



CANADA

# House of Commons Debates

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OFFICIAL REPORT  
(HANSARD)

**Thursday, June 13, 1996**

**Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent**

## CONTENTS

(Table of Contents appears at back of this issue.)

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# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, June 13, 1996

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[*English*]

### REPORT OF INFORMATION COMMISSIONER

**The Speaker:** I have the honour, pursuant to section 38 of the Access to Information Act, to lay upon the table the report of the information commissioner for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1996.

[*Translation*]

The report is permanently referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

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[*English*]

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Paul Zed (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table in both official languages the government's response to six petitions.

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[*Translation*]

### INTER-PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

**Mr. Raymond Bonin (Nickel Belt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 34, I have the honour to present to the House, in both official languages, the report of the Canadian section of the International Assembly of French-Speaking Parliamentarians, as well as the financial report regarding the meeting of the co-operation and development commission of this organization, held in Ouagadougou, in Burkina Faso, on March 22 and 23, 1996.

• (1005)

### CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

**Mrs. Anna Terrana (Vancouver East, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-307, an act to amend the Canada Elections Act (polling hours).

She said: Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill entitled an act to amend the Canada Elections Act (polling hours). As you know, Canada is a huge country, with great distances, which does not make life easier for Canadians although it does make it more interesting.

One of the major problems is distance. Even though the CBC broadcasts the same message at the same time from the Atlantic, to the Pacific, to the Arctic, when we wake up in Vancouver, we know that Canadians in St. John's, Newfoundland, have already had lunch.

The time difference is a big problem on election day. Shortly after 4 p.m. in Vancouver, we know the results in Atlantic Canada, and shortly after 5 p.m., we know what the situation is in Quebec and Ontario. In British Columbia and in western Canada, where there are fewer MPs, this means that, depending on the results, the outcome has already been decided in eastern and central Canada.

The bill proposes to have all polling stations, from Newfoundland to British Columbia, close at the same time, taking the time difference into account, which would give the west the possibility of having a say in the future of the country together with the other provinces.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed.)

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[*English*]

### CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

**Mrs. Anna Terrana (Vancouver East, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-308, an act to amend the Canada Elections Act (polling stations in hospitals).

She said: Mr. Speaker, today I would also like to introduce a private member's bill entitled an act to amend the Canada Elections Act, polling stations in hospitals).

Although in the current act, section 138, there is a provision for elections to be held in a sanitarium, a home for the aged, a chronic

*Routine Proceedings*

care hospital or a similar institution for the care and treatment of tuberculosis and other chronic diseases, nothing in the act gives patients in hospitals an opportunity to vote.

Apparently this service is already provided but there is no indication of it in the elections act. I would therefore like to introduce a bill that would ensure all patients in hospitals during an election have the same privileges as all Canadians.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed.)

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**FOOD AND DRUGS ACT**

**Ms. Paddy Torsney (Burlington, Lib.)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-309, an act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (ingredients of food sold in restaurants).

She said: Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to introduce this important piece of legislation. As members know, thousands of Canadians suffer from serious food allergies and are unable to freely enjoy one of the simple pleasures most of us take for granted, a meal in a restaurant.

For these Canadians, full ingredient disclosure of a restaurant's menu items can mean the difference between good health and serious illness, between life and death.

The bill promotes greater awareness of the issue of food allergies throughout the restaurant industry and minimizes the health risks faced by food allergy sufferers. It was developed on the initiative of Mrs. Betty Lou Taylor of Burlington and is supported by over 100,000 Burlington residents. It follows many months of consultation with the restaurant industry, the medical profession, groups representing allergy sufferers and members of Parliament.

I would like to dedicate this bill to the memory of Christian Taylor, a young man in my riding of Burlington who passed away on June 23, 1987 at the age of 17 after eating an apple turnover secretly flavoured with crushed hazelnuts.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed.)

• (1010)

**The Deputy Speaker:** Presenting petitions.

**Mr. Werner Schmidt (Okanagan Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to present on behalf of well over 500 petitioners from Kelowna—

**Mr. Solomon:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I have four private member's bills to introduce today. I was obviously not recognized. Could we revert to that before petitions?

**The Deputy Speaker:** There has never been a mistake made by Chair. Perhaps there was not notice. Who knows what happened. We will revert with permission to private members' bills.

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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**PARLIAMENT OF CANADA ACT**

**Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-310, an act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act (meetings of the Board of Internal Economy).

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce an act to amend the Canada of Parliament Act, meetings of the Board of Internal Economy. As parliamentarians know, the Board of Internal Economy is a very secretive operation. The public is not allowed to attend meetings. These are very important meetings because decisions are taken by the board which cost taxpayers a lot of money and there is no transparency or accountability with respect to its decisions.

The purpose of the bill is to allow members with a particular interest to attend and take part in meetings of the Board of Internal Economy of the House of Commons. The bill makes board meetings public with the exception of those devoted to certain specific topics. This follows up on many other jurisdictions in Canada which have made their boards of internal economy meetings public.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed.)

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**PATENT ACT**

**Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-311, an act to amend to amend the Patent Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce a bill entitled an act to amend the Patent Act. The bill will limit the life of patents for medicines to 17 years and allow for compulsory licences to be granted for the manufacture and sale of medicines after the original patentee has had the medicine approved for marketing for four years.

It also takes into account that the royalty rate is to take into account the amount of medical research carried out in Canada by the applicant and the patentee. There is a provision for refusal or deferral of licence if a patentee has been unusually delayed in commercializing a medicine.

In essence the bill addresses Bill C-91, which has caused prescription drugs to skyrocket in costs. It has affected our medical care system by driving up costs of hospital prescription drugs and

other drugs as well as to individual users. This will allow fairer competition with respect to prescription drugs in the marketplace.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed.)

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#### MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT RETIRING ALLOWANCES ACT

**Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-312, an act to amend the Members of Parliament Retiring Allowances Act (money purchase pension).

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to once again introduce an act to amend the Members of Parliament Retiring Allowances Act, money purchase pension.

• (1015)

This bill addresses many concerns in Canada about the cost of members of Parliament pensions. It follows up on Saskatchewan's lead in 1979 when the Saskatchewan legislature pension plan was changed from a defined benefit to a defined contribution or money purchase. It will save Canadians about \$7 million or \$8 million a year. It will also provide a fair pension system for members of Parliament.

This sort of plan has been endorsed by the National Assistance Coalition and the Canadian Taxpayers Federation. It will take effect as soon as the bill is passed.

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed.)

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#### PARLIAMENT OF CANADA ACT

**Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden, NDP)** moved for leave to introduce Bill C-313, an act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act (other pension income).

He said: Mr. Speaker, my fourth and final bill this morning is an act to amend the Parliament of Canada Act (other pension income).

The purpose of this bill is to require all pension or retiring allowance payments received by a member of Parliament that are paid from public funds to be deducted from the member's sessional allowance. What this does is it eliminates the real double dipping.

Many members of Parliament receive pension funds from municipal, provincial or federal governments, boards, agencies, commissions, teachers' pensions and so on. They come to this House and talk about the salaries being too high. This will save the taxpayers a number of dollars because a number of members receive both public pension income and an MP's pension both of which are paid by the same taxpayer. My view is that this bill should be adopted to eliminate that as much as possible.

#### Routine Proceedings

(Motions deemed adopted, bill read the first time and printed.)

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#### PETITIONS

##### THE CONSTITUTION

**Mr. Werner Schmidt (Okanagan Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to present a petition on behalf of well over 500 petitioners from Okanagan Centre, resident primarily in Kelowna, Westbank and Winfield.

This petition asks and prays that Parliament not amend the Constitution as requested by the Government of Newfoundland and refer the problem of educational reform in that province back to the Government of Newfoundland for resolution by some other non-constitutional procedure.

I present this to the House and I support the petition.

##### PROCEEDS FROM CRIME

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present a petition signed by numerous residents of Kingston and the area. They are petitioning Parliament to urge that we adopt Bill C-205, a bill introduced by the hon. member for Scarborough West, at the earliest opportunity, which will provide that under Canadian law, no criminal will profit from the commission of his or her crime.

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#### QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Paul Zed (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Question No. Q-48 will be answered today.

[Text]

Question No. 48—**Mr. Caccia:**

What will be the precise reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per year to the year 2000 for each of fluorescent and incandescent lightbulbs under the new energy efficiency regulations announced by the Minister of Natural Resources in November of 1995?

**Hon. Anne McLellan (Minister of Natural Resources, Lib.):** The total annual reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, to the year 2000, associated with federal energy efficiency regulations for incandescent and fluorescent lamps are estimated to be:

Year	Annual Reductions in CO <sub>2</sub> (Megatonnes)
1996	2.6
1997	3.7
1998	3.6
1999	4.2
2000	5.3

Reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions were not calculated by lamp type (i.e. incandescent and fluorescent), rather they were calculated based on total energy savings of all lamps affected by the regulations. However, it is estimated that approximately 80 per cent of

*Supply*

annual energy savings associated with the regulations would be attributed to fluorescent lamps. In this regard, it would be reasonable to assume that approximately 80 per cent of the total annual reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> would be attributed to fluorescent lamps.

[English]

**Mr. Zed:** I ask, Mr. Speaker, that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

**The Deputy Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

### SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY—FRANCOPHONES IN MINORITY SITUATIONS

**Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec-Est, BQ)** moved:

That the House encourage the federal government to acknowledge the urgency of the situation of francophones in minority situations in Canada and take the exceptional steps required in order to counter their assimilation and allow their development.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to address the House on this issue which is very close to my heart. First of all, I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to the associations promoting the rights of francophone minorities in Canada, particularly the Ontario ACFO and the Fédération canadienne des communautés francophones et acadienne, for their courage in fighting for the rights of francophone minorities in Canada.

• (1020)

I know it takes a lot of courage and perseverance. I know that from experience since I come from Penetanguishene, a community near Toronto where we had to fight hard to obtain our own schools. I have seen the discrimination against francophones on the part of anglophones; I experienced it and I witnessed it. I have seen not only the fight that francophones had to put up to get their own schools, in Ontario and other regions, but also the problems that such a situation can cause in families, the dissensions, the assimilation of some people, the francophones who, once assimilated, fight other francophones and the damage all that can cause. I know what the results of assimilation can be.

Unfortunately, I also know that the government often exploits this situation. Francophones are accused of being the source of all the trouble in Canada. The francophone minority, even Quebec as a whole, are blamed for Canada's troubles, when in fact the trouble has its source in the hatred anglophones feel toward francophones,

in the discrimination they have subjected that minority to throughout Canadian history.

[English]

I do not think anglophones know their history well enough. They did not take the time to read the history which was biased. Today we speak of francophones as being the black sheep of Confederation, of being responsible for the problems of the country when anglophones have created the problem because they have a history of discriminating against the francophones. That is the root of the problem in Canada.

I remind the House that Quebec existed two centuries before an anglophone even set foot in this country which later became Canada. Quebec was here two centuries before Canada was born.

It was a civilized place to live and was conquered in 1760. From that day on there was a manifest and clear attempt to assimilate the French. Anyone who reads the history of Quebec and later of Canada will understand that there was a manifest intent to politically dominate and to economically exploit the French, to impoverish and assimilate them. This went on for almost a century until a point of grave difficulty was reached in Quebec when people were so impoverished and so politically dominated that it created a rebellion in 1837.

Many francophones then left Quebec for Ontario and western Canada. This is one reason there are large francophone speaking communities in the rest of Canada. They could no longer survive in Quebec because it was under a political domination and economic exploitation by an English minority that made it so difficult for them.

Then there is the report by Lord Durham in 1840 which was a manifest document, clearly indicating that the English will was to assimilate the French. Anyone who reads Lord Durham's report cannot deny that he brought the discussion to another level. He spoke of it in terms of racism, a battle of two races.

English Canadians recognize Lord Durham as a person who brought a kind of parliamentary democracy to Canada. If one looks at it from the francophone point of view, one sees a racist, a person who hated the French and who used all the means at his disposal to assimilate the French.

And so it continued until Confederation in 1867, which was probably the crowning of this effort on the part of Lord Durham. It did not really change the political context in Quebec under which francophones lived. Quite the contrary. It was the accomplishment of the attempt by Lord Durham to assimilate the French.

• (1025)

George Brown, the founder of the *Globe* which later became the *Globe and Mail* in Toronto, was very anti-French. He wrote his wife shortly after Confederation indicating that the English had finally been victorious; they had drowned the French. The aim of Confederation was to drown the French in a new country and they

had succeeded because in Confederation there were three English voices against one. Before that it was one on one. Today it is ten on one.

The attempt to assimilate the French then had a political purpose and it has continued to today. It has never altered. This discrimination, this hatred against the French is manifest, it is written all over the walls in this country. I can give you three examples of this.

The public service in Ottawa functions in English to a large extent. It is 85 per cent English. The public service in Ottawa, which represented this country that was said to be bilingual after Confederation, never recognized French. Everything functioned in English. Canada did not have a word of French on any stamp until 1926. Canada did not have a word of French on any dollar bill until 1936. The federal government did not put out a single government cheque with a word in French on it until 1956. This country was an English country and it was the intent of the anglophones to assimilate the French and discriminate against them.

In Ontario, as in other provinces, all the rights that supposedly were guaranteed by the Constitution, all the rights that had been negotiated in the Confederation debates by John A. Macdonald and others, after Confederation were abolished from Newfoundland to B.C. There were no exceptions. Only in Quebec, anglophones' rights were respected and still are today.

In 1871 New Brunswick abolished French rights and French schools. In 1870 Manitoba abolished French schools and French language. In 1905 Saskatchewan and Alberta abolished French schools and French teaching. In 1912 Ontario abolished French schools and French language. In some provinces of this country there is anti-French legislation that has lasted over a century.

In Ontario, my native province, which is the heart of this country, there has been legislation on the books against the teaching of French and a recognition of French rights for over 50 years. In 1912 règlement 17 was one among many laws passed by the Ontario government to abolish the French language.

In the 1960s Quebec suddenly awoke to this discrimination, political domination and economic exploitation that had been exercised for two centuries against Quebec. Quebecers woke up and said enough is enough. It was the quiet revolution. The anglophones realized that francophones were not sheep or sheepish and that they wanted their rights respected.

Then the Laurendeau-Dunton commission, the B and B commission, was put together which verified the facts. Anyone who reads those documents will recognize the inequity and injustice in this country, the discrimination against the French. There was a royal commission and that is why we have the language laws of 1969. It was to redress these wrongs and injustices toward the French. That

### *Supply*

is why these laws were passed. It was to put back balance, give justice to the francophones who represented at one time almost a third of the population, today maybe a quarter of the population of this country.

• (1030)

They have rights guaranteed by the Constitution that were never recognized in the provinces out west. It was only recently, two years ago, that we started to provide a school or two here and there, but their rights were never recognized. They are still not recognized in British Columbia, Ontario, Newfoundland and New Brunswick.

In 1969 the first law was passed on official languages. It was updated in 1988 with all kinds of additions. Today if we look at the situation of francophones living outside of Quebec, we notice that the situation has not improved tremendously. Some concessions have been made. I can vouch for Ontario and how the francophone community has fought tooth and nail for every school it won. It was hard because the assimilation rate in Ontario is something like 40 per cent today.

The Constitution of Canada grants francophones the right to administer their own school systems. However, this right is denied in Ontario. It is denied in British Columbia. It is denied in Newfoundland. In spite of the fact that these rights were laid down in the Constitution of Canada, guaranteed by the charter of rights in 1982, reaffirmed by two Supreme Court decisions granting francophones the right to administer their own schools, this right still has not been granted 25 years after the official language law of 1969, 15 years after the charter of rights and eight years after both Supreme Court decisions.

It is discrimination against the francophones on the part of the English population. That is the problem. The problem is not that Quebec does not respect its English minority. Give or take the problems here and there that might erupt, that is normal. The injustice of this country is toward the French minority which today, after all these laws and these attempts to address the wrongs toward a minority, still has not been established.

I mentioned the rate of assimilation. Over the last 20 years since the adoption of the law of 1969, the assimilation of francophones has increased by 40 per cent. The laws that have been passed and the attempts by the government to redress these wrongs have not worked. The francophone population is still being assimilated. Not only are francophones still being assimilated as they were 25 years ago but they are being assimilated at a faster rate. They still do not have access to their schools. Even in those provinces like Alberta and Saskatchewan that finally granted some schools to francophones, it is only one in twenty francophones in Alberta who have

*Supply*

access to French schools. It is normal that the assimilation rate should be so high.

Why is it that in the public service right here in Ottawa functions 85 per cent in English? This is confirmed by the Commissioner of Official Languages. His recent report indicated, according to his survey, that 85 per cent of all meetings that occur in the federal public service in Ottawa are in English. Francophones complain of the fact that the functioning of the public service in the federal system is English. Only about 10 per cent of written documents are in French. The public service in Ottawa still functions in English.

Look at Ottawa. This is the capital of the country of Canada which says that it is bilingual. But anyone, even a blind person, can see clearly that Ottawa, the official bilingual capital of a bilingual country is an English town.

• (1035)

Even the francophone community that existed in Ottawa is being assimilated at a rate of 36 per cent. The rate of assimilation is so great that perhaps the next generation will be much weaker, especially if they do not have access to schools, health services or social services. Francophones have nothing with respect to that except minor concessions and exceptions. That to me confirms the fact that the discriminatory will exercised in Canada, which started many years ago, still continues today in other forms.

“We do not want francophones in this country. We do not like francophones in this country. Francophones are the problem in this country. They are the black sheep and they are giving us all kinds of problems”. The problem is that the anglophones wanted to assimilate the French and they are terribly frustrated because the French are still here and still strong.

It is surprising, when we speak of the francophone communities, in spite of all the discriminatory laws, injustices and hatred they have known, that they are still surviving, they are still vital and strong. At the same time, there is a terrible urgency that the government should act. But the government is not acting.

What the government is doing is making promises. Two years ago, in August 1994, when the Prime Minister went to New Brunswick, he took advantage of a great event in French Acadia and promised that finally part VII of the language laws would be applied in this country. This he did with great pomp and circumstance. What do members think happened to that promise? We know the Prime Minister is not too strong when it comes to keeping his promises, but this is another one that fell by the wayside. Nothing has been done. The report of the Commissioner of Official Languages confirms in black and white that nothing has been done.

There is an urgency in this country to provide the health, the resources and the co-operation to ensure that francophone commu-

nities can breath and have faith in their future but the federal government does little or nothing, if anything at all.

Of course the speeches that will be coming from the Liberal members will say that everything is fine and great. They will say progress is being made and everything is going well. I heard the President of the Treasury Board two days ago saying: “My goodness, we have made great accomplishments and extraordinary achievements in this country in terms of bilingualism and the French language in the public service and everywhere else. Things are just great”. That is what we are going to hear from the Liberals and the Reform Party but we will not speak about them.

The Liberals will speak to us about the fact that everything is great which is part of the problem. The government does not even want to recognize that there is a problem. If it does not want to recognize that there is a serious problem then there is never a solution.

The reason why this government does not want to recognize that there is a problem is that the anglophone communities in this country do not want to hear anything about francophones. They are tired hearing about francophones. The Prime Minister knows very well that he does not have any political advantage in trying to help the French minorities that are in difficulty in English Canada.

The majority of the population of English Canada still has that discriminatory anti-French feeling. I know because it is prevalent all over Ontario particularly. It is knee-high and it smells, this discrimination in English Canada. Therefore, the Prime Minister does not want to fluster or frustrate the English majority who have this anti-French feeling.

