speaker, this week Ottawa is playing host to Canada's 4-H delegates during their National Citizenship Seminar.

These young people from across our country will be discussing Canadian government systems, their rights and responsibilities as citizens, and they will be learning about each other.

All members should be proud of these young adults who were selected as delegates for their outstanding achievements in their local and provincial 4-H activities. I am proud that several of these exceptional young Canadians are from Prince Edward Island.

Head, heart, hands and health is the 4-H motto. This great national organization provides young people with the opportunity to develop both leadership and life skills and, in doing so, contribute to the well-being of our communities.

On behalf of all members of the House, I commend these young people for their accomplishments to date and wish them every success in their future endeavours.

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GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Mr. Speaker, very soon members of this House will be voting on the goods and services tax. Close to 80 per cent of Canadians oppose the tax, but the government has chosen not to listen.

Only 21 of the 167 Conservative MPs need to vote with the combined opposition parties to defeat the tax, so we are urging Canadians across the country to phone their Conservative members of Parliament and tell them to vote against the GST.

In Atlantic Canada, Canadians can phone the member for Annapolis Valley—Hants at 542-5737; the member for South Shore at 543-5141; the member for Halifax West at 865-9194; the member for Fredericton—York—Sunbury at 458-8046; the member for St. John's East at