

S. O. 31

NATIONAL PARKS AND HISTORICAL SITES

Mr. Andy Mitchell (Parry Sound—Muskoka, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and thank the hard working men and women who staff our national parks and historical sites.

As Canadians we can be very proud of the quality of our Parks Canada facilities and the quality of service that is provided by a dedicated staff of professionals, men and women who are committed to what are undoubtedly some of Canada's greatest natural resources, our parks and historical sites. These represent an important part of Canadian identity from coast to coast to coast.

In Parry Sound—Muskoka, Parks Canada has responsibility for Georgian Bay Island National Park in the west of my riding and Bethune Memorial House in Gravenhurst. Both facilities have fine reputations and attract visitors from around the world, adding significantly to our local tourist economy.

I congratulate the Parks Canada staff for its fine work on our behalf and for maintaining our resources to the highest standard. Specifically I acknowledge the dedication of Mike Walton, Mary Ellen Corcelli and her staff who are responsible for Bethune House and Georgian Bay National Park.

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[Translation]

WORLD TEACHERS DAY

Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, on October 4, 1966, a special intergovernmental conference adopted the UNESCO recommendation on the status of teachers. Thirty years have passed since the adoption of that historical document, and today we mark the anniversary by inaugurating World Teachers Day.

Just by pure happenstance, on the very day we are marking the vital contribution of our teachers, the permanent campus of la Cité collégiale will be holding its official opening ceremonies in Ottawa. Its teachers and students can be proud of the fact that theirs is the first French-language college of applied arts and technology in Ontario.

I would like to take this opportunity, therefore, to offer my thanks and congratulations to all of the men and women in the educational field for their ongoing efforts to provide Canadian youth with the opportunity to realize their full potential.

My best wishes to all teachers for a happy international day, and to la Cité collégiale for a long life.

[English]

CANADA POST CORPORATION

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, earlier this year I toured the head offices of Canada Post Corporation here in Ottawa.

I found Canada Post to be a thoroughly modern distribution organization, the equal of any in the world. Its track and trace system for managing mail flow is said to be state of the art and Canada Post is selling the technology worldwide.

Ensuring timely and cost effective mail delivery to all Canadians is no small challenge. Doing so in the midst of a revolution in communications and at a profit is the challenge that Canada Post faces.

For a time, closing rural post offices was seen as a way for Canada Post to meet this challenge, but this avenue was closed with the decision by the Minister of Public Works and Government Services to impose a moratorium on the closure of small rural post offices. That decision has proven to be enlightened. It has refocused the energies of Canada Post and allowed the corporation to discover that its more than 19,000 outlets are not liabilities but important assets. Now it is time to broaden the range of services which Canada Post provides, especially to rural Canadians.

As other countries have discovered, the possibilities are endless and endlessly exciting.

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[Translation]

THE NATIONAL DEBT

Mr. Maurice Godin (Châteauguay, BQ): Mr. Speaker, every day, owing to Canada's enormous debt, a federalist legacy, we see the extent to which interest rates and monetary policy are determined by our southern neighbour's central bank and by international financial markets.

On May 16, 1994, even Canada's finance minister acknowledged this dependence on financial markets, and I quote: "Canada's debt, especially its foreign debt, undermines the sovereignty of this country. Our sovereignty suffers when we have to keep our interest rates high—even if our rate of inflation is among the lowest in the world—in order to attract foreign investment".

Due to Canada's dependence on foreign investment, it is clear that if the finance minister ignores his obligations as the manager of this debt by refusing to negotiate a new economic partnership with Quebec, national and foreign markets will call him in to order.