Furthermore, the government does not want to spend a cent because if the Prime Minister took a single dollar more to help the francophone communities living outside Quebec, my God, it would be horrible what would happen in this country. We would have the Reform Party hitting the Prime Minister and the Liberals would have difficulty enduring the Prime Minister. So the Prime Minister does zero, he does nothing. He has abandoned the francophone communities. He has abandoned even the MPs who have been elected in some ridings, Vanier for example.

• (1040)

There is an MP who has resigned his responsibility toward the francophone community. He was elected in Ontario to defend franco-Ontarians. The AGFO organization is now trying to deal with the federal government because it considered it had received so little for so many years. It considers this year to be critical. If the situation does not change, if the situation does not alter in terms of finances and program, franco-Ontarians will lose many of their organizations, they will lose many of the few services they have right now.



*Supply*

They are in a very critical situation and the francophone MPs of Ontario do not even speak up for them. Quite the contrary. They go to the organizations and say: "The status quo is fine. Everything is great. The government is doing everything it can. The Prime Minister has made a lot of promises. Don't rock the boat. We don't want anyone to be upset. Everything is fine".

The francophone MPs who were elected in the Liberal government who normally are supposed to be defending francophone rights are not defending francophone rights at all. They are not defending the schools that are disappearing or the services that are disappearing. They use the typical Liberal tactic which is to attack Quebec and say: "Gee whiz, Quebec is really maltreating the English. The English are really poorly treated. After all, they might not be able to have bilingual signs and blah, blah, blah, fundamental rights". And still the English community in this country, when we compare, is extremely well treated in Quebec compared with the francophone communities outside Quebec.

Assimilation, the will of domination, exploitation, discrimination and hatred by the English of the French continues today. I know a lot of anglophones personally. I know a lot of them are not anti-French. They have open minds, but they are part of the minority as well.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, since we are talking about discrimination, I am surprised with the statements made by an hon. member of the House who spoke about Canadian history in a biased manner, in my opinion, an opinion that is certainly shared by the vast majority of Canadians, and indeed, historians.

The hon. member talks about defending the interests of francophones, but I would like to point out to you that he spoke to us exclusively in English. He should at least have made an effort by outlining this situation in French.

Having said that, I find the Canada the hon. member has described to us is a Canada that no longer exists. I believe the hon. member has forgotten to tell us about the real Canadian history. If we go back to the conquest, when France, as you know, gave New France to England, we must not forget that it is the French administration that left us, that abandoned us. We must not forget either that, at some point, we thought we could reconquer New France, since England was in a position to give it back to France, but, unfortunately, the French did not accept that. That is not well known, but is worth debating and telling the people about.

In fact, when I saw the premier of Quebec, accompanied by several of his ministers, giving the Order of Quebec to Prime Minister Juppé of France, I recall that the existence of Canada was all but denied and that the Maple Leaf was nowhere to be seen. We

saw, for example, how the agency dealing with the Quebec government protocol behaved.

• (1045)

It did everything to hide the Maple Leaf. I find that rather repugnant and, in my opinion, inappropriate in the current context. I sometimes wonder, because I somehow have the feeling that these separatists are behaving like mere colonials.

It is also interesting to hear them talk about Canadian history. You know, 100 years ago this month, Wilfrid Laurier was elected Prime Minister of Canada, the first Prime Minister of French Canadian origin. I think we should not be surprised that so much progress has been made since that period.

The hon. member did not even talk about the fact, for example—I want to conclude on this, as it will certainly make for a very lively debate—that, today, 350,000 young anglophones are studying French full time in immersion classes throughout Canada, while, only 15 years ago, there were barely 30,000 of them doing so. I believe anglophones have made considerable progress, but the hon. member does not talk about that. And I think that, today, we will go back over the points that were raised by the hon. member, we will debate them and we will certainly correct his version of Canadian history.

**Mr. Marchand:** Mr. Speaker, of course, I have nothing but praise for the fact that 350,000 young anglophones are learning French. I think this is a very good thing and I have nothing negative to say about it, but this does not help the situation of francophones outside Quebec. Francophone communities, for their part, are being assimilated, and that is the problem.

The hon. member accuses us of being mere colonials, but in fact, he too is acolonial, just like the minister who is about to speak, perhaps. The arguments used always try to convey the idea that Quebecers are all wet, that they misunderstand history. As if Quebec were always responsible for its own problems and those of Canada.

It is obvious that the hon. member, like his francophone colleagues, rarely speaks to the issue of francophones outside Quebec. They always want to point the finger at Quebec, as if Quebec were responsible, as if Quebec did not respect the rights of its minority, whereas it is English Canada that does not do so. It is obvious that English Canada does not respect the rights of francophone minorities, starting with the federal government right here in Ottawa, which no longer has or seems to have the will to respect minority rights, which has an impact on all the other provinces.

So there is no significant progress, no concrete progress. Minorities get a few goodies here and there, but there is no real progress. That is why the communities themselves, in Ontario, Saskatchewan and elsewhere, are raising the alarm, saying that it is urgent for the federal government to react.

*Supply*

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I like French Canadians.

[*English*]

I find the hon. member's intervention quite intriguing. He is trying to polarize Canadians with comments such as English Canadians hate French Canadians. Comments like that are engendered to further the separatist cause, not to develop peace, understanding and tolerance between groups. Its primary reason is to engender hate, intolerance and misunderstanding between these groups.

I debated with this member on television a week and a half ago. I asked the hon. member that if Quebec separates, what will happen to the French speaking people outside of Quebec. The response of the member, who raised this motion, was a shrug of the shoulders: "Who cares?" This from the member who professes to fight for the rights of French speaking people outside of Quebec and who brought forth this motion.

• (1050)

I ask the hon. member why he said that. What is his explanation for that?

**Mr. Marchand:** Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether I actually said that, but it is certainly not the member who cares. It is certainly not the government that cares.

I am the one who put forth this motion today and I am the one speaking in defence of francophones outside Quebec. Francophones know I am doing that.

Who cares? At least I care because I know the situation of francophones. It is certainly not the Reform Party that cares. It is certainly not the government or the minister who cares. What has the government done to redress the injustices toward francophones? The situation generally has worsened.

I am not trying to create a discourse on hatred or intolerance or discrimination. I am stating historical facts. I do not hate anglophones. I speak English and I deal with respect with anglophones because anglophones are like francophones, people who have to be respected, but the history of Canada has a place. The history of Canada, with respect to the French, is undeniably proof of a long term, well established and heavyweight discrimination against the French. In some circles it is profound hatred.

I want to denounce that. I want it to change. I want the government to react.

[*Translation*]

**The Deputy Speaker:** Unfortunately, the time allocated has expired. Do we have the unanimous consent of the House to extend this fascinating period of questions and comments?

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Hon. Lucienne Robillard (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and Acting Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to reiterate the Canadian government's commitment to francophone communities in minority situations in Canada.

This world of ours is redefining itself. Never has there been such a great need to look at the linguistic minorities issue. In this vast redefinition effort, Canada is a fine example of a success story, and I stress "success".

Unlike most countries, Canada was built on its two founding peoples. Ever since the first European explorers set foot on the American continent, linguistic duality has been a central feature of our collective identity. This duality dating back to the beginnings of this country has also enriched our country. Canada's official languages policy partakes of this vision, which, while being rooted in our past also propels us toward the future.

This policy was developed to promote the development of the two major official language communities across the country. Its main objective is to give francophones outside Quebec tools to ensure their development in terms of language and culture as well as in all economic sectors.

The official languages policy has always adapted to new realities. It started by recognizing Canada's official language minorities. Then, it encouraged them to find ways to assert their uniqueness within the community. Today, it seeks to promote their autonomy in every sphere of activity and to prompt them to look to the future and take their place on the world scene.

This policy remains an undeniably effective tool as we approach the turn of the century. Official language communities in a minority situation must join in with the rest of our society to meet the challenges of our times.

On this occasion, I would like to reflect on the key components of this policy, a proven policy that has been instrumental in making our country as successful as it is. There was a need, first of all, to recognize the fundamental role of the two official language communities of Canada. Enacting the Official Languages Act in 1969 laid the foundations of this recognition. This act unequivocally recognized in law the right of anglophones and francophones in minority situations to develop like all other Canadians.

• (1055)

Moreover, it gave the French and English languages equal status and equal rights in Parliament, before the courts and in federal institutions. Boosted by this recognition, linguistic minorities, especially French-speaking communities, have been able to put all their energy, imagination and resources into creating organizations which would allow them to voice their concerns throughout the country. First of all, those official languages minorities had to

ensure that the majority was aware of their presence and heard what they had to say.

Through its official languages policy, which gave concrete expression to the text of the law, the Government of Canada supported the collective effort by funding the new organizations directly. This strong political commitment of the government, combined with the inexhaustible vitality of the communities, for they played a role as well, led to the emergence of a solid network for promoting their interests and strengthening their communities in all aspects of life in society.

There are many tangible manifestations of this support. Everywhere outside Quebec where French is the language of communication and solidarity, school-community centres have opened their doors. New radio stations started to broadcast, newspapers reflected the reality of the minority environment, theatre companies sprang up, mutual aid associations were created and cooperatives went into operation. Thus, by implementing its official languages policies and programs, the federal government set off an unprecedented period of growth, and changed for good the vision that Canadians have of their country.

Second, in order to continue to promote the growth of the French fact outside Quebec, many years of negligence in education had to be compensated at all costs. This is why, in 1982, the Liberal government then in office guaranteed the rights of linguistic minorities to education in their own language in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The recognition, in section 23, of the right to an education in French for all francophones in the country is an historic fact of the highest significance. In addition to protecting the vital character of an education in French, this section confirms the right of francophones to manage their schools, as confirmed in 1990 by the Supreme Court of Canada in the Mahé case.

Given its mandate under the Official Languages Act, the Government of Canada decided to take the initiative and to help reluctant provinces fulfil their commitments. Among other things, it passed a series of special measures to make school management a reality everywhere in the country. The facts speak for themselves. In most provinces and territories, French speaking minorities now manage their own schools. The Government of Canada does its utmost, within the limits of its powers, to promote this reality in all regions of the country.

In October 1994, this government reinstated the court challenges program, an initiative which earned it the praise of the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata, who said, and I quote: "On behalf of the francophone and Acadian communities, one must rejoice in the reinstatement of the court challenges program, the abolition of which they had condemned. It is thanks to this program that the right to be educated in French in Canada was recognized".

### *Supply*

The program provides francophones with the means to go to the courts to protect the right to manage their schools. The Government of Canada will continue to support these communities on the political, financial and legal fronts, to ensure this right is respected in every province and in the two territories.

Communities must now strengthen these rights and look after their development in every leading sector of human activity, particularly the economy and the communication and technology sectors.

#### ● (1100)

At the World Acadian Congress held in August 1994, the Government of Canada announced an initiative that will allow francophone communities to play fully their role in the society of tomorrow. Pursuant to section 42 of the Official Languages Act, federal institutions and bodies have from now on the responsibility to financially and technically support the development of minority official language communities within the scope of their respective mandates, which means that these communities can now rely on new partners in each of the key sectors of their development.

For example, various concrete projects show the results such an initiative can have. In Alberta, for instance, the Western Economic Diversification Agency and the Department of Canadian Heritage both helped in the establishment of the Cité francophone in Edmonton.

In New Brunswick, the Law Faculty and the Electrical Engineering Department of the University of Moncton enjoyed the support of the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Department of Human Resources Development. In Manitoba, a heritage centre will soon come into being thanks to the co-operation of the Western Economic Diversification Agency, and the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Department of Human Resources Development.

Francophones in Regina and Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, also had the support of these three partners for the construction of a school and community centre. In Nova Scotia, francophones in Petit-de-Grat, Cape Breton, have set up a combination school-community-business centre with the support of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the Canadian heritage and development of human resources departments.

Obviously, these are but a few examples, but my own department is not the only one that does and should promote official languages in Canada. Linguistic duality is a matter of partnership. The Department of Canadian Heritage is also looking for a better co-operation with provincial and territorial governments.

With each one of these governments, the department tries to promote issues under provincial jurisdiction that have a direct impact on the future of official language communities in minority situations.

*Supply*

Moreover, the Government of Canada has given more leeway to official language communities despite the economic situation. We wanted these communities to set their own priorities and channel the resources provided to them into areas they consider a priority.

We are convinced that people themselves are most able to determine their needs and their future. That is why we have brought in a unique type of co-operation that involves direct agreements with the communities and gives them a greater financial independence. Both these measures are the logical and unescapable consequence of the Canadian government's vision of linguistic duality. They help official language communities in a minority situation contribute to the prosperity and success of Canada.

Also, because of the globalization of the economy, having two languages is a major asset, especially at a time when geo-political boundaries are becoming blurred. Our francophone and anglophone communities give us access to two of the greatest cultures of the world and their cultural vitality lets us assert our originality within the community of the world.

For instance, the Canadian francophonie, which is centred in the province of Quebec but spreads all over our country, has long been maintaining close ties with the international francophonie, that includes 47 member states.

• (1105)

The Francophonie is getting stronger and stronger and becoming a vibrant and invigorating force, a true culture and idea medium. To be part of it is to join a partnership of more than 160 million people scattered over five continents.

To be able to use two languages spoken throughout the world also represents a clear economic advantage at a time of market globalization. No less than 25 countries have French as one of their official languages, and 33 countries have English. That is why our official language policy promotes, through its programs, the learning of the second official language and makes Canadians more aware of the economic and cultural benefits several languages can provide.

Moreover, many Canadians want to have the opportunity to learn their second official language. An Environics poll showed that three out of four Canadians want their children to learn and master both official languages. Some three million young Canadians take regular second language courses or take part in immersion programs.

Communication, globalization and change are the new watchwords. Because of new technological and scientific developments, we are thrust into a complex and changing world. The information superhighway which will soon link all the countries in the world

gives us only an inkling of the dimensions the information-based society will take worldwide.

We must have access to this electronic highway and it is all the more urgent for the Francophonie since it will need to find an original way to emphasize its distinctiveness and to carve itself a place in this otherwise unilingual and monolithic electronic universe.

Nowadays, the Francophonie is undoubtedly an integral part of the Canadian society and a major asset for this country. This is the reason why the official language policy remains, after 25 years, a good means to realize our vision of a free and forward-looking country.

Partnership and accountability are the key words of our policy. I unhesitatingly agree with these tools that will allow us to take up the challenges of today and tomorrow. Co-operation between various levels of government and their agencies, linguistic minorities, their representatives and the majority should be automatic. It must become second nature. I would even go as far as to wish that the private sector be even more committed to the promotion of the French factor in Canada. Businesses have much to give and to gain in this area, particularly if they want to establish business relations with francophones here and overseas.

Thus, partnership is a key to success and should guide us in the future. It is then important to diversify the funding sources of a policy that can no longer be only the concern of the government. For such a partnership to work, all stakeholders must also contribute their ideas, their creative abilities and their strengths.

Communities in particular must get what they need to be self-sufficient and find within themselves the means to realize their ideals. We will take measures to promote greater responsibility and freedom of action. It is with the absolute confidence that we have the instruments necessary to succeed collectively that I envision for Canada a future which reflects its geography, one that is rich, diversified and inexhaustible.

I think we have every reason to be proud of our Official Languages Act. Incidentally, initiatives taken towards the French communities outside Quebec were praised by a former Secretary of State of the federal government, Mr. Lucien Bouchard.

In 1988, he declared that these initiatives were made possible by the enactment of the Official Languages Act, in 1969, by a Liberal government. He also said and I quote: "—their success was astonishing, as reflected in the access that Francophones outside Quebec have to education in their language and by the enrolment in immersion courses. Their implementation, as he then concluded, represents in every way a model of federal-provincial cooperation."

In this case, I can only agree with what Mr. Bouchard said at that time.

• (1110)

**Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec-Est, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciated the minister's speech. Of course, she used many fine words, such as "reiterate the government's commitments", but we all know very well that if the minister really examined the situation of francophone minorities, she would realize that, in fact, things are not getting better, they are getting worse. Indeed, this is what the associations themselves are constantly saying.

I have two brief questions to ask her as the acting minister of Canadian Heritage. Here is the first one. The hon. minister will recall that the Department of Canadian Heritage is responsible for coordinating and implementing Part VII of the Official Languages Act. In Part VII of the act, section 42 provides that the heritage department is responsible for coordinating and ensuring the implementation of Part VII. Why has Part VII not been implemented yet, two years after the Prime Minister himself, at the Acadian Convention in August 1994, formally committed his government and his caucus to ensure it would be done?

I would like to point out to the minister that in a recently released report, the Commissioner of Official Languages says, in black and white, that nothing or close to nothing has been done regarding the implementation and enforcement of Part VII.

My second question is as follows. The minister spoke beautifully about her government's commitments, ensuring financial independence, cooperation, *alleluia*. But, at the same time, her department is cutting its financial assistance to francophone communities. I am sure the minister did not have the courage to go to the last ACFO convention, in Ontario, the ACFO being in the process of negotiating with the Department of Canadian Heritage to obtain the funding it needs to survive, while the department is making all kinds of cuts. There is a lot of moaning and groaning from francophone communities.

In Saskatchewan, it has already happened. The government has cut almost 50 per cent of its financial assistance to the various associations. There is a constant effort on the part of the government to reduce to the lowest level possible the funding granted to francophone association, at a time when the situation is critical.

I will quote a letter about the cuts made in Saskatchewan. The letter is addressed to the prime minister and comes from a twelve-year-old elementary school student, Marisa Gendron-Nadeau, from Saskatchewan. She writes very well, I might add, even if she is only twelve. I will not read the whole letter, but here is what it said: "As for the documentation I am supposed to receive from Heritage Canada, I am afraid it will not be very informative since I already know that Franco-Saskatchewanians will receive 37

### *Supply*

per cent less over the next three years, which means a 45 per cent cut for provincial associations and a 10 per cent cut for community associations".

Later on, she adds: "Personally, I sell tickets that give people a chance to win prizes. The proceeds from the sale of these tickets would help pay for this year's trip for the eighth-graders in our school", which is a French school.

She goes on to say: "Each time people ask me which school I attend and I tell them that I attend the French Canadian school, they call me a frog and slap the door in my face. That is the kind of attitude that anglophones have towards us. It is unfortunate that these people close their door to us, but it is downright unacceptable that the people who have the duty to help us—namely Heritage Canada—have chosen to do the same."

She said in closing: "Dear Mr. Prime Minister, at the beginning of our correspondence—she had sent other letters previously—I encouraged you to win the elections and to become prime minister of this country. Today I wonder whether I was right or wrong."

Can the minister tell me now, in spite of her wonderful speech, why her department, which is directly responsible for the application of Part VII, has done almost nothing and is even cutting funding to francophone associations at a time when the situation is critical?

• (1115)

**Mrs. Robillard:** Mr. Speaker, with regard to the first question by the hon. member for Québec-Est, I think he ought to at least have the courage to acknowledge that this government, through its Prime Minister, did indeed commit in 1994 to the implementation of section 41 of the Official Languages Act.

At that time, I would say it was somewhat of a novelty for government to require various sectors, various departments, to be concerned with the development of minority communities in the country. Of course, we are just beginning that undertaking and most definitely we have asked each department to provide an action plan on the implementation of section 41. The Commissioner of Official Languages has just reported on this. At least he had the honesty to describe the action plans very clearly as first generation.

For the first time, departments and agencies were required to draw up action plans concerning the development of minorities in Canada. The initiative must, I believe, at least be acknowledged, although I fully agree that the plans are not perfect, and not up to the expectations of the francophone communities. There is, however, action under way and the wish of the government is being translated into action which will improve from one year to the next. Moreover, the report of the Commissioner of Official Language will help us to improve the departments' action plans for next year.

*Supply*

Although the hon. member for Québec-Est does not have the honesty to do so, the action taken by this government must be acknowledged. The same thing goes for the support to official language minority groups throughout the country. Every time I hear the hon. member for Québec-Est in this House, he is going on about the end of the world, the assimilation of Canada's francophones. He makes it sound like we are headed for a national catastrophe or something.

I realize that the potential for indignation among the Bloc Québécois members is very great, very easily set off, but still reality must not be denied. Has there been progress in this country in the past 25 years, since the Official Languages Act was adopted? Has there been a change for the better in the situation of the communities? Yes.

Is the situation perfect? No. I am the first to admit that. We must, however, acknowledge that we are in a situation of change, that there has been a marked improvement, and that this government is still committed to supporting the minority communities across the country.

When I hear it said that I did not have the courage to attend the ACFO convention, I would just like to remind the hon. member for Québec-Est that, on this side of the House at least, we work as a team, and a government team member did attend, the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier. He spoke at the ACFO convention, reiterating the government's desire to sign an agreement with the franco-Ontarian community. What is more, that community has requested a meeting, which will take place tomorrow with the parliamentary secretary for Canadian Heritage. Once again, let us have all the facts before we jump to conclusions.

[English]

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a quick question for the minister.

Hahamovitch Kosher Imports of Quebec was being investigated by the l'Office de la langue française in Quebec for abrogating French language laws.

• (1120)

The French language police in Quebec have dropped those charges, yet this government through the Minister of Justice is continuing to pursue charges against this group, this religious group importing religious foods from overseas.

I ask the minister why her government is continuing to pursue charges against the Hahamovitch kosher food company when l'Office de la langue Française has dropped its charges.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Robillard:** Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that, in this country, there is legislation that must be respected in this area, and

a certain degree of flexibility is always required. There are always interpretations of legislation. I can, however, assure the Reform Party member that I shall be raising this question with the Minister responsible for this within the government.

[English]

**Mr. Jim Silye (Calgary Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on this issue. Since the Reform Party policies on bilingualism have been misinterpreted, misrepresented and misunderstood, it gives me an opportunity to put them back in their proper perspective.

I will comment on the speech given by the Bloc member for Québec-Est. It is regrettable that it was one of the most insightful, racist speeches I have ever heard. He tried to encourage other people across the country to show their anger and frustration. He used the word hate and said anglophones hate Quebecers or that anglophones hate francophones. I do not know under what authority, according to what knowledge, he can make that statement.

I know the majority of Quebecers do not share his view with respect to hatred, even if some are separatists. I know the majority of Quebecers in two referendums voted to stay in the country. It is a shame and a sham that the Bloc continues to want to push its personal separatist cause to break up the country.

He also discredited himself in three ways. He failed to give proof of his motion, which states in part that the government fails to recognize the urgency. It does. It has a lot of audits. It has made mistakes with the Official Languages Act and it is not perfect. However, the member never proved the urgency he talked about.

His motion also says they should take exceptional measures to counter their assimilation and allow for growth. There has been a lot of movement toward respecting francophones who live outside Quebec and working with them. I have evidence in my speech which shows that.

The member also described himself by only complaining. That is all he did, complain, complain, complain. He offered no solutions to solve the problem. This gentleman does not wish to stay in Canada. This gentleman has no interest in promoting anglophone-francophone relationships and bilingualism across the country.

There is proof of that. The final discredit was when he was on television with my colleague from Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, my colleague asked him what would happen if Quebec separated to all those francophones who live outside Quebec. He shrugged his shoulders and said: "Who cares?" That is shameful. What duplicity. It reminds me of the finance minister and the Prime Minister. They are duplicitous too.

His speech strictly tried to create a myth to push the Bloc agenda. The agenda should be what can the Bloc members of Quebec do to make things better for Quebec. What can the Bloc

members do to make this a better country to live in? Together we can grow and nurture much better than if we divide and separate. The consequences are as severe for the rest of Canada as they are for Quebecers in Canada. They know it.

They hid the Le Hir reports; 10 or 15 reports were hidden. Parizeau showed he cared only about a small select group, a few people. He made bigoted and racist comments when he lost the referendum, and now Bouchard will have another referendum. When will it end?

He talks about democracy. They had two democratic elections. Twice they lost. They want to do it a third time? What happens if they get yes with 50 per cent plus one? That means immediate break up, right? They will not have another referendum then, will they? Bloc members are shaking their heads, "no, we won't". No is never, but yes is forever, and yes just once.

• (1125)

That is hypocritical. It is undemocratic. Quebecers should wake up and realize these separatists are hurting them. There are francophones and anglophones in Quebec who do not like what they are doing. The majority do not like what they are doing. They should stand up to them. That is the only way we will put this to rest.

I have complained that he has not shown the urgency. All he has done is make accusations. If he could have focused on how to better spend the billion dollars a year we spend on bilingualism to encourage bilingualism, even in Quebec, it would have been a much more productive speech.

This motion would be much more productive if we talked about how we could promote bilingualism. That is the problem. It has 63 per cent to 65 per cent of Canadians complaining about how official bilingualism is not working in this country. Even Quebecers are in the 60 percentile that complain about how this is not working. If that is where the gentleman from Québec-Est is coming from, to that degree I agree with him. I agree official bilingualism is not working. The way to do it is to stop having it misinterpreted.

The question is how to promote bilingualism. His lack of attention to the word bilingualism to his own province is what is lacking in his speech. What about the ethnics who come into that province? Yes, they have to learn French first. Yes, they should learn French first. Yes, they must be made to learn French. That is a provincial jurisdiction and a provincial right.

What about those anglophones born in Quebec who remain anglophones, 800,000 of them? Do they not have any rights? Will they all be kicked out?

### *Supply*

Let us look at the facts. The government spends over a billion dollars a year and has done so for about 30 years, since Trudeau started this; \$30 billion or more spent on bilingualism. Do we have value for our money? No. Sixty-three per cent of Canadians, including Quebecers, say no.

The official languages commissioner sends confusing messages. The person who is supposed to ensure this is being enforced right does not know what he is talking about. Let me give an example of that.

In 1994, I was on the Standing Committee on Official Languages where I met Mr. Goldbloom. The first thing he said was Reform's policy is not very good for Quebecers. He said if we went to Montreal we would certainly hear that the English speaking community, which is vibrant and has moved a great deal in the direction of bilingualism, is still very much committed to its life in English. This is for the Bloc members. Those people in Montreal still want the right to have English.

I was able to point out our policies. I indicated our party's position is that we are not anti-French, as some of the media likes to accuse us. The principle of supplying bilingual services in federal institutions should be where numbers warrant, where there is significant demand. This is the one supported by the Reform Party.

The question became, both for myself and the commissioner, how to define the minority community, the size, how big it should be to qualify for bilingual services?

Mr. Goldbloom said: "A province, I respectfully submit, is too large. The unity of this country matters to me. Unity means we are talking about a unit. That unit is not a province, it is the country. In the country there are 7 million people who speak French. It is not the small number of people that is the issue. It is the whole country and it is the history of linguistic duality".

There are two messages there, how to incorporate and include services in two languages to satisfy the 7 million French speaking people and that there should be services required to serve the balance of Canadians who, I presume, would be English speaking.

He says the unit of a province is too large but that the country is the right size. That is a confusing message. I think everybody is going away from what the original B and B commission indicated.

The B and B report, which Trudeau commissioned and which he based on his bilingualism and biculturalism policy, was to have a system for all individuals located in the country to have the right to communicate and receive services from government in their preferred official language.

*Supply*

This has been interpreted as where sufficient numbers and significant demand warrant. This has been reinterpreted by the Official Languages Act that we must force all Canadians to learn two languages. We object to having an Official Languages Act that enforces bilingualism. People react to this, especially when one province will not teach in the second official language. This offends and upsets people. It is what is making this issue so controversial.

• (1130)

We should go back to the original B and B report and significant numbers, sufficient demand. We could end the official enforcement of two official languages and that money, whether it is a \$500 million or \$1 billion, would be better spent encouraging and promoting bilingualism. To speak a second language is an advantage, not a disadvantage.

We do know Canada's history, unlike what the member for Québec-Est said. We all recognize that this is a country of two primary languages, French and English. To promote and encourage Canadians to learn a second language is positive, not negative. It is similar to Europe.

I speak Hungarian. I am a first generation immigrant. There is no official Hungarian language policy in Canada. I go into my little pockets and pools where I can speak Hungarian to Hungarians. I never spoke one word of Hungarian for 10 years.

*[Editor's Note: Member spoke in Hungarian.]*

*[English]*

I have learned to speak quite well in Hungarian. I have forgotten some but not all of it. I am saying to Quebecers and separatists that their argument that if they do not speak French every day all day they will forget their language and if they do not force people in Quebec to learn only French they will lose their language, is not right. I am living proof it is not right. I guarantee that if every francophone in Quebec never spoke a word of French for 10 years, they would still remember how to speak French. I submit that very humbly. They may forget a little bit. The argument that if they do not speak French all the time and do not have it up there first and foremost they will lose their language is wrong.

How did we get here? We got here through the B and B report and through a confusion and misinterpretation of Trudeau's intention for a just society. It is unfortunate that has happened because although I do not respect the games the separatists are playing, I respect their right to fight for what they want and what they believe in.

By the same token, I would hope that they would give me that same respect and I could speak against them in such a way that shows them I really want to be their friend. I really want them to fight for Quebec the way Reformers are fighting for B.C., Ontario and Alberta. They should force the federal government. Le

problème c'est Ottawa, as our leader said. That is the problem and that is where we should focus.

We can fix the Official Languages Act. We can move to encouraging and promoting bilingualism. There is nothing wrong with learning English or French no matter what one's first language is, even if it is Hungarian. This is the way to solve the problem.

I have to go back to a couple of other facts mentioned by the member for Québec Est to give credence to his contention that there is an urgency and a lack of respect for francophones. That is simply untrue, totally and blatantly untrue. I respect francophones. I stand here and defy anyone to say that I do not respect francophones. I respect all Canadians.

For instance, the member said that there were only one or two French schools in my province. Let me tell the hon. member what the deal is. In Alberta 163 schools offered French immersion in 1994-95. That represents 27,717 students. The member asked: "So what if there is French immersion? What does that do for the francophones who live there?" What it does is when those people whose first language is English learn French and become bilingual, then the francophone has just found 27,717 new friends. That is what it does. That is what builds a country. That is what will unite us. It is what brings us together.

• (1135)

On top of those 163 schools, 21 schools offer francophone programs for francophones living in Alberta. Programs just for francophones last year represented services for 2,765 francophone students. They can even have their own French boards if they want.

I would like to share with the hon. member for Québec-Est that for the first time there is a French only school in Calgary Centre. That is in Alberta, where 23 Reformers have come from to this House of Commons and are labelled as anti-French, a province which has done nothing but promote bilingualism.

Those are examples of promoting and encouraging bilingualism. People I know, lawyers, doctors and accountants send their kids willingly to French immersion schools because they know the advantage of it. The member should be doing the same thing for francophones. He should be encouraging francophones to learn English as well, instead of being so paranoid about his own language which he will never ever forget how to speak and I know that.

The Reform Party has done a poor job of representing its bilingualism policy. We come across as anti-French. We come across as anti-Quebec. What I am hoping to do today is to put on the record quite clearly and unequivocally that we are pro Quebec, we are pro French, we are pro bilingualism. In fact we are pro Canada.

We want this country to stay together. We want this country to show its ethnic backgrounds and diversity. Yes we agree that the



way the government is doing it is not the right way. Yes we agree it is easy for the member for Québec-Est to stand up and get the government ticked off and get more separatist support, but that is not the way to reach his ultimate objectives.

Look what is happening in the city of Montreal. After two referendums and 25 years of trying to separate, it has not worked. Why not just forget it? Montreal has dwindled to half of what it was 25 years ago.

In 1969 I went to the University of Ottawa and bilingualism was prevalent then. Sometime in the late sixties the separatist movement started. A student union started it. I was there and saw the birth of separatism, of that movement and that thought.

The difference in Ottawa was maybe 25 per cent or 30 per cent of people were bilingual. Now I do not need a statistic. I do not need a map. I do not need anything. I am here 25 years later and I get the impression that 75 per cent of people in Ottawa are bilingual. Everywhere I go they can speak two languages. Whether they greet you in English or French, you go into the other language and you just do not know. You are not safe to say anything in another language assuming that the other person does not understand because they do.

This is evidence that bilingualism has worked. Ottawa is an example of it. In the House of Commons there are 1,400 employees under the control and purview of the board which the Speaker looks after. For 69 per cent of those employees, French is their first language. That is great and good. It shows that it works. It shows that things are being done positively within the system.

I want to explain what the Reform Party means when we say that we would replace the Official Languages Act. We do not like the Official Languages Act and we say a lot of the money being spent is a waste. Let us spend it better. We would replace the Official Languages Act with a territorial bilingualism act. It has its credibility and concept from the original Laurendeau-Dunton report, the B and B report. It goes back to that principle to recognize language minority rights. It is a compromise between the two extremes.

Under this model, language rights and minority language services would be extended only to those minorities large enough to survive over the long term. Smaller minorities would not receive full rights on the basis that the burden imposed on the majority population which must foot the tax bill for minority language government services outweighs the benefits being received by the minority. This model has been successfully employed in Finland for dealing with its Swedish speaking minority.

If practised in Canada, this model would extend full minority language rights to the large francophone communities in eastern and northeastern Ontario and to the Acadians of New Brunswick as

### *Supply*

well as to the anglophone community of west end Montreal. The rest of the country for all intents and purposes would not be required to offer the services in two languages. By doing this we then spend some advertising dollars on promoting and encouraging the learning of a second language.

• (1140)

When I went to high school in Arnprior, Ontario I was taught a second language. It was French. I learned English at home and French in school but I did not see the need for it. Times have changed. This is the nineties. There is a need for a second language. There is a need for people to expand their minds. People do not have to learn a second language and if they speak just one language they should not be ashamed or embarrassed.

There are places in Quebec where they are forced to do things in English where there is no need. Some areas are so francophone it is ridiculous to impose English signs and English services. They do not need it, they do not want it and they should not have to do it. The same exists outside of Quebec in a lot of areas.

If we want to achieve a balance, territorial bilingualism might go a long way toward solving that problem. I am not saying it would solve all of the problems because someone or something always gets in the way. They are politicians, bureaucrats and government.

We as politicians should clearly enunciate the objectives of what we want and then follow it up. The mistake Trudeau made is he enunciated a good objective and he supported the Laurendeau-Dunton report. That is all he wanted. He wanted to encourage, promote and set in place some services that would make francophones who left Quebec feel comfortable living outside of Quebec. That is what he wanted. However other people came along, for example the bureaucrats, and interpreted it differently and started imposing rules. For example, I think it is silly to have language police in a province. That is such a waste of money, but it is just my personal opinion.

What else can I say in the minute that is left for me.

**An hon. member:** Why don't you sit down?

**Mr. Silye:** I do not want to sit down until my time is up. I have every right to speak for 20 minutes just like the member for Québec-Est. I know he is champing at the bit to get at me on a question.

In 1995 the commissioner of official languages received 15 complaints regarding the Internet which dealt with the unavailability of various information in French. When will the Bloc Québécois and the Liberal government catch up with the Reform Party which has more French services on the Internet site than both the Bloc and the Liberals? How is that for promoting bilingualism? How is that for offering services in two languages? How is that for showing

*Supply*

that the Reform Party does care about Quebec, that the Reform Party wants Quebec?

We need good Quebecers to run for the Reform Party to show that we can make a difference here representing the province of Quebec the proper way.

**Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec-Est, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I know the member for Calgary Centre to be respectful and probably one of the more progressive MPs in the Reform Party but he does not necessarily represent the opinion generally expressed within the Reform Party. Certainly I can well believe he is sincere in his remarks.

However his remarks indicate clearly that he lacks a certain understanding of the history of Canada, in particular when he speaks about the Hungarian language and asking why do we not have an official language policy for Hungarian in Canada. It is not that I am against Hungarian. I would love to speak Hungarian. I would love to speak many languages.

The fact is initially francophones were at the foundation of this country. Again, it comes back in the messages that are sent out from the Reform Party and the Liberal Party which are always attacking Quebec as though Quebec were responsible for the assimilation of francophones outside Quebec.

Quebec is still part of Canada and the assimilation of francophones is increasing. It is increasing more and more rapidly. We cannot blame Quebec for the fact that English speaking provinces do not respect their commitments to francophones. Also, I would humbly submit to the member for Calgary Centre that the English community in Quebec is well respected. They have all their rights, educational, hospital, social services. They are extremely well treated in spite of disagreements in terms of details.

• (1145)

For example, the member mentioned that it was Mr. Trudeau who brought about the B and B commission. No, it was Mr. Pearson who brought about the commission which recommended a series of measures to help bring back the rights that had been denied francophones, particularly in Alberta, which had denied those rights since 1905. It took a long time before Alberta recognized the right of francophones to their own schools. It happened only last year. There are 14 schools in Alberta where they teach in French. The member did not mention that, but it is important, it is a great gain. But it was forced on Alberta.

Alberta resisted in spite of two Supreme Court decisions and the charter of human rights, article 23, which demanded Alberta respect the rights of francophones. Alberta resisted until the last minute and the federal government had to pay Alberta to provide schools and administer the school system in Alberta. So Alberta is far from being an example.

I do not think that the people in the west could teach a lesson to Quebec on how to represent its minority. However, the problem is that Alberta and other provinces still do not provide a sufficient guarantee or services to its French minority.

Finally, the policy of the Reform Party obviously, in spite of goodwill, reduces it to a territorial administration. It would obviously reduce even further the powers that French language communities will have in order to survive. Clearly, according to history, Alberta, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and B.C. do not want to have any French in their provinces.

If the provinces are given the right to administer minority language services, my God, it is going to be absolutely, zilch, zero.

**Mr. Silye:** Mr. Speaker, I never said that we need a Hungarian language policy. I am saying that we do not need the Hungarian language policy. Hungarians will continue to retain their language and culture, despite the fact that we do not have a policy here in Canada.

My point is that it is not necessary to be so over protective of a language to the degree that it will be lost and forgotten. There are examples that it will never happen.

I never blamed Quebec for the mess we are in concerning bilingualism. I never once in my speech blamed Quebec. I blamed the federal government, prime ministers and the second tier, the bureaucrats who were hired to implement those policies.

I thank the member for the correction as to who initiated the Laurendeau-Dunton report, the B and B Commission, Mr. Pearson. He was a fine gentleman.

In terms of the Bloc's policy, I talked about territorial bilingualism and he indicated that it would not work. Here is the Bloc Quebecois policy. It calls for full and generous language rights to be extended to francophones living outside of Quebec and very few rights to be extended to anglophones living inside Quebec.

Where is the principle of equality there? That is avoiding it. "The logic of this asymmetry is that French is in danger of extinction in Canada". It is in danger of extinction in Canada? Seven million people speak that language and somebody says that it is in danger of extinction. That defies logic. It goes on: "It can only survive on an equal footing with English if it receives preferential, legal treatment".

Let us say that it was in danger of extinction and we felt that we had to do some extra work to ensure the language survived. What offends anglophones is that the separatists in their own province—not all Quebecers because the majority are not like this—will not give the equal treatment to anglophones living in that province. They tramp on their rights. That is what is wrong with the separatists and the Bloc view of bilingualism.

• (1150)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Reform Party member has raised a number of points, and I find very interesting his claim that the francophone community can survive without the necessary support or assistance of the Canadian government. I think the hon. member is mistaken.

It must not be forgotten that francophones represent only one per cent of the total population of North America, if Mexico is included. Clearly, it is therefore to our advantage to make sure that we have good ties with and, of course, the unconditional support of the anglophone and bilingual provinces of the country.

There was also a reference to the case of Alberta, which, to some extent, resisted the efforts of the federal government in a procedure back in the eighties. Admittedly the whole thing had the support of the Quebec government at the time.

I would like to hear the member's thoughts on this territorial responsibility. He spoke to us about the Reformers' almost electoral promise to encourage and promote the French fact and, in particular, bilingualism, throughout the country. How could they encourage French throughout the country when they are prepared to support a policy of territorial management?

He proudly told us about the existence of 163 schools, or educational establishments, offering French immersion courses. He also boasted—and I am very glad to hear it this morning—that there are over 27,000 anglophone school children in French immersion in Alberta this year.

How does he think they could maintain or increase the number of these French immersion schools if they followed his political logic? How could a government headed by the leader of the third party guarantee us the presence of French in that province and, of course, in the other anglophone provinces? I would certainly like to hear his comments on this subject.

[*English*]

**Mr. Silye:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the member for his question. It is a very good question. It is a very important question.

The Reform Party recognizes and realizes that French is a fact in this country. So is English. French is the minority language because fewer people speak French.

We are not against supporting bilingualism. When I was making the point about compulsory enforcement and about not spending a lot of money to encourage people to learn a language, I was trying to show that the separatists use an extreme argument. They go overboard in trying to retain their argument. There needs to be a compromise between the two.

*Supply*

It against that point that I was stating the fact that if someone did not speak the language for a number of years, they could still speak that language. The culture of a province and a region is important. There are many cultures across this country.

The member asked how we would encourage or protect French minority language rights outside Quebec. First, all provinces have jurisdiction over language and culture. It should be the same for Quebec as it is for Alberta and for every other province. Within that right, the provinces can encourage the people to speak the language of its choice and to insist on education first in the language of that choice.

The way to ensure that French is protected in Alberta, for instance, is to recognize where the pockets, the pools, the significant numbers and sufficient demand exist to ensure that those people, through legislation, get the services they require. That is protected by law. It is enforced by law.

However, to encourage more Albertans, more Edmontonians, Calgarians, people from Red Deer, from Lethbridge, from wherever they are to speak French, one has to sell and promote the advantages of a second language. It has to be shown what are the advantages for Albertans to learn French. A lot of good contracts from Europe in the technological field are going to Quebecers and Quebecers only because they speak French and supply the drawings and the technical information in French.

• (1155)

If Calgarians and Edmontonians or Albertans in general were to take the time to become proficient in that second language it would improve their opportunities to market themselves. It would improve their ability to make deals in the global economy. The world is shrinking. It will become a Europe. Therefore, the protection of a second language, be it English in Quebec or French in Ontario, will become more prevalent. The way to do it is not to force people to do it but to encourage, to promote, to show the advantages of it.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in the minutes to come I will give troubling facts regarding assimilation of French speaking Canadians outside Quebec. I remind the House that today's debate is on francophones living mainly outside Quebec. The opposition motion we are debating on this supply day recognizes the urgency of the situation of francophones outside Quebec.

As evidence of this fact, here are some very eloquent figures which show the seriousness of the assimilation problem of francophones in minority situations. Over the last 20 years in Canada, the assimilation rate of francophones increased from 27 per cent in 1971 to 35.9 per cent in 1991. This means that more than 35 per

*Supply*

cent of francophones outside Quebec now speak English at home and this trend is becoming more marked every year.

This is why the Bloc Québécois encourages the federal and provincial governments to acknowledge the urgency of the situation and even more, to take the exceptional steps required in order to counter the assimilation of francophones everywhere in Canada and allow their development by appropriate measures.

It is very unfortunate that the federal government, and especially Liberals who have been the most keen promoters and defenders of bilingualism and multiculturalism in Canada, persist in denying the real presence of francophones outside Quebec despite the numerous reports of the Commissioner of Official Languages and francophone advocacy groups.

This situation is all the more incomprehensible since minorities outside Quebec have traditionally voted for the Liberals. It is high time we dropped the rhetoric and the lip service. The federal government must act and not just make empty speeches. It must promote effective legislation to save the francophone and Acadian communities in the throes of death from assimilation.

In reality, the government is not meeting its statutory commitments toward francophones in Canada. The proof is in a memorandum issued by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages on February 22, which indicates that, after investigation, the office noted significant gaps in the training of federal officials and in existing training and management systems in terms of the provisions of part VII of the Official Languages Act of 1988. Section 41 of part VII of the act provides that the government is committed to "enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and supporting and assisting their development". It is also committed to "fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society".

In the light of the latest statistics from Statistics Canada—and this is what is important—supported by the latest reports of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, it is as if the federal government had forgotten the meaning of "francophone" in the act. It is, however, clear. The federal government has both the obligation and the responsibility to ensure French linguistic minority communities receive fair treatment in keeping with its status of official language in Canada.

• (1200)

I am going to read an extract of the February 1996 report of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, which clearly proves the government's inaction, despite its obligation to act. You will see on page 32, and I quote: "It is not surprising, therefore, that in a random sample of more than 550 senior executives, when

they were asked to say what initiatives their institution could undertake to implement Part VII of the OLA, the two most common responses were "no idea" (23 per cent) and "nothing needed" (20 per cent), and that almost none suggested any measures directly intended to enhance the vitality and support the development of minority official language communities". They were not interested.

That is saying something. A majority of representatives in the main federal departments and agencies in charge of programs for francophones do not even understand the French speaking community's needs. There is more: in the same report, on page 31, under the first heading, in answer to a question, it says, and I quote: "—except for senior executives who are members of one of these communities or for rare individuals who had developed extensive knowledge on their own initiative, the baseline of knowledge about minority community characteristics and needs is extremely low".

Where is the problem? Under these conditions, are the intentions of the federal government realistic? That is why the Bloc Québécois is asking the federal and provincial governments to take the exceptional steps required to counter assimilation of French communities outside Quebec and encourage their development.

Here are other figures more closely related this time to governments of provinces having an English majority and who still resist the demand of francophones for real education services in French, thereby contravening the Canadian constitution.

Take the case of Ontario for instance. Over 20 years, the assimilation ratio among francophones increased to 38.2 per cent from 27 per cent. Now, Franco-Ontarians who still speak French at home are only 3.2 per cent of population. They are declining in number. That is what we are saying. Now that is assimilation. This situation is particularly tragic as Ontario is, as you know, the province where more than half the francophone community outside Quebec lives. It is therefore the most important in terms of numbers.

In Alberta, the assimilation rate is 66.9 per cent. In Saskatchewan, its neighbour, it is even higher, 69.6 per cent. In Manitoba, the rate is 52.1 per cent. The statistics I quote come from documents prepared by Statistics Canada, I did not make them up. British Columbia, where the assimilation rate of francophones is the highest, is the most obvious case. It is the province furthest from the francophone nucleus, and it is therefore where the rate is the highest: 75.2 per cent.

This means in fact that 75.2 per cent of the population in that province whose mother tongue was French no longer speak French at home and have turned directly to English. For a francophone, those numbers are not at all heartening. You will agree with me that this is the statistical reflection of a sad reality.

With assimilation rates going from 38.2 per cent in Ontario to 75.2 per cent in British Columbia, francophone communities are fading away.

Only Acadia is still holding its own, and I want to acknowledge the courage and determination of the Acadian people. But, will it last? That is the question. As a francophone and a francophile, I sincerely hope so.

• (1205)

Behind those statistics are intense, heartbreaking human dramas often full of despair: those of francophones who believed in this country, in its bilingualism policy and in the promises made by its leaders.

The French speaking Fathers of Confederation rapidly lost their illusions. They believed that new provinces joining Canada would be bilingual. We know what happened. Provincial legislatures abolished and denied francophones all their rights.

Despite the legislation and Supreme Court decisions francophones are still without schools, health services, government services and cultural services in their language, French. It is the same story almost everywhere in Canada. Put down, betrayed by the people who did not keep their promises, those French speaking Canadians feel wounded but yet, they continue to fight, refusing to admit that, maybe, they have lost the battle. They have all my admiration. They have all the admiration of the Bloc Québécois.

As a general rule, the Canadian government refuses to talk about the assimilation of francophones outside Quebec and even refuses outright to recognize it. I listened to the minister who just gave a very nice and politically correct speech, but that was the icing on the cake. We should look further than that but that is exactly what the government refuses to do.

In this regard, the annual reports by the Commissioner of Official Languages constitute a marvel of hypocrisy. But the best example of that kind of attitude is given by the current Prime Minister. His statements on language issues go back to the implementation of Bill 101 in Quebec. It is at that time that the Prime Minister started to get interested in Acadian and French speaking minorities.

On one hand, at the time, in the late 1970s, the Prime Minister prevented the decentralization towards Quebec of the federal public service because he felt the Quebec government of the time could not guarantee that displaced federal civil servants could send their children to English schools.

I refer hon. members to page 5602 of *Hansard*, dated May 13, 1977. This is the Prime Minister speaking:

### *Supply*

I have told the Quebec government that if they cannot give the anglophone civil servants who would have to settle in Quebec the guarantee that their children could attend English schools, we will not be able to decentralize in this province.

On the other hand, in 1982, the current Prime Minister conspired with English provinces, during the night of the long knives, to force Quebec to accept the Canada clause with regard to the language of instruction.

Another quote from the October 23, 1981 *Hansard*, page 12115, says this. Again, it is the Prime Minister speaking:

We want to make sure that Canadians who speak English and move to Quebec have the right to go to English schools. In return, we want to have the constitutional right, for the first time in the history of Canada, for francophones in the nine other provinces to have their schools.

Both times, of course, this advocate of the Quebec English minority did not forget to assure Acadian and French speaking minorities that they would have the same rights.

However, the Prime Minister unconditionally accepted to transfer francophone soldiers to Kingston although he knew perfectly well that Kingston's track record in French was so atrocious that everyone knew that francophones would have to live in English there.

It is only thanks to the Bloc's relentless attacks here, in this House, that the situation of francophone soldiers in Kingston has improved slightly. As you will recall we also came to the rescue of the people who wanted a French school in Kingston. It is thanks to the Bloc Québécois that things started to happen. We put pressure on the government and it took action. Public opinion played a part too.

It is as if the Prime Minister were only interested in French speaking Canadians to the extent that there is an English minority in Quebec.

• (1210)

He repeated it in this House, saying that in the event of a yes vote, francophones will be the losers because the federal government will not support them. I was present when he said that. They are being held hostage here. The federal language policy is based on the following logic: we must make people believe francophones have the same privileges so that the anglophone minority will not lose any of its own privileges. The fact that the Prime Minister acquiesces to the frantic pace of assimilation of francophones all over Canada clearly shows that this is one of the reasons for the tragic decline of the Acadian and francophone minorities.

Most of these people had to sacrifice their own francophone community and their advancement within the federal government because career moves can only be made with the support of the majority, that is the anglophones.

*Supply*

It is clear that the federal government and its leader pay lip service to the equality of French and English under the law; they certainly do not take any tangible action to change the status quo.

Equality of the two languages is a fiction. Out of the 1,242 complaints examined by the Commissioner of Official Languages in 1992, 81.8 per cent came, as per usual, from francophones.

In some regions of Canada, the commissioner himself admits that the situation is hopeless. He said: "Where there were fewer complaints (from the West, for example) this can be attributed in part to the frustration felt by clients— at the lack of progress on the part of various institutions". This quote comes from the 1994 annual report of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

Therefore, the assimilation rate is on the rise; we must stress that point for our colleagues from the other parties. We are not making this up. Statistics Canada reports that assimilation of francophones is increasing in Canada. So assimilation is gaining ground and the government, particularly some public servants, do not seem to care.

The situation is critical and it is our duty to remedy it because assimilation will continue to destroy our communities. The statistical profile of francophone and Acadian communities shows without a doubt the seriousness of the situation in these communities.

We have the right to ask others to respect the necessary conditions so that our language and our communities are a viable identification pole.

Before I conclude, I would like, here in the House, to congratulate the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada for its perseverance, and I urge it to continue the struggle to preserve its language and its culture.

Finally, will the federal government have the wisdom to really seek the advancement of francophone and Acadian communities, which will involve talking about schools, because that is where it all begins, and about real services in communities where there are francophones. The situation is critical, and the government must act quickly and efficiently to counter the assimilation of francophones everywhere in Canada outside Quebec.

**Mrs. Anna Terrana (Vancouver East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to add the voice of British Columbia to this debate. I am neither a francophone nor an anglophone. I am originally from Italy; this makes me a member of the multicultural, ethnic community. But I speak both official languages, as well as Italian.

I must say that British Columbia is a young province, just turning 125 years old this year. I must also say that it differs from other provinces, as someone pointed out, in that it is a community

of communities, some of which are much larger than the francophone community.

Still, I would like to make a few comments. I will comment on this. For instance, when I travelled to Montreal before the referendum, I was told: "What are you doing here? This is not your country". But it was my country, too.

• (1215)

I would also like to say that, during the referendum campaign, my colleagues from the Bloc Québécois showed little interest for communities outside Quebec. Indeed, I was one of the first to raise the matter of francophone minorities outside Quebec during the referendum campaign, because their party was just not interested. I think that now they are trying to show to Canada that they care, but I have never seen their party show any interest in the matter before.

On the subject of assimilation, I would like to say that, naturally, in British Columbia, there is some assimilation taking place because we have so many different communities, but we also have 60,000 francophones across the province, who form a very vibrant and very active community.

I just spoke to them. I spoke to the Fédération de la francophonie last week. I worked with the francophone community in British Columbia for 20 years and I must say that it is one of the most organized communities, and has a very good rapport with the federal government. Yet, again, my colleagues from the Bloc Québécois were nowhere to be seen when the time came to sign an agreement with the government. I was there though. I was there to help, along with other Liberal members, and I have worked long and hard for this agreement to be signed. Now there is a very good agreement in place. And francophones are pleased. Just the other night, their report was tabled.

I might add that, yes, we are not always happy with what happened in the past, but what can I say? This is a young country. My country of origin, Italy, is a much older country than Canada, but just the same, Italy has a past we are not always too proud of. We have to work together. I do not think that separating or getting out of Canada will make a difference. I think we must work together to maintain two main languages in Canada—as well as minority languages—two languages that are very popular around the world, especially the French language.

This is just a comment I wanted to make. It was important for me to make this comment because I have not heard any other speakers from British Columbia and I think I know British Columbia and its francophone community pretty well.

**Mr. Leroux (Shefford):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the comments made by my colleague across the way. I think her remarks were totally fair. Today's debate is not about Quebec sovereignty, but about francophones outside Quebec. May

I remind you that, in 1994, the Bloc Québécois developed a policy to help francophone communities outside Quebec as well as the Acadian community.

In 1994, under the leadership of the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata, we set out a policy to help francophones outside Quebec in case Quebec achieved sovereignty, which did not happen. The Quebec government also formulated a policy to help these people. May I remind you that the red book, which is still being promoted by our Liberal colleagues across the way, makes no mention of what will be done about these communities.

In my speech, I talked about cold statistics. The hon. member spoke with her heart, but I prefer to quote statistics that show us beyond any doubt what is happening in this country. Statistics Canada's figures paint an alarming picture. The assimilation rate is now so high that, in one or two generations, there will be no francophones left outside Quebec, only small organized groups. These are Statistics Canada's own figures.

The other day, I went to a reception given by the Speaker of this House, where we welcomed a great man, the RCMP commissioner, who was just back from Haiti. This man is a francophone. I will not give his name. He married an anglophone woman—love will find a way—and they have three great children in their 20s, one of who is a nurse and another one of whom has a teaching job abroad.

• (1220)

I met these people. They were very nice, except that, with a francophone father and an anglophone mother, none of the three children speak a word of French. This did not keep me from appreciating and even liking them, because they were good kids, but they are indeed assimilated. That is what I want to say today. This is the risk we face.

We are moving toward an irreversible trend. The members who come from elsewhere can understand this. I go out in Ottawa all the time, I go to restaurants, and there are not many francophones. There are fewer and fewer of them. I met a lady who works for the government and who has children. She speaks French, but her children did not learn it. That is what is happening.

Today, we want to describe the situation to the government so that necessary measures will be taken. Members across the way also mentioned immersion classes. As we all know, any Canadian who dreams about his child becoming Prime Minister enrolls that child in immersion classes.

Nowadays, it is better to be bilingual if one wants to hold public office and to become Prime Minister. I do not question the validity of immersion classes, I do not condemn them, but it is the

### *Supply*

anglophones that make use of them. This is not like providing services to francophones in their own environment.

My assistant in Ottawa is a francophone from northern Ontario. He often tells me that his parents wanted him to study in French and how hard they had to fight for this, back then. You certainly know, Mr. Speaker, how parents in this situation had to fight to preserve their French language and culture.

I do not wish to sound petty, but we all know that some members in the House are first generation Canadians. Our country welcomes immigrants, and so does Quebec. But we have a tradition. If the Constitution stipulates that French is one of the two official languages, that francophones have rights, it is about time the government assumed its responsibilities, made the necessary decisions and to make sure that the law is enforced.

**Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the comments made by the hon. member have more to do with the anecdotal than with facts. Statistics are mentioned and I find this very interesting. I do not accept everything the government says, including Statistics Canada.

I would like to talk about the birth rate. As you know, the birth rate of francophones living outside Quebec, and even of those living in Quebec, is lower than the natural replacement rate. This is something which Statistics Canada cannot explain, but which must be taken into account.

Moreover, no mention is made of the increase in Canada's population over the last 50 years. As we know, the population increased tremendously because of the massive immigration movement to Canada, which is known the world over as a good host country. In fact, this is why people came here and helped build the prosperous nation that we know. Canada's population has doubled over the last 50 years, but not the number of francophones living outside Quebec. These are the facts.

I realize that the proportion of francophones in Ontario is now smaller, but their actual number has remained stable. I find it regrettable that anecdotal information is being used and that, in this debate, we are told that a francophone married and anglophone and that their children are assimilated.

Let me tell you about my own situation. I would say that 95 per cent of my work is done in French and that 90 per cent of my speeches are in French. My wife's mother tongue is Spanish, and it is true that, at home, we speak English together. However, this does not mean that my children are not francophones.

• (1225)

In spite of what Statistics Canada may say, it does not necessarily mean that I am assimilated. Based on Statistics Canada's criteria, the member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine is

*Supply*

assimilated because his family speaks English. But this does not tell the whole story.

My father, Alban Gagnon, and his mother, an Irish woman named Jones, spoke English together. However, my father worked to improve his skills and became bilingual. In fact, French was spoken in the family. My father works exclusively in French.

The same is true in the case of my great-grandfather. His story is even more interesting. He dared marry a Protestant, a Scot. You cannot imagine how strongly the clergy protested at the time. However, these people not only preserved their language, they managed to promote it and to learn a second one. This is more than anecdotal information. It shows that couples with French and English speaking partners can actually help its members improve their linguistic skills and their knowledge of both official languages.

Let us not forget that 30 per cent of Canadians are now bilingual. This means 10 million people out of a population of 30 million. This is very interesting.

I also note, while acknowledging the point made by the Bloc Québécois, that French immersion programs for anglophones are a tremendous success. I will end on this note. I hope more English speaking Canadians will consider French immersion, as many have done over the last 15 years.

**Mr. Leroux (Shefford):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member told us about his origins. As we can see, he comes out of a true melting pot. What you see is what you get, is it not? He did not want us to talk about that, but he is the one who did.

Now, data from Statistic Canada tell us that the assimilation rate has gone up from 27 per cent in 1971 to 35.9 per cent in 1991, and this in spite of the hon. member's rhetoric; this is undeniable. We simply point out, without wanting to squabble, that there is a problem. Right now, the Liberals are in power, and as long as people in Canada vote for the Liberals, they are the ones we have to talk to and they are the ones who must take measures to deal with the situation.

Thus, the trend toward assimilation seems to be irreversible. Does the government have any solution to settle this problem? If it has no solution, we, in Quebec, have our own. The ball is now in the government's court. So, does the government have any solution? That is the question that we are asking ourselves today.

We could surely trade anecdotes but, in our everyday life, we meet people. Assimilation of francophones to English is much more frequent than assimilation of anglophones. Why? The hon. member will understand that, since he is, as you know, a young man with good sense.

He will understand that we live in North America, where there are many anglophones. It is quite simple, we live in a sea of anglophones. Canadians always say that having two languages, French and English, is the specific characteristic of Canada. How nice. They should ensure that this will continue to be true a little longer. That is what we are asking for. That is what the francophones are fighting for.

As I look on the opposite side, I see a francophone member from another province. He might not say so in the House because he is a member of the Liberal Party, but he would tell you privately that both he and his parents have to fight every day to get quality services. That is what the government has to look at now.

• (1230)

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in the discussion on this motion, which I will read out carefully, because I do not want us to lose sight of what it is all about.

Here it is: "That the House encourage the federal government to acknowledge the urgency of the situation of francophones in minority situations in Canada, and take the exceptional steps required in order to counter their assimilation and allow their development". In a way, this is an excellent motion, because assimilation is indeed a problem. The struggle never ends. In a changing society, a constant vigilance is required.

One of the main things we should be doing today is asking why things are the way they are and looking for solutions. What is it we should do to counter and stop assimilation and better support minorities in their development?

The same message lies behind all the speeches of members opposite, simply that if they separate and are left to their own devices, there would be some kind of magic solution. We all know there is no magic solution. I certainly hope that before the end of the day, before the end of this discussion, political parties opposite will come up with concrete, specific, sensible and thoughtful solutions.

I am not suggesting that the federal government has that magic solution, but I do say and emphasize that the government is committed, and that this commitment is getting stronger. The solution we now have is the best solution for francophones outside Quebec.

At this point, I want to stop and reflect some more on Manitoba as it was at the start. Take, for instance, what we have in Manitoba. We have the Société franco-manitobaine, a special interest group. Yes, we have to fight, we always had to—and we do it rather well, you know—and we will continue to fight. But my hon. friends opposite also have to fight, do they not, to try to find their own place in the sun? We all have to fight. Canada must fight to carve itself a place in this world of ours, in its relations with the United States and Europe. It is a battle we all have to fight when we look at



the society we live in and the people we represent. Francophones outside Quebec are no different.

This Société franco-manitobaine has been promoting the rights of francophones for a long time. It does a good job of it. Only recently, after a very fierce battle, did Manitoba get a French school board, where we manage our own schools. I must tell you, this is a huge step forward. I hope other provinces, like Newfoundland for example, which we have been discussing, will do the same. I sincerely hope that in all the provinces and in all the territories where francophones live and have French schools, something that we see in Canada—they will have the opportunity to elect their own representatives and to manage their own schools.

In Manitoba, we have the Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface, a university-based community college offering education and upgrading programs in French. We have a university attended by students not only from throughout Canada, but from around the world. This is the only French language community and university college in western Canada. It has been doing some remarkable work, because it is still there after many years and is renowned in Canada and abroad.

We also have a youth council that sees to our young citizens, their needs, their education and their recreational activities. We also have CKXL, a community radio station that helps us to talk to, understand and help each other. And then there is the Cercle Molière, the oldest French theatre company in Canada.

• (1235)

We have a French Chamber of commerce. We have organizations like Réseau and Plurielle, which fight for the needs and rights of women. We have, for example, the Fédération des comités de parents. We have the Association des juristes, and so on.

We have a major infrastructure, which sure helps us meet our needs. All these organizations have received, at one time or another, some financial assistance from the federal government. But they help themselves. They did not survive only with the help of the federal, provincial or municipal governments. They contribute not only their talents, energies and creative abilities, but also their money.

Now I will tell you about a very promising federal initiative. As we already heard this morning, some hon. members vied with each other in predicting the end of French communities outside Quebec, backing this up with alarming figures on their assimilation. True, there is a problem, but is it as serious as they say? Are they exaggerating for some reason? Maybe to send another message? It is up to the people to decide after hearing the speeches.

### *Supply*

And yet, these communities are vibrant and, with the help of the federal and other levels of government, they are giving themselves the means to remain that way.

One of these means is the school-community centre. The first of these centres, the St. Anne centre, was opened in 1978 in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Since then, others have opened their in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and I like to think that there may be one soon in Manitoba. This is a project I am working on and hope to realize. I am working on yet another project in the Yukon and hope that centre will open in the near future. Each and every one of these centres benefited from the assistance of the federal government. Without federal assistance, I am not sure they would now be a reality.

School-community centres have many advantages. They give French speaking citizens a school in a separate building. They also allow for a more homogenous education and daily French language immersion for the students.

*[English]*

French language education is one of the greatest values of francophone minority communities and the best means of ensuring their survival. It reflects the community's beliefs, hopes and labours. It is a route taken by the francophone minority communities to enhance their identity and to pass along their language and culture. A close relationship between the community and the school is essential in order to support the work being done by the school.

Since culture is defined as the beliefs, behaviours and values of the community, the community centre is a natural partner for French schools and minority settings.

*[Translation]*

The school-community centre also allows the community to gather together, hence ensuring a better cohesion of organizations and one of the best consultation process regarding its needs. It also helps coordinate activities and create a community spirit.

It combines and creates more activities in French for adults and children. The experience of existing centres shows that there has been an improvement in community life and the use of French. It is not surprising, therefore, that many French communities have chosen the school-community centre as anchor point and that the federal government has chosen to support these initiatives.

The hon. member who moved this motion seems to consider concrete signs of the vitality of communities as unimportant. The centre Sainte-Anne in La Grand'Terre, Newfoundland, the carrefour de l'Isle Saint-Jean in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island,

*Supply*

the carrefour du Grand-Havre in Halifax-Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, the centre Sainte-Anne in Fredericton, the centre Samuel-Champlain in Saint John, the carrefour Beausoleil in Newcastle, New Brunswick, the Kingston centre, the Beauséjour school-community centre in Plamondon, the Calgary school-community centre, the Fort McMurray school-community centre.

• (1240)

And, I hope, if I make this speech again in a few months, why not the Manitoba school-community centre in Saint-Vital and, maybe, another one in the Yukon? Most of these centres were created in the last ten years.

They are further examples showing that the federal government did not twiddle its thumbs and that French communities are better equipped than ever before to meet their needs and view the future with optimism.

The school-community centre is an important tool for the development of French language minorities. By regrouping under one roof the French school and different services and organizations, it creates an homogeneous French-language environment that promotes exchanges and cultural vitality. The school-community centre is a small scale reproduction of a complete society. It is a French centre for living whose influence extends well beyond the immediate area it serves. It is a meeting place, a source of pride and inspiration. It compensates for the isolation and the scattering of the French language population.

The vitality of a community depends on more than the sheer numbers of its members. The French speaking minorities show their dynamism in all fields and the activities which take place in community centres are a perfect illustration of that fact. With the play groups for preschoolers, the fitness classes for senior citizens, libraries, video libraries and cultural and sports activities of all kinds, community centres support and promote the development of French language and culture.

During a recent seminar on official language teaching, the director of the Carrefour du Grand-Havre, in Nova Scotia, presented very interesting data. For example, in the six years since the opening of the school-community centre in 1991, school attendance almost doubled. It must be stressed that the same is true of all school-community centres.

The opening of such a centre has always been followed by an increase, sometimes a significant increase, in the number of registrations in French schools. The Carrefour serves a cosmopolitan clientele coming from diversified school systems. Francization programs were created for kindergarten and grade one students and many community projects were initiated, like services for preschoolers, access to the school library for the French community, a videotape library, summer camps and sports, cultural, social and religious activities.

[English]

I have chosen to use a more concrete example to illustrate the vitality of francophone communities outside Quebec. School community centres are proliferating at an increasingly rapid rate. One wonders then why some speak of the disappearance of the very communities that they are labelling as dynamic, the newly emerging energies, the coming together of different generations toward a common goal. These are but a few of the examples of the achievements in which francophone minority communities can take pride.

[Translation]

I would like to share a few things with my colleagues because I think one of our obligations is to try to be well-informed. And, when dealing with certain issues, we should try to stay away from politics so that it does not prevent us from finding a solution to the problem.

I have here a list of about sixty or maybe eighty francophone organizations in Manitoba that receive financial assistance from the federal government to help them meet specific objectives. Whether they work in the field of theatre, music, radio, education or training, they all receive assistance from the federal government. They probably receive further assistance, up to a certain amount, from other levels of government. It must not be forgotten that francophones outside Quebec have contributed, as I said earlier, not only with their talent, their dedication, their creativity, their commitment, but also with their money, to meeting their own objectives.

• (1245)

What saddens me somewhat when dealing with such a motion is the fact that it is indeed an important motion in itself. Yes, there has been a certain degree of assimilation and, yes, there is still work to be done. But are the members opposite really trying to identify the problems and to find solutions to stop this assimilation process and to help the francophone community to flourish? Is that what they are doing? Or are they mainly trying to demonstrate that the federal system does not work? I am sorry, but the federal system works just fine.

Could it work better? It certainly could. Should it work better? Yes, it should. Will the members opposite help us or will they just try to destroy what has been done? When I heard my colleague say that his party had a policy concerning francophones outside Quebec since 1994, I could not help but notice that this was only two years ago. So where were they before that? Were they on our side or on the other side? Were they there to help us find sensible solutions to our problems or were they there to play politics?

In closing, I would like to think that this debate will not only help us identify the problems, but that it will also help us find solutions that will allow us to meet the great challenges that lie ahead.

*Supply*

**Mr. Maurice Dumas (Argenteuil—Papineau, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, fifty years ago I had the pleasure of travelling through the western provinces with my father, who had a folk group known as Omer Dumas and his minstrel singers.

I visited villages with names like Saint-Jean-Baptiste, Saint-Pierre-Joli, Otterburne and Saint-Claude. There was Prud'homme, Plamondon and Bonnyville, the home of the Campagne family that has formed the group known as Hart Rouge. There was Beaumont, in Alberta. There was also St. Boniface, which unfortunately no longer exists. St-Boniface, which was the centre of life in Manitoba, has been merged with Winnipeg.

In those days, we had the pleasure of meeting the parish priests, since the shows my father put on always took place in parish halls and often in churches. He did not just tour in the west; he took his show all through Quebec and New Brunswick too.

Parents we met said great efforts were made to preserve the French language in the west, but the big problem was that more and more the children would use English in speaking to each other.

My question to the member for St. Boniface, whose French is excellent by the way, is the following: What language do 20-year olds, the children of francophone parents, use?

**Mr. Duhamel:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for his question, which I greatly appreciate. Fifty years ago, the struggle was much harder than now. Things have evolved. True, 50 years ago, people did not always look favourably on French education or culture. Some people offered little if any support.

There has been a change, however. Not only in Manitoba, I believe, but elsewhere as well. That is debatable, but when I look around today, I see young parents, whether francophone or not, with an openmindedness that would have been hard to imagine in the past. I say this without any desire to make any political hay from it.

I will give an example, and will also answer your very specific question, dear colleague. When we see anglophone parents enrolling their sons or daughters in immersion, whether they have in mind that their child could become prime minister or a minister, or what have you, it is because they believe it offers an advantage, either a career advantage or an opportunity to develop a broader mind.

I worked in that field for a number of years, and I was always impressed by the answers parents gave. I do not think they all believed their son or daughter would end up prime minister or a minister. They were doing it for other reasons. To broaden their child's horizons, to enable him or her to be able to speak to people in Manitoba, Quebec, or elsewhere, in French.

• (1250)

According to a fundamental belief being able to speak more than one language gives a person a special quality and increases his or her possibility of contributing to society. These are all valid reasons. I can now see an open-mindedness that was not there before. and I believe this trend is increasing, at least I hope it is.

As regards small communities, I will say this. They still are in large majority. You are absolutely right in saying that St. Boniface was amalgamated. But as the hon. member knows, St. Boniface still exists. I am the member for the federal riding of St. Boniface and I am proud to be. One of my colleagues, Neil Gaudry, is a francophone and member for the provincial riding of St. Boniface. When we meet in that part of the city, we do not call it Winnipeg but St. Boniface. They wanted to amalgamate those two cities, but St. Boniface still exists and it always will.

What language do young people in their twenties speak? I believe a large majority of them speak both languages. I have three daughters. The youngest, who is 16-years old, speaks French and is now finishing grade 10 in a French school. I was one of the lucky ones to be married to a francophone woman who speaks French as well as I do. She learned it as an adult and is member of francophone committees. For example, she is chairwoman of the administration board of the Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface. She got that job because of her competence and her commitment to French language and culture. She has that job because francophones want her there.

Some only look at the dark side of things, but I believe there is also a bright side and a lot of sunshine that some people do not want to see. Let us acknowledge the positive things that were done and the improvements that could and should be brought about. This is what we must do today.

[*English*]

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, there are some things members from the Bloc Quebecois should understand. The purpose of language is communication. It is not to be used as a political knife to wreak havoc among communities and separate one community from another. Language should not be used as a political tool to destroy a country and divide people who are otherwise tolerant, understanding and who truly care about each other and want to live together.

I would like to ask the hon. member about a few facts from his party and the Treasury Board. In Quebec anglophones represent 15 per cent of the population but receive only 5 per cent of the jobs. Treasury Board has said this is a deplorable situation and must be rectified to provide a balance. For years the anglophone population in Quebec has been trampled on under the guise of official bilingualism. The reality is the anglophone population has its rights, and its ability to communicate is being destroyed.

*Supply*

I ask the hon. member what he will do to rectify the situation of English speaking people representing 15 per cent of the population in Quebec but receiving only 5 per cent of the jobs in the federal government. Those are his own statistics.

**Mr. Duhamel:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question and I am delighted it has been raised. I have always believed that in Canada we need to have fair representation for women, visible minorities, aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, francophones and anglophones.

I have said publicly and I continue to say that if there is the spread my colleague has mentioned it needs to be corrected. I have not seen the statistics. I have talked with my colleagues in the Bloc. Some indicated an openness to that possibility.

• (1255)

We have to recognize as well that I do not run the province of Quebec and do not aspire to do so. I will continue to make statements such as the ones I have made in a positive way to encourage them not only to have fair representation among women, visible minorities, people with disabilities, but anglophones and francophones. That is what the essence of government is, to make sure people are fairly represented.

I am part of the government and I am proud to be part of the government. Obviously the statistics with respect to federal government operations are much closer in line if one looks at the federal public service, if one looks at the military, if one looks at the RCMP, if one looks at other organizations. The statistics reflect quite accurately the make-up of both French and English speaking Canadians throughout Canada.

We have noticed some difficulties elsewhere in terms of fair representation among visible minorities and people with disabilities and we are trying to correct those.

I do not want to be paternalistic about this and I do not want to seek a conflict unless that conflict were to bring about a positive resolution. At the federal level we have made some significant gains in terms of fair representation particularly with respect to English and French. We still need to make further gains with regard to other groups and we are in the process of doing that. We have done it rather well.

With respect to other provinces, I hope we look at the province of Quebec to see whether there is a fair distribution of jobs in the public service between English and French speaking peoples, and that we do so in other provinces. We would look at every province to see whether there is fair representation, English and French

speaking. Then perhaps we could put that on the table and have a good debate about what is right, what is fair, what is just.

I would like to go beyond language distribution, although I think that is an important issue, to look at representation from the perspective of women, visible minorities, aboriginals, people with disabilities. I give my total commitment to that kind of exercise in a totally non-partisan way. If we want the best society on this planet we need to do things like that with conviction and take the politics out of it.

[Translation]

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Terrebonne, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would first like to tell my colleague for Saint-Boniface that I will not talk to him about the lack of French newspapers in Saint-Boniface, because I know he does not like that. However, when he was asking where things were before 1994 because no policy had been established, I would remind him that the elections were held in October 1993, near the end of the year.

I remind him as well that, early in 1994, we developed a policy. If he were to read the red book from beginning to end, I would like him to tell me just where the Liberal Party's policy on francophones is to be found, because there is no reference anywhere. Given that the Liberal Party has existed a bit longer than the Bloc Québécois, perhaps the member could tell me the Liberals' policy on francophones outside Quebec? The Bloc Québécois has such a policy, I would remind you.

In terms of statistics, on the question he was asked about the language young people speak in Manitoba, I would ask him if he disagrees totally with Statistics Canada, and, if so, he can change their statistics because it could be done in the name of democracy. However, the figures say that, in 1971, 4 per cent of Manitobans spoke French, whereas today the figure is only 2.3 per cent. Do we abolish Statistics Canada or acknowledge its statistics?

**Mr. Duhamel:** Mr. Speaker, I am not prepared to abolish Statistics Canada. I think other questions need to be asked. Could it be that the English speaking population has grown significantly? One should ask questions. We are not here simply to juggle figures. Is there a reduction? I said earlier that there had been assimilation and that there were problems. And I wondered why we could not find solutions together.

The member said I did not want to talk about newspapers. There is the newspaper *La Liberté*. It is a fine paper and has won awards across Canada. I am very surprised that my colleague did not mention it. I think he should read it, if he has not yet, because it would help educate him. He would understand the francophone community outside Quebec and the francophone community in Manitoba much better than he does now.

*Supply*

• (1300)

He must not forget that we have newspapers. Are there as many as in Quebec? I doubt it. You probably have some 6 million French speakers, maybe a little more; in Manitoba, we have only some 50,000. The figures are a bit different, you realize.

As far as people not speaking French is concerned, I tell you what I see. My daughter has a group of young friends. When I see them, I speak to them in French. They answer me in French. From time to time, and even quite often, I hear English. That is quite normal. In our home, it is perfectly natural to speak both French and English. Sometimes the parents think they are speaking too much English, no doubt the reverse is true. Statistics Canada knows what it is doing, and I applaud it. We certainly have to give this issue more thought.

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Terrebonne, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, to start with, since the House is soon going to adjourn for the summer and given what the Reform member who spoke earlier said I wish to officially invite him to come and visit my riding in Quebec during the summer vacation, so he can see for himself that anglophones in Quebec do not have such a tragic life, that the nasty separatists are not waiting for them at each street corner, and that their life is not in danger. So that he can change his perception of Quebec people whom he sees as oppressors, I invite him to come and visit us.

I will also recall, for the information of the Reform Party, the motion which is debated today. The Bloc Québécois moved: "That the House encourage the federal government to acknowledge the urgency of the situation of francophones in minority situations in Canada, and take the exceptional steps required in order to counter their assimilation and allow their development".

My colleague, the member for St. Boniface, said earlier that there is indeed an assimilation process. From what he said, what else can we conclude—and I am going to give the House figures to prove it—but that francophones outside Quebec are going through difficult times? We are asking the federal government, and therefore the Liberal Party, to take measures to help them improve their situation.

That is why I have a hard time understanding why we are accused of being nasty separatists, of wanting to tear down everything, and so on. We will talk about that when time comes.

Let us set the record straight. Today, we are debating a motion in which the Bloc Québécois is asking the government to recognize and affirm that francophones outside Quebec are in a difficult situation and that we must join forces to help them. If the fact that such a declaration comes from a democratically elected majority party in Quebec does not please some members, even certain French speaking Liberals like the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, it is just too bad. It is too bad if he does not want to recognize there is a problem and if he resents the fact Quebecers of another affiliation say it is so.

We are asking if francophones outside Quebec have a problem. The answer is yes. Should federal and provincial governments get together to help these communities instead of cutting their budgets? I think the answer is yes again. That is what we are debating.

If Liberals and Reformers want to keep on accusing us of being separatists, we have news for them because, as long as we are here, we will be separatists. If we want to talk about the Prince Edward Island bridge or Pacific salmon and they object to our topic because we are separatists, we have a problem. We were democratically elected by the Quebec people.

Today's topic is not Quebec sovereignty but francophones outside Quebec who are having a hard time according to statistics. It must be absolutely clear that we are not talking against French communities outside Quebec. Basically we want to help them.

**Mr. Boudria:** Since when?

**Mr. Sauvageau:** I am asked "since when".

• (1305)

Even though this is not the time for questions and comments, I will answer this question by asking one: To what did the Liberal Party commit itself in the red book in order to defend francophones outside Quebec? And if not a line can be found on this subject, I will myself ask the following question: Since when has it been defending them?

**Mr. Boudria:** We have always been defending them.

**Mr. Sauvageau:** Mr. Speaker, could the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell be decent enough and courteous enough to observe the rules of the House and listen to his colleagues' speeches? If not, may I ask him, through you, to show that much courtesy?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** The hon. member for Terrebonne.

**Mr. Sauvageau:** Mr. Speaker, since 1982, when the Constitution was patriated, section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees French-speaking and English-speaking minorities the right to their own school and to manage them as well, wherever numbers warrant it. This is the problem.

In Canada, there are 260,000 francophones—these numbers are not coming from mean separatists—and only 160,000 have access to education in French. But there still is a 100,000 gap. The common denominator for all francophone communities is that none of them have the right to collect their own school taxes. Therefore,

*Supply*

they are all dependant on English school boards or the provinces, which usually do not recognize the particular needs of francophone communities, leaving them without enough resources to manage their schools.

I am told that this is not so. This compels me to mention a few facts. New Brunswick is the only officially bilingual province in Canada. However, it does not respect section 23 of the charter since, on March 1, it abolished the French and English school board to replace it with advisory parents' committees. From now on, all the school structures are under the direct authority of the education ministry, in other words public servants. This reform is deemed unconstitutional by parents, who have applied for financial support under the Court Challenge Program. When their application is approved, they will be able to embark on preliminary research and ask for legal advice to confirm that this reform is indeed unconstitutional.

I am told that is not the case, Mr. Speaker. The Fédération des parents francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador has been waging a 10-year fight for the right to manage their own schools. In 1988-89, this federation filed its first lawsuit against the Province of Newfoundland to obtain the right to manage their own schools under section 23.

Mr. Speaker, I apologize for not informing you earlier. I am dividing my time into two ten-minute periods so that one of my colleagues could speak.

The Fédération des parents francophones issued a press release, and I quote: "This right is conferred to them under section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, but the province still refuses to implement it. The province's francophones are therefore asking the federal government to intervene on their behalf when the proposed amendment is tabled". I should point out that there are no Bloc MPs in Newfoundland and I understand that the premier there is a Liberal.

This situation is totally unacceptable to Michel Cayouette, the president of the Fédération des parents francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador. There is an inconsistency in all this. On the one hand, clause 23 of the charter requires the provinces to recognize minority language educational rights and, on the other hand, Parliament is about to adopt a major constitutional amendment affecting the way these schools are managed.

So we have two provinces, other than Quebec and Ontario, which do not comply with that clause. Furthermore, eight out of ten provinces, all English-speaking, are finding legal, administrative, financial and other ways to contravene the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms by not providing the educational services provided for in section 23. As a result, only one in two eligible children in Ontario, one in five in Manitoba, and one in sixty in Saskatchewan, goes to French school. There is more undereducation among francophones outside Quebec than among anglophones.

In 1994, 45.2 per cent of anglophones had graduated from high school compared to 37.4 per cent of francophones. And, as we know, education is the future.

• (1310)

I have just been talking about education, but for these children education is their future, knowing in which language they will grow up and eventually be working.

I am going to answer a question put to me by my colleague for Cape Breton Highlands—Canso who wanted to know if it could be proven that the French fact had been strengthened or not throughout Canada.

In 1951, 40 years ago, outside Quebec, in the other Canadian provinces, 7.3 per cent of the population spoke French. And 40 years later, despite the Official Languages Act, only 4.8 per cent of the population speaks French, a drop of nearly 50 per cent.

What about the mother tongue spoken at home? In Canada, 20 years ago, 25.7 per cent of the population spoke French at home, this has now dropped by 2.4 per cent throughout all provinces, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. In Saskatchewan, this proportion has dropped sharply from 1.7 per cent to 0.7 per cent over 20 years.

Statistics Canada does not give any indication that the French fact has been strengthened in any province over the past 20 or 40 years.

If the Liberal Party of Canada and the Reform Party agree with these statistics, then the situation is urgent. If they do not agree, they are turning a blind eye and are putting their heads in the sand when they wrongly accuse the separatists.

**Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this debate brought us to do some research and correct the Bloc Québécois on some points. I think it is very interesting that this Party is now concerned by the situation of francophones outside Quebec. It was not the case before.

**Mr. Bergeron:** You just realized that?

**Mr. Gagnon:** Yes, the Bloc Québécois just recently realized that; for twenty years now, for a long time, we have been asking separatists to pay attention to Canadian francophones outside Quebec.

However, as we all know, the reply of the Quebec government was that, last year, it closed its office in Edmonton; it just abandoned that francophone community in Western Canada. I find that very unfortunate.

But they still quote data so I will take this opportunity to quote some data of my own which I find very interesting. They mentioned today the percentage of Canadians who can speak French.

Over the last ten years, that percentage has increased. I am speaking here about Canadians outside Quebec, excluding Quebec. The proportion has gone from 9.4 per cent to 10.5 per cent in ten years.

This is very interesting. We heard about immersion classes and I would like to hear what the Bloc Québécois has to say on these facts I am making public here today. As concerns the proportion of Canadians who can speak French, we can see for example that, in my age group, 25 to 34, 8.2 per cent of the people can speak French. However, the most interesting data are those pertaining to the next generation, young people 15 to 19; in that age group, 16.7 per cent can speak both official languages and particularly French in this case. That is, between these two age groups, the percentage of young Canadians who speak French has actually doubled.

Another very interesting fact, and that is the one I prefer, of course, with the mass arrival of new Canadians who came to enrich the country, we find, as told you, in the population newly arrived in Canada, that 22.8 per cent of young people aged between 15 and 19 also speak French.

So, compared to those in my generation, the number of people who are able to speak French has almost tripled. I find that is very interesting and that we must still encourage the government to promote bilingualism and, of course, ensure the prominence of French in Quebec, but also ensure that French is more widespread throughout the country.

I would really like to hear the Bloc Québécois has to say about the data I have just given.

• (1315)

**Mr. Sauvageau:** Mr. Speaker, I was going to say that they were all over the map, but I will not, and will instead try to bring my colleague back on track.

He was surprised to hear the Bloc Québécois speaking about francophones outside Quebec. My answer is that he will perhaps have an opportunity to speak shortly, and while the others have the floor, he can look in the red book where the Liberal party tells us what it is going to do for francophones outside Quebec. We will no doubt be treated to the great insights of the writers of the red book and the wonderful French of the quotation, which my colleague, the member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, can be counted on to read us in a few minutes when he has found it.

To help him out, I will tell him that his neighbour, the member for Ottawa—Vanier, would rather collect money to oppose legislation that has been prepared and presented by a democratically elected national assembly in Quebec, than defend francophones, who will see their assistance cut in Ontario. We will not get into the economics of it, because they are already having such a terrible time with numbers.

### *Supply*

I would just like to point out to my colleague that when he says that 16.2 per cent of young people between this age and that speak one of the two official languages, that does not mean they are speaking French, because one of the two official languages could be either French or English. In other words, 16.2 per cent of young people speak one of the two official languages, which probably means French or English. One could therefore interpret this to mean that 16.2 per cent, or a proportion, of these people speak French and English.

I am answering his questions with other questions, because clarification is required. If his statistics also come from the federal government, there is a problem, and we could have a debate, because Statistics Canada, in its catalogue No. 96-313F on languages in Canada, says that 29 per cent of people spoke French in 1951, while the percentage was 24 in 1991. Mathematics is not my strong suit, but 29 take away 24 leaves 5 per cent fewer people speaking French. This means that the number of people speaking French in Canada can certainly not have increased by a third. I could be wrong. The numbers come from Statistics Canada. In line with my earlier suggestion, if the Liberal government is not happy with the data provided by Statistics Canada, it can either replace its chief statistician or abolish it altogether.

**Mr. Roger Pomerleau (Anjou—Rivière-des-Prairies, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, it will not be easy to speak no more than 10 minutes on this subject. Naturally, I am rising to support the motion put forward by my hon. colleague from Québec-Est, who has given, in my opinion, a historical speech tracing the history of the whole French language issue in Canada from Lord Durham or, indeed, the conquest to this day.

We sometimes look back at our history, not to wallow in it, but because the source of current problems can often be found a long way back in time. Anyway, judging from Statistics' Canada figures, on which I will come back later, the policy put in place under Lord Durham to assimilate francophones seems to still be in operation today, like it or not.

The motion before us is designed to make the government aware of how urgent the situation is. Allow me to read out loud for the benefit of those watching us. It reads as follows: "The Bloc Québécois moves that the federal government and the provinces acknowledge the urgency of the situation of francophones in minority situations in Canada, and take the exceptional steps required in order to counter their assimilation and allow their development".

In the circumstances, I find it somewhat deplorable that francophone members from outside Quebec have the gall of telling us how everything is hunky-dory in their regions, when we know full well, as we will demonstrate throughout the day, that the French language is in peril in every province of Canada.

*Supply*

As you know, under section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, anglophone and francophone minorities of every province of Canada are guaranteed the right to have their own schools and, where numbers warrant, the right to manage these schools. The federal government and the English-speaking provinces contend that the rights of francophone minorities are protected under section 23. Unfortunately, it is apparently harder to enforce this section than to recognize it. This reminds me of the GST. It is easy to say the tax will be scrapped, but it is a different matter to take action.

• (1320)

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled that francophone minorities had the right to govern their own schools in their respective provinces but, once again, the English-speaking provinces have always tried to dissociate themselves from the conclusions reached by the Supreme Court. As we speak, at least seven parents associations have turned to the courts to enforce the rights conferred to them under section 23 of the Canadian charter of rights. These cases are before the courts in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, and the list goes on.

This means that, even if the Constitution supposedly grants us certain rights, we must fight in court to have them recognized. This is the beginning of a long process that is not leading anywhere; while this process goes on for many years, the assimilation of francophones continues.

It must be noted—and this is deplorable—that the rights of francophone communities outside Quebec are not respected, only tolerated. These are fictitious rights. Francophones are told they have these rights, but when the time comes to enforce them, they must wage long, drawn-out battles, often in vain or for meagre results in the end.

Demographic projections show that the rate of assimilation of francophones in Canada is increasing, especially in the western provinces, probably because they are further away from us. I would like to quote other figures which may be challenged, but which come from Statistics Canada.

They are taken from publication No. 92-733, for 1974 data, and publication No. 94-319, printed and released in 1993 by Statistics Canada. The comparison is made in Table 5.

The table deals with the net anglicization rate of francophones aged 35 to 44, who are members of a French speaking minority outside Quebec. It establishes a comparison between 1971 and 1991 for all the provinces. The term anglicization refers to a very specific phenomenon. It refers to people who now use English, but who have a different mother tongue. This is assimilation. It means

someone who is a francophone by birth and who, for all sorts of reasons, now uses another language at home.

A member of my family lives in Portland, Oregon. This is in the United States, of course, but it illustrates the phenomenon even better. Both parents are francophones and their children were born in the U.S. The children married Americans, as one would expect, and when family reunions are held, which is fairly regular, everything takes place in English. The principle is simple: the majority rules. It is only normal.

We are told that this is how assimilation may occur, but that we have two official languages in Canada and that the necessary measures will be taken to prevent it from happening. However, the reality is that these measures do not mean anything and do not lead anywhere.

Let me go back to the document from Statistics Canada. In 1971, Newfoundland had a rate of assimilation of 35 per cent; it was 65 per cent in 1991, 20 years later. In 1971, Prince Edward Island's rate was 50 per cent; it reached 55 per cent in 1991. Nova Scotia's rate was 42 per cent in 1971, and 51 per cent in 1991. We can see that the rate of assimilation has gone up in 20 years, despite all the measures that are supposed to have been implemented.

New Brunswick's rate was 12 per cent, and it is the only case where there has been a slight drop, to 11 per cent. Things are looking up, so to speak. I was in Acadia last year and it is true that there is a strong feeling of attachment to things Acadian that can be felt everywhere you go. There are Acadian flags flying on all the farms and houses, and it is a sight to see. We can probably thank New Brunswick's legislation for slowing down the rate of assimilation in at least one province.

In Ontario, the rate of assimilation was 38 per cent in 1971; it was 43 per cent 20 years later. In Manitoba, the rate was 45 per cent in 1971 and 63 per cent in 1991. In Saskatchewan, the rate was 60 per cent in 1971; it was 79 per cent in 1991. In Alberta, the rate was 64 per cent in 1971; in 1991, it was 74 per cent. In British Columbia, the rate in 1971 was 77 per cent; in 1991 it was 76 per cent.

• (1325)

These are the figures published by Statistics Canada. I will give only one example. I prepared a little report on four or five western provinces but, given how little time I have, I think I will stick to British Columbia, a wonderful province I visited on many occasions. It is the only province where I did not live, but which I visited.

The B.C. legislature is far from complying with section 23 of the Canadian charter. After several years of negotiations with francophone parents, no progress has been made. The provincial government has still not amended its school legislation. The only



concession to parents was to pass a regulation that will take effect July 1 and create a school authority without any power.

This does not amount to much: there is no taxation power, no capital budget. Although the law, the regulation, is said to give these people a prerogative, there is no way to enforce it. In the final analysis, what the parents gained is simply the right to supervise school management.

As we know—and this is something that has been condemned by some people and that will be condemned by others today—the basic principle that can be applied in the case of the minorities the government says it wants to protect is that they must be given the basic tools they need to survive by being able to complete their education in their own language. This is what they claim they want to do, but it is not happening.

The Association des parents francophones de Colombie-Britannique and some other francophone organizations deplore the fact that the school authority created by regulation is in violation of section 23 of the charter, as there is no way to manage this school authority.

In addition, as we know, a regulation is not a law and is much easier to amend. This parents association also condemns the fact that the jurisdiction of the school authority extends to only 18 of the 75 provincial school boards, all of which are concentrated in Greater Vancouver and Victoria. No school authority was granted outside those two areas.

We can therefore expect another great legal battle—as we often see in that province—that will surely go all the way to the Supreme Court in Ottawa, since the Association des parents francophones de la Colombie-Britannique revived its claim for full implementation of section 23 of the charter. People from almost everywhere in Canada, from every province, are challenging this clause because it is not being enforced.

If this debate goes all the way to the Supreme Court, it would mean another six or seven years of legal wrangling so that these people can enjoy rights that are normally and theoretically guaranteed by the charter and the Constitution but which they must fight to obtain.

This parent association fights to get the minimum. A spokesperson for the association, who in fact wrote to the Prime Minister in 1994 to make sure francophone claims would be taken into account, Mrs. Galibois Barss, explains very well what motivates them to lead this fight: “—the government is not fulfilling its constitutional responsibilities. The measure does not even meet the minimal requirements to ensure the smooth operation of a French speaking school system”. The same claim is made almost everywhere, in all the provinces.

Considering it may take six to seven years for a case to be heard by the Supreme Court, we can definitely conclude that section 23

### *Supply*

of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms does not provide an automatic guarantee that the rights of francophones living outside Quebec will be protected. Given that statistics show an already high assimilation rate that will continue to increase, we ask the government to take note of the situation and to realize the urgency of the situation.

**Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, once again, I must object to the way the Bloc Québécois manipulates data from Statistics Canada. It is well-known that there are data on language, culture and values in our country, as we move into the 21st century. They are published by a government agency. We can see, for instance, that only 5.7 per cent of Canadians aged 65 and over living outside Quebec speak French. By contrast, the percentage of young people between 15 and 19 who speak French fluently is 500 times greater, at 22.8 per cent.

• (1330)

I will ask permission to table these statistics with the Clerk of the House, in order to show their importance and make sure the opposition parties and, of course, all the hon. members are aware of them.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Does the hon. member have the unanimous consent of the House to table his document?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Mr. Gagnon:** Mr. Speaker, this shows how truth holds no interest for the Bloc Québécois. Unfortunately, figures were quoted today. They reflected the interpretation and the perception of the Bloc Québécois of democracy in Quebec compared to democracy in the rest of the world. It is deplorable to see the Bloc Québécois refusing to accept the reality of the figures that I have here.

Having said that, I regret that the Bloc Québécois did not establish a consistent policy on francophones outside Quebec. Where were the separatist forces, a few years ago, when francophones outside Quebec asked for their support on several issues? Unfortunately, they did not get an enthusiastic response.

I know we are pressed for time, but I urge our listeners to examine carefully and understand the data from Statistics Canada. We know very well that the number of francophones outside Quebec has gone up by 50,000 between 1971 and 1991. This fact has been confirmed by Statistics Canada, an agency the Bloc is fond of quoting.

Time flies, but let me say that if we were to examine the data on and the level of success of Canadian bilingualism, which we owe to Pierre Elliott Trudeau, I could tell you this: If we stay the course, like we say in my riding, I am convinced the percentage of young Canadians who use French outside Quebec will increase from 22.6

*Supply*

per cent to 50 per cent in the next 20 to 30 years. It augurs well for the future of the French language, and the future of Canada.

**Mr. Pomerleau:** Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat taken aback by my colleague's question, because I think he does not make the distinction between the number of people speaking a language and what assimilation means. Even if, overnight, there were five million more people speaking French in Canada, this would have no impact on assimilation.

Being assimilated means starting out with one mother tongue, losing it on the way, and ending up adopting the other language as the language spoken at home. That is what assimilation means. In Canada, right now, data from Statistics Canada prove that, for the last 20 years, this process, that started with Lord Durham, is still going on and is on the rise.

I will be pleased to send the official data from Statistics Canada throughout my riding to satisfy my hon. colleague.

**Mr. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with some sadness that I rise today and people will know why when I am finished talking.

First of all, in response to the opening remarks made by the member for Québec-Est, I would like to confirm that, yes indeed, francophones in Canada are faced with several problems. They are being assimilated, and I share some of his concerns.

Finally, it is true that our past, our more distant past as a country, has been less than glorious when it comes to francophones. However, I dissociate myself from his remarks and statements regarding our more recent past.

• (1335)

We totally disagree with what the member said about the past 30 or 40 years. But I will not repeat what the Acting Minister of Canadian Heritage, who accurately described the role played by the government during that time and the impact of some of its policies, had to say.

Before going any further, however, I would like to respond to two personal attacks from the member. First, he accused me of abandoning francophones. Frankly, I find this comment somewhat out of line, and I am compelled to go on a bit and tell the member that maybe he should do his homework. He is not the one who demonstrated to get a French high school, which we did get in Ontario, before there even was a charter of rights and freedoms. He is not the one who had to travel 40 miles morning and night to go to this school. He is not the one, I am not the one either. But my mother did all this. She was one of the four individuals who invoked the charter to be given the right to manage our own schools in Ontario. I just wanted to let the hon. member know what my roots are.

The member accused me of abandoning francophones. I assume he is talking about the closure of a school in Lower Town. The member forgot to mention that it is an elected French school board, managing its own resources, that was dealing with this issue. But he did not mention that. He did not say that, in the end, the school was not closed, because it suits his purpose not to say so.

The member accuses me of having chastised my French speaking colleagues from Ontario at the ACFO meeting, but he was not there, even if it was his job to do so as critic. He claimed he had not been invited. I am sorry to hear that, but I imagine he was invited to Sainte-Anne school. No, he was not. It simply suited him to criticize a colleague, to make political hay at the expense of others. I must stand up in my own defence, on that point.

Second, the member says that French speaking members from Quebec adopt an attitude typical of the Liberal Party, that they attack Quebec all the time. I dare the member for Québec-Est to quote one case where I attacked Quebec. Really when making such extravagant statements, one should be able to back them up.

I would like to tell the House a story, not mine but one that was written by Antonine Maillet, that great lady, author of *Pélagie la Charrette*, for which she won the Goncourt prize. It is the story of two frogs who accidentally fell into a milk jar. Mrs. Maillet tells the story much better than I can, because she is an extraordinary storyteller. But this is how it goes roughly: both frogs swam and move around but one weakened because it was not as determined as the other frog. At one point, it could no longer hold on, and it sank and drowned.

The other frog kept on and on, swimming all night long and when the farmer looked in the milk jar the following morning, lo and behold, he found one dead frog and one frog sitting on a block of butter. As I said, I do not have the style and eloquence of Antonine Maillet but the story is interesting just the same.

I dare say I am not the frog that gave up. I am not the frog that went to seek refuge elsewhere. I am not the frog that bragged about supporting the francophone community in Ontario, and then abandoned it to use it for his own political ends. That is not my style.

The member prefers to hold out the spectre of assimilation and doom us to extinction within one generation, if I understood him correctly. Let us examine the real situation. To that end, I will quote from four sources. The first one is known by the member, because I have quoted it before. It comes from a brief that was submitted to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resource Development by the Cité collégiale, a French college in my riding. The statement was made this year. This is important, to know which government is being referred to.

• (1340)

I will quote a passage from it: “We are aware of the efforts made by the federal government, over the past 30 years in particular, to stop assimilation, which was so insidious and destructive that it threatened the survival of a whole civilization. The party which now forms the government has been, in this sense, at the forefront of progress, often adopting unpopular but historic measures without which we have to wonder where we would be today as francophones and as Canadians”.

The second one comes from Jacques Michaud, the president of the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada. It is dated April 2, 1996, and is quoted in the editorial page of *Le Devoir*. I quote: “There are several ways to measure the vitality of a people or a nation that is in a minority situation on a continent it shares with a majority from another language, another culture. The most simplistic one is probably to make a comparison with the majority. The most daring one is certainly to emphasize the willingness of a people to live and to develop in its own language and culture. However, this latter requires more than a simple minicalculator to draw all the conclusions. Gains achieved in recent years, not in absolute numbers, but in rights acquired by the francophone community outside Quebec, as well as its determination to take matters in its own hands, are the side of its vitality that is hidden by statistics”.

Let me read a third one that comes once again from *Le Devoir*. It seems this newspaper is highly thought of. It is from Ms. Bissonnette. She talks about the visit she made in some francophone areas in Canada. She talks about two people who are very closely associated with the theatre in St. Boniface. I quote: “The Mahés are everything but bitter. They understand that Quebecers, as I have been repeatedly told in St. Boniface, only know the statistics on the assimilation of francophones outside Quebec and have trouble realizing that the French culture in that province, with its unpredictable directions, is stronger today than it was yesterday. This is no mystery. More comes out of less. It is simply a passion that fires up and connects where it wants to”.

My last quote is also from Lise Bissonnette, an editorialist at *Le Devoir*. Her May 3, 1996 article reads as follows: “In the Commons, the Bloc Québécois erupted with the most hackneyed of sovereigntist arguments. According to its mouthpieces, there can be no progress when the assimilation rate of francophone minorities continues to rise in English Canada. The Bloc forgets that its own policy toward the Canadian Francophonie prevents any statement on its eventual demise. And it has a rather simplistic conception of progress. True, figures are alarming, but cultural vitality also counts. Anyone who knows anything about francophone communities in the other provinces cannot deny that they are stronger and

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less folkloric today than they were yesterday. The sovereigntists, who are always so quick to take offence anytime an outsider has something negative to say about Quebec, are treating others as they hate being treated themselves, again, as a result of ignorance”.

I think it has become rather obvious that, if we look only at the statistics, we can convince anyone of anything. This is what brings me to question the motive behind today’s Bloc resolution, which refers to the urgency to act. They are trying to achieve their goal by trying to sow the seeds of hatred, by painting everything in black, by fabricating, inventing and trying to pit francophones against anglophones.

The urgency may lie elsewhere. There may indeed be an urgency, but it may lie elsewhere. Perhaps this urgency is better explained by the fact that the members of this House who support a certain option—call it sovereignty, independence, separation or whatever—may be getting a feeling or urgency from how fast their best arguments are slipping through their fingers.

Let us say we managed to divide, as demanded by the consensus in Quebec, responsibilities and powers in the area of manpower for instance—and, with an ounce of good will, I think it should be possible—then, they would be losing one of their best pieces of ammunition and it has them concerned because it would play havoc with their plans to become sovereign.

• (1345)

In Canada, the French language is in peril. That is what this is about here today. This is the big argument on which dreams of sovereignty, independence, or whatever, were built. In the past 30 years however, the trend in this country has not been what they had hoped for. The trend has been for the bone and sinew of the Canadian francophonie to regain strength, as one of my colleagues pointed out earlier. He said so himself. That is a threat in itself for those who dare hope for this francophonie to die, just to prove they are right to want to become sovereign.

This explains in part where this sense of urgency is coming from. You know, there is also a fair chance that, in the months to come, some provinces at least will start giving the language of instruction and the right to manage one’s educational institutions the kind of recognition they have been rightly demanding. Premier Tobin made a statement on this subject. We hope he will deliver the merchandise. We are confident Ontario will follow suit and that the federal government, through its own programs, will continue to support communities claiming this right and demanding that it be recognized by the provinces. In short, the sovereigntists realizing that their best arguments in support of sovereignty is slipping through their fingers and getting worried may well explain this sense of urgency they are feeling. Personally, I am not worried at all.

*Supply*

Let us give our Bloc colleagues a word of advice just the same. Bitterness and hate do not help in building a country. If they ever manage to build a country, although I doubt they would succeed, let us hope they will not build it on hate and bitterness. I could not help but feel hurt this morning, when I heard three Bloc members refer to Sir Wilfrid Laurier as a sell-out. To call Sir Wilfrid Laurier, one of the first prime ministers of this country a sell-out is to show incredible narrow-mindedness and a glaring lack of intellectual rigour. In the face of such inability to have an open mind, the only thing I feel is great sadness.

**Mr. Jean-Paul Marchand (Québec-Est, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I did make comments in my speech regarding the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier and I wish to correct or clarify these comments.

Of course the member was elected by francophones living in Ontario. Still, the issue is very serious, considering that several schools will close, including Saint-François-d'Assise and Champlain high schools. Sainte-Anne school would also have closed, had it not been for the Bloc Quebecois.

The assimilation rate in Ottawa-Carleton is 36 per cent. If the hon. member does not feel very concerned by the closing of schools because school boards will look after the issue, fine. But the fact is that the Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario, the ACFO, raised the alarm. I could quote from a large number of press reports. The issue is very serious and has reached a critical point. The association asked for money from the federal government, but the latter reduced its funding by half. The member for Ottawa—Vanier actually went and told the ACFO that it would have to make do with the reduced funding.

So, the member was elected by Franco-Ontarians, but when an issue concerns them he does not look after their interests but after those of his government and tries to hide the reality and downplay the urgency of the problem. Moreover, the member claims that he is not attacking Quebec, but wants the Quebec Referendum Act amended, as if it was any of his business. As a Franco-Ontarian member of Parliament, he should at least take action to help his fellow Franco-Ontarians survive.

• (1350)

Again, Statistics Canada tells us the assimilation rate has increased since 1971, going from 38 per cent that year, up to 43 per cent now. The situation is urgent because the federal government does not do its job, and that includes Liberal members elected by francophones in Ontario and elsewhere. We tabled this motion because neither the government nor its elected French speaking members do anything, and we do not want to see francophone communities disappear. It is in Quebec's best interests to ensure that French speaking communities outside its territory are as strong

as possible, and also in the interests of the whole French speaking community.

If the Liberals cannot do their job, the Bloc is there to try to make them aware of how critical the situation is.

**Mr. Bélanger:** Mr. Speaker, the member is referring to a specific case and his facts are wrong. He says the federal government is about to cut by 50 per cent a grant to the Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario. We will show him the results of the ongoing negotiations so he can change his tune.

All I want to say is that I do not feel like a person who has abandoned francophones in Ontario. It is quite the opposite. Anyway, it is not for me to make that judgment, but for the people of Ottawa-Vanier. They will be the ones who will decide if I have abandoned the francophones in my riding. If they do not think so, they might want to re-elect me, and I will be glad to discuss this issue again at that time with the member for Québec-Est.

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Terrebonne, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, no, I will not talk to him about his frogs.

He gave an eloquent reading of several quotations from Lise Bissonnette. I would like him to comment on the one I am about to read. It goes back to May 28, 1995 and is entitled "A First". In the middle of the page, we find the heading: "The Bloc finally finds the path of the Canadian Francophonie". It was fine to quote from Lise Bissonnette and *Le Devoir* a while ago, and this is the same Lise Bissonnette and the same *Le Devoir*. Does anyone have a problem with that? Thank you very much.

"On the other hand, the Bloc has even outdone the federalist parties on this project". She is referring to the Bloc's position at the time on francophones outside Quebec. "The Quebec Liberal Party never had anything approaching a policy on francophones in Canada. And there is nothing to suggest that it ever will. As for the federal Liberal government, it was contributing large, but ever-diminishing, amounts of money to support official languages programs. The last budget continued the cuts introduced by the former Conservative government, and the Prime Minister has just turned down flat a recommendation by the official languages commissioner to raise the status of bilingualism and francophones by assigning responsibility for them to a new organization reporting to the Privy Council. The Prime Minister turned the whole matter over to the minister, Michel Dupuy, who was reduced to admitting that he had no policy on francophones outside Quebec".

So, here is my question for the member for Ottawa—Vanier, who is working very hard to come up with money to challenge Quebec's democratic laws. What does he think of the cuts and of this article by Lise Bissonnette?

**Mr. Bélanger:** Mr. Speaker, all I can say is that the article or the editorial from which my colleague has quoted was written and published before the one I quoted. We would perhaps have to conclude that Ms. Bissonnette's thinking evolved.

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I would like, first of all, to thank the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier for the excellent speech he gave in this House a few minutes ago. I also thank the members of the Bloc for also recognizing how excellent it was.

I would like to ask the member if he remembers, as I do, back to what the Bloc members used to say some time ago, before they became holier than the holy. But it was not so long ago, and I do not know if the member for Ottawa—Vanier remembers, as I do, that a certain parliamentarian, from a party I shall not name, said about francophones outside Quebec: "Our message to francophones outside Quebec is clear: let us make our decision and mind your own business".

• (1355)

I wonder if the member for Ottawa—Vanier remembers these words. I wonder if he also remembers that a separatist member, who shall remain unnamed, apparently told francophones outside Quebec that they had engaged in a form of prostitution by accepting grants from the federal government. On that occasion, the MP, whom I shall not name, had said that francophones outside Quebec had been bought.

I wonder if the member for Ottawa—Vanier would agree with me that these insulting remarks represent the true feelings of the Bloc Québécois toward francophones outside Quebec, as opposed to what we have just heard today.

**Mr. Bélanger:** Mr. Speaker, I may disappoint my hon. colleague and surprise my friends from the Bloc Québécois. You know, in the heat of the moment, we sometimes say things we later regret having said. Who knows if I did not say things today that will be thrown back in my face next month or the month after that.

If we go over everything I said since coming to this House, which is not that long ago, we shall notice that I have done my best to make a positive contribution, trying, successfully I hope, to avoid personal attacks. I may have ventured a comment here and there, like the one I made about Hull, which was meant as a joke.

Without repeating what my hon. colleague from Glengarry—Prescott—Russell said—and I am convinced what he claims to have heard was indeed said—I wish we could debate this issue with more rigour, raise the tone of the debate so to speak. I am directing my remarks to our colleagues from the Bloc Québécois too. Instead of attacking one another, stirring up bad feelings, I would rather we proudly identify ourselves as Canadians. I am not ashamed to say that I am raising funds to protect people, because we are still—

Mr. Speaker, since I am running out of time, I will complete my remarks on this matter at a later time.

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**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** To be fair, I will not recognize any new speaker, as we are merely minutes away from members' statements.

The hon. member for Rosemont, for a brief comment.

**Mr. Benoît Tremblay (Rosemont, BQ):** Allow me, Mr. Speaker, I want to come back to what I would call the parable of the frogs as told by our friend and colleague, the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier, who is so proud of the fact that one frog managed to survive. But he forgot to tell us about the one that died. When we look at the situation in Canada, we notice that a growing number of francophones are no longer speaking French. That is the fact they are trying to hide.

**Mr. Boudria:** That is right. Showing the same contempt as Suzanne did.

**Mr. Tremblay (Rosemont):** The government whip ought to behave decently.

**Mr. Boudria:** He has just shown the same contempt. You are all the same. Shame on you.

[*English*]

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, as it is now 2 p.m., we will proceed to Statements by Members.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[*English*]

### AGNES BOROS

**Mrs. Georgette Sheridan (Saskatoon—Humboldt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honour the volunteer efforts of Agnes Boros.

Agnes spent six weeks in Panama City with CESO, an agency supported by CIDA, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs and by hundreds of Canadian corporations and individuals.

Agnes had the task of reviewing the expansion plans of an outdated, overcrowded cancer treatment centre.

Her efforts brought about real change. After discovering that the only expansion site was the antiquated laundry facility of an adjacent hospital, Agnes worked out a compromise that will allow both hospitals to share a new laundry. Agnes also provided a detailed cost estimate that facilitated agreement from various authorities for a construction plan. She developed the concept plans for both the bone marrow and intensive care units.

Like other CESO volunteers, Agnes has professional skills and experience that she willingly shares with needy businesses and

*S. O. 31*

organizations in developing nations, emerging market economies and Canadian aboriginal communities. Well done, Agnes.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Benoît Sauvageau (Terrebonne, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in the past, we have sometimes wondered about the judgment shown by some public officials responsible for issuing visitor's visas for Canada. This time, it seems someone really outdid himself.

On Tuesday, June 11, in *Le Journal de Montréal*, Franco Nuovo told the following story in an article simply entitled "Rosa": Three sisters from Ecuador, all wives, mothers and workers in their country, were denied visitor's visas for Canada. Why did these women want to come to Canada for a short stay? Was it a for a good reason or a trivial one?

These women wished to come to Canada because their mother, a Canadian citizen who had been living here for eight years and who was suffering from lung cancer, had reached the terminal phase of her illness. Rosa Saraguro died on May 30, without her three daughters from Ecuador at her side, because some public officials did not deign to use common sense and to show some compassion. This is awful.

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[English]

**TALWINDER SINGH PARMAR**

**Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, while members of this House often rise to salute ceremonies taking place in their constituencies, I am using this opportunity to condemn one that is taking place in my riding this weekend.

The Surrey-Delta Sikh Temple will be honouring the late Talwinder Singh Parmar, the founder of the Babbar Khalsa, and the suspected mastermind behind the 1985 bombing of Air-India, which killed 329 people.

In response to this ceremony, the RCMP issued the following statement:

Mr. Parmar's recognition as a hero, despite what investigations have confirmed and what the RCMP believe insofar as Parmar's objectives being furthered by acts of violence and terrorism is—not only disturbing, but totally unacceptable and intolerable.

I add my voice to those of the RCMP and the families of the victims of the Air-India bombing in condemning this ceremony.

Perhaps now is the time for an official inquiry so that all Canadians can see just what type of a hero Talwinder Singh Parmar really was.

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**FRESHWATER INSTITUTE**

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, the fate of the Winnipeg's Freshwater Institute and the environmental lakes area hangs in the balance. Manitobans, northwest Ontarians and the international scientific community are waiting to see if the Liberal government is so lacking in vision that it will actually follow through with its plan to destroy one of the jewels of Canadian science and environmental research.

The world renowned institute first established the environmental hazards of phosphates and detergents and its experimental lake program was a key player in research on acid rain.

Honoured by the international scientific community for these accomplishments, scientists at the institute are now being trashed by their own government. They are facing unbelievable cuts of 70 per cent of their budget, cuts so deep that they will effectively kill the institute. The rumoured promise of a small reduction in the cuts would do little to save the integrity of the work done there.

The NDP calls on the government to back away from this self-inflicted wound to the Canadian environment, Canadian science and Canada's international reputation and save the Freshwater Institute.

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[Translation]

**SIR WILFRID LAURIER**

**Mr. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the election campaign is well under way. Wilfrid Laurier is just days away from an election which he will win on June 23, 1896.

At the time, the problems were somewhat similar to those of today. Laurier was an staunch Liberal protector of the rights of the provinces, lambasting the centralizing policies of Sir John A. MacDonald, who had a tendency to view provincial governments as subordinate institutions.

Wilfrid Laurier favoured an optimistic and positive approach. While in the opposition the previous year, he had said, in Morrisburg, Ontario: "If it were in my power, I would try the sunny way".

It is in this spirit of openness that I join the hon. member for Québec-Est and all my friends in this House to say, like Wilfrid Laurier did: "Let us try the sunny way".

[English]

### DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL

**Mrs. Anna Terrana (Vancouver East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, next Saturday in my riding of Vancouver East the world championship dragon boat festival will start. For eight days dragons, boats, lions, dances, multicultural food, arts and crafts from around the world and competitions will bring to life the Plaza of Nations and the Concord Pacific Place.

Although dragon boat races have taken place for eight years, this is the first time the world championship will be held outside of Asia, “building bridges of understanding” not only for various people, but for the whole world.

[Translation]

This colourful and exciting festival will make Vancouver, a place where the mountains and the waters meet to create one of the world’s most beautiful cities, an even livelier place. Local and international teams will take part in the festival. The whole world will be represented.

• (1405)

[English]

I would like to congratulate all participants and organizers of this massive event and in particular, Jon Markoulis, the chairman of the Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival Society.

Ten years after Expo ’86, Vancouver invites the world once again to celebrate the “world”.

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### HUNGARY

**Mr. Tom Wappel (Scarborough West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the year 1996 marks the 1,100th anniversary of Hungary, the homeland of my parents and ancestors.

It was in 896 AD that Arpad, the leader of the most powerful tribe of Magyars, then living on the western steppes of Ukraine, was invited by the Carolingian emperor Arnulf to cross the Carpathian mountains to help the emperor subjugate the Moravian empire.

This federation of 10 tribes, or hordes, was known to its neighbours as the On-Ogur, meaning 10 arrows, from the Slavic pronunciation of which the name Hungary is derived.

Over the course of its 1,100-year-old history, the Magyar nation has sent its sons and daughters throughout the world, including our great country.

I am proud of my ancestry and of my country of birth, Canada. Let us hope that 971 years from now, our descendants will be

*S. O. 31*

celebrating the 1,100 anniversary of Canada and that when they do, the 2,071-year-old Magyar nation will be there to congratulate us.

**The Speaker:** Magyar kac magyrok?

\* \* \*

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mrs. Monique Guay (Laurentides, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, earlier this week a coalition of national and local environmental groups issued its report card on Liberal performance in the area of the environment.

The Sierra Club of Canada blames the government in particular for having flouted one of the few explicit red book promises, to reduce greenhouse effect emissions by 20 per cent by the year 2005. This crucial Liberal commitment will not be fulfilled, quite simply because the government has been unable to achieve a consensus among the provinces.

Finally, this government has reduced the Department of the Environment “to a significantly weaker position and has shown a more hostile position to environmental decision-making than any other government in the 25 year history of the department—The Chrétien government’s record on the environment is significantly worse than the Mulroney government record”.

What more is there to add to such a damning conclusion?

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### SPORTS FISHERY

**Mr. John Duncan (North Island—Powell River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, despite valiant attempts by the minister of fisheries to dissuade sports fishermen from visiting the west coast, I want fishermen from around the world to know that the regular sports fishery on the east side of Vancouver Island and adjacent inlets continues.

The minister has created a public relations nightmare of confusion and delay in announcing chinook catch and release programs specific to the west side of Vancouver Island. This forced the good municipality of Campbell River and local businesses to institute a \$32,000 emergency advertising campaign to minimize the minister’s damage to this season.

Two things are true. Campbell River and area’s multimillion dollar sports fishery is open for business and the minister sat on his hands for months, rather than make a decision. Then he made a confusing announcement.

When is the rear admiral going to start leading from the front instead of the rear?

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### MARCH AGAINST POVERTY

**Mr. Gurbax Singh Malhi (Bramalea—Gore—Malton, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, 1996 is the International Year for the Eradication of

*S. O. 31*

Poverty. I rise today in honour of thousands of Canadians currently taking part in the Women's March against Poverty.

Women represent 52 per cent of the population, yet many of them and their children continue to live below the poverty line.

The march underlines the fact that women can only achieve equality in society where the rights of the neediest members of our communities are taken into consideration.

This march is about the kind of society we need to build for our families and our communities.

\* \* \*

**FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME**

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, fetal alcohol syndrome, or FAS, is a medical diagnosis that refers to disabilities in children caused by the use of alcohol during pregnancy.

• (1410)

Characteristically, a FAS child experiences growth retardation, neurological abnormalities, behavioural dysfunction, learning disabilities, facial and brain malformations to name a few.

Medical research has shown that even social drinking on special occasions can cause birth defects affecting the growth and proper formation of an unborn child's body and brain. Health experts agree that there is no safe level of alcohol consumption during pregnancy and alcohol can damage the fetus throughout the pregnancy, not just in the first trimester.

In terms of numbers, 5 per cent of birth defects are caused by alcohol and it costs taxpayers \$2.7 billion each year in special health care and social programs needed by FAS children.

FAS is a 100 per cent preventable tragedy and I therefore urge Health Canada to warn expectant mothers of the dangers of consuming alcohol during pregnancy.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**QUEBEC PREMIER**

**Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it has not been easy trying to keep up with Lucien Bouchard's political meanderings over the last few months.

After personally asking for a meeting with the Prime Minister of Canada to discuss questions of importance to Quebec, Lucien Bouchard cancels in an unprecedented huff, even threatening to call an early election.

A few weeks later, he says that the reasons he gave for cancelling the meeting were not really important, and turns around and asks

for another meeting. Following that meeting, he says he is satisfied with the discussions, but less than a week later, he again lapses into a pique and trots out the usual themes of humiliation and centralization.

The separatist leader should, from time to time, review what he has said the day before, and save all of us the trouble of trying to figure out where he is headed next.

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**CHILD LABOUR**

**Mr. Maurice Dumas (Argenteuil—Papineau, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in a recent study released by the UN on social issues, we learned that no fewer than 73 million children are used as cheap labour. Ranging in age from 10 to 14, these children represent 13 per cent of the young people in the age grouping studied. They are exploited in agriculture, domestic services, the carpet and textile industry, and, shamefully, in the sex trade.

On June 11 in Geneva, labour ministers from 173 countries met to look at ways of eliminating child labour, especially forced labour, slavery, exposure to toxic products and child prostitution.

The government must play a leadership role in this issue and must adopt strict measures to keep goods produced by child labour out of Canada. Canada has a duty to demonstrate clearly the regard in which human rights are held by the people of Canada and of Quebec.

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[English]

**FISHERIES**

**Mr. Bill Gilmour (Comox—Alberni, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, last Friday I attended Federal Court in Vancouver to hear the case regarding the native only fishery in the Alberni Canal in my riding of Comox—Alberni.

The plaintiffs sought an injunction to stop the fishery and challenged the fishery minister's authority to grant an opening to one sector of society based solely on race. Rarely has a Federal Court judge been so critical of a minister of the crown.

The judge charged that this was a very serious issue and the courts were dealing with only half the information and half the evidence, and he blamed the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. He said DFO had been negotiating secret deals that had impacts far beyond those which involved the two parties before him in court.

When will this government, and particularly this minister, realize that all Canadians, regardless of race or background, deserve equal treatment and that all Canadians must be treated equally before and under the law?



*Oral Questions***KLONDIKE GOLD RUSH**

**Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House that the Prime Minister today signed a proclamation declaring the celebration of the centennial of the Klondike gold rush, an event of national significance.

One hundred years ago the Klondike gold rush attracted fortune seekers from all over the planet in search of adventures that captured the imagination of the world.

The discovery of gold shaped the future of Yukon and indeed the future of Canada. This anniversary is part of a decade of centennial celebrations in Yukon. Today is also the 98th anniversary of Yukon as a territory.

These events are being further commemorated today by the unveiling of a series of commemorative Klondike stamps by Canada Post. Earlier this year, the Royal Canadian Mint launched its 1996, 14 carat gold coin "Centennial of the Discovery of Gold in the Klondike".

• (1415)

I am pleased, therefore, to call on all Canadians to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the momentous discovery which launched the Klondike gold rush, a colourful saga of the Canadian north.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**CAE**

**Hon. Sheila Finestone (Mount Royal, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the firm CAE in Ville-Saint-Laurent has just announced it will expand its facilities. The project, estimated at some \$8 million, will enable the firm to provide an additional 500 jobs over the next two years.

This major expansion of the Montreal plant is due, among other reasons, to the international reputation of its flight simulators. The news comes at a perfect time to reward the efforts of all the employees of this firm, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.

This company, with its head office in Toronto, provides work for more than 6,200 people in Canada, including 4,000 in the Montreal area. With a full order book, quality products and highly trained employees, CAE is proving once again the importance and the cost effectiveness of investing in research and development in Canada.

**ORAL QUESTION PERIOD**

[*Translation*]

**AIRBUS AIRCRAFT**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice has revealed that, a few days after his appointment as Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, he approached RCMP authorities concerning the Airbus affair.

Let us not forget that the minister has admitted that the information he communicated to the RCMP originated with an unidentified journalist.

I am asking the minister whether he advised the Prime Minister of the approaches he was planning to make to the RCMP, before he was appointed Minister of Justice and Solicitor General of Canada?

[*English*]

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** No, Mr. Speaker, but there is an assumption in the question that is wrong.

The hon. member asserted in his preamble that there has been an omission that I involved myself in the Airbus investigation. That is plain wrong. The choice of language and precision of expression is important in this matter.

The House will know from what has been said that I have made it a matter of public record that after consulting with my deputy minister and the Solicitor General of Canada, I communicated to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in November 1993, or thereabouts, information which I had received with respect to the previous government.

The RCMP then communicated with me after they had looked into those matters and said that there was no basis for investigation.

Subsequently, separately, the RCMP commenced an investigation into what is now called the Airbus affair. I had no knowledge of or involvement in that investigation. My first knowledge of it was derived on November 4, 1995 when one of the lawyers for Mr. Mulroney telephoned me at home.

Those are the facts. In communicating information to the RCMP that I had learned early in November 1993, I was not only acting after consulting with the deputy minister and the solicitor general, but as it appears from reports in the media in recent days, I was doing exactly the same as at least one former minister of justice, John Turner, said he did when he was fixed with information of that kind.

*Oral Questions*

Therefore, I invite the hon. member to be careful in how he expresses himself. I had no involvement in the Airbus investigation, as that is known. That is a matter for the police.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister tells us that he communicated information to the RCMP. I am not making any assumptions on the role he played in the affair.

Having this information, however, and intending to communicate it to the RCMP—I am not saying he interfered in the investigation—I am asking him, knowing all this, when the Prime Minister invited him to be Minister of Justice and Solicitor General of Canada, did he not find it appropriate to inform the Prime Minister of his intention to communicate that information to the RCMP because, after becoming Solicitor General and Minister of Justice, he would be the one responsible for the case.

Is this not a lack of judgment? Let us keep in mind, all ministers speak on behalf of the government, commit the Cabinet, commit the Prime Minister. Why then did he not inform the Prime Minister?

• (1420)

[*English*]

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** No, Mr. Speaker, it is not.

In the first place, at the time when I was sworn in I had not yet consulted either with the deputy or the solicitor general with respect to the information in my proper role. Second, a police investigation is not the responsibility of the attorney general and the Minister of Justice.

If the hon. member will look at the roles and responsibilities of officers of the government, he will see the RCMP conducts investigations on its own. It is the solicitor general, not the attorney general, who reports to Parliament for the police.

These are not simply matters of detail. They are fundamental issues, as I said in response to a question last week from the hon. member's colleague. Police investigations are run by the police, not by politicians.

It is only those who choose not to see it who say there is no distinction between an attorney general acting responsibly in communicating to the RCMP information so it can pursue it and exercise its own judgment about its importance and an attorney general saying to the police: "I will have no role in a police investigation. That is up to you to decide". Those are the principles.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the minister tells us that he did not speak to the deputy ministers or the people in the department before becoming minister

and Solicitor General. I can understand that, as he was not yet in the position. The opposite situation would have surprised me greatly.

What I am asking the minister is that, when invited to join the cabinet as Solicitor General and Minister of Justice—he was the one who would have to deal with this matter later on. I am not speaking of the investigation, or of the letters sent to Switzerland, to a foreign government, by his department, which was nevertheless responsible—would it not have been appropriate at that time for him to inform the Prime Minister that he was privy to some information, that he had heard certain things, allegations from a journalist, in order not to be in conflict of interest or to appear to be in conflict of interest?

[*English*]

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, I know this is an important matter. I try to give all latitudes à celui qui demande les questions et à celui qui répond. For the rest of question period I ask that you be very precise in the question. Maybe we can cut down a little on the preamble.

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will poke in vain through the entrails of this affair to find some squalid political advantage.

There are two principles in operation here, and I abided in them both. First, as the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, when I am fixed with information and consult with my deputy and with the solicitor general and am then advised that it is properly communicated to the RCMP, I do so. That is fulfilling a moral obligation. I am encouraged to see that predecessors in office have done the same, including John Turner.

The second principle is the police conduct investigations without interference from politicians. When I communicate information, it is up to the police to decide what to do with it.

In this instance they wrote back and said "we have looked into it and we are doing nothing with it". Then if they on their own decide to commence an investigation, as apparently they did, they are to do that investigation without being controlled or influenced by politicians. That is the second principle and that principle was also respected.

• (1425)

The hon. member will look in vain for any wrongdoing in this case.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday, in the House of Commons, the Minister of Justice denied the report by the CBC to the effect that the libel suit brought against the government in the Airbus deal might be settled out of court.

*Oral Questions*

However, by indicating that an out of court settlement is always the best solution, the Minister of Justice admitted that the government was trying to get that kind of settlement in the Airbus case.

Can the Minister of Justice tell us if, in the Airbus case, the main objective of the government is to settle out of court and if the department's counsels have made a proposal to that end?

[English]

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the question of whether litigation should be settled is a matter for lawyers. As I said yesterday, I think in civil litigation the interests of the parties are always best protected, best served, by settling rather than by litigating issues.

There is no settlement imminent in this case that I am aware of. There is no concrete proposal on the table that I am aware of. If the parties through their solicitors have communication, so much the better. We will always be mindful of the public interest in whatever settlement discussions take place.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have a feeling that the department's counsels heard the minister say that a settlement out of court was the best solution. I do not think they are deaf.

Would the minister not agree that his own poor judgment put the government in a very bad legal situation, that will cost a lot of money to the Canadian taxpayers and undermine the credibility of the whole government?

[English]

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I remind the hon. member that this litigation was commenced by the plaintiff, not by us. As to what it will cost the taxpayer, the hon. member ought to wait and see how the case turns out.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, this airbus scandal continues to take flight. Although it is clear there have been gross errors of judgment, errors of commission and omission, the minister continues to confuse the people of Canada by denying all responsibility and says he is taking no part, no play in this comedy of errors.

Now the Liberals are talking about a payoff to keep Mr. Mulroney quiet and taxpayers are on the hook for millions.

If the minister is not responsible for this Keystone cop routine, who will he blame? Is it the RCMP, the reporters? Who is he blaming?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows the matter is in litigation. The questions I was asking had to do with the prospect of settlement.

As I said, there is no settlement imminent, no concrete proposal for settlement. There is no issue at present of spending any taxpayer money. I said earlier we should wait and see how this litigation turns out.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday on the news even the Prime Minister mentioned he would be open to the idea of settling this out of court. He did not mention numbers, but I suppose he would agree even if it costs millions of dollars.

I think Canadian taxpayers are upset. The Minister is acting like Monte Hall: "Brian Mulroney, let's make a deal". I think that is unacceptable. Why did the minister and his department not get the facts straight before he risked millions of taxpayer dollars?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member does not have his facts straight. I said no such thing. Negotiations and litigation for the settlement of cases are for lawyers and should be left to the lawyers acting for the parties.

**Mr. Chuck Strahl (Fraser Valley East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, this Airbus investigation, regardless of who is to blame, has been bungled right from the word go. The screw-up has cost Canadians and it will cost, starting with this payoff to Mr. Mulroney, millions of dollars. What is more disturbing is that no one on that side of the House will take any responsibility for anything that has happened to date.

Will the minister take ministerial responsibility for the crash landing of this Airbus investigation? If he wants to know what to do, there are two seats in the front, two on the side and two in the back.

• (1430)

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I take responsibility for the Department of Justice. From the outset the Department of Justice has acted in an appropriate fashion.

As to the litigation, if there is any settlement to be discussed it will be discussed between the lawyers for the parties, the people who should be undertaking that work.

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[Translation]

**FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS**

**Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

*Oral Questions*

Yesterday, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs was asked about the Charlottetown style model of federal-provincial relations that the government is putting forward and he said, and I quote: "The Government of Quebec has certain responsibilities. It has a hard time assuming them all the time, and we are offering government assistance to ensure that this responsibility is carried out as well as possible."

Are we to understand that the minister believes the provinces are unable to manage the programs from which they want the federal government to withdraw and that that is why the government wants to remain in charge, set the standards and keep the money, simply letting the provinces carry out the orders? That is indeed the way he sees it.

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if the provinces of Canada are limited to carrying out the orders, what about the German Länders, the Swiss cantons, the American states, the Australian states, all federated entities that dream about the powers the Canadian provinces have?

**Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, as a learned constitutional expert, the minister also said yesterday and I quote: "The Government of Canada has the responsibility of ensuring that these moneys are administered responsibly."

The minister talks about co-operation, but at the same time he questions the provinces' ability to administer the moneys responsibly. Does that mean that the federal government will continue to act as a big brother to the provinces it considers incompetent and totally irresponsible?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, if, for once, just for once, the official opposition members were to look at the problems we have not through their glasses which make them see plots everywhere, but with the best interests of Canadians in mind, they would have to agree that we have a wonderful federation that gives us the best standard of living in the world and that we can work together to improve it even further. You only have to believe in this federation of ours.

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[English]

#### FIRST MINISTERS CONFERENCE

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, Mr. Klein has said he will not participate in secret discussions on the Constitution and he would walk out of a first ministers conference that did that.

Premier Clark said he will not participate and yesterday premier Bouchard repeated he will not participate in constitutional discussions at the first ministers conference.

Will the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs make a commitment that at the FMC any discussions of the Constitution will either be public and open or the agenda item will be withdrawn?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I repeat to the hon. member that the sole aspect of the Constitution that will be discussed is to fulfil article 49 and it is to discuss the process by which we will have an open discussion among Canadians about the amending formula.

**Mr. Stephen Harper (Calgary West, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister admitted to the House yesterday that this condition has already been satisfied at least three times. That still does not answer why we are discussing it at all.

Can the minister make two other commitments, if he is so committed to public consultation, to describe to us the public consultation which has taken place leading up to this first ministers conference and will he commit, as the Liberal Party did in 1992, that no constitutional change will be made unless it is submitted to a national referendum?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this meeting is certainly not to discuss the Constitution except for the specific matter of section 49.

• (1435)

The hon. member mentioned Premier Klein. I quote Premier Klein. He said the agenda of this conference is a good one, that we finally have some meat and potato items on the agenda that affect social policy reform, labour training and governmental harmonization and environmental assessment. It deals with overlap and duplication which exists in a lot of inspection and security services. We are actually addressing some of the issues that go right to the heart of the problem of the rebalancing of federal powers.

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[Translation]

#### FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS

**Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Yesterday, in response to a question by the member for Berthier—Montcalm, the minister stated, with reference to federal

*Oral Questions*

responsibilities in the area of manpower and provincial ones in the area of education, as follows:

—the provinces are responsible for education, which is rather closely related to occupational training. It is, therefore, all these constitutional responsibilities which the Government of Canada, in conjunction with the provinces, will be better assuming, thank to the reform proposed by the minister.

Can the Minister explain this statement, which suggests that the federal government has not really given up interfering in education, through national standards in particular?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in all other federations, federal spending power is exercised without limitation. The division of powers is, substantially, legislative. Where spending power is concerned, in the U.S., the federal government spends money in the various sectors.

Here in Canada we shall go further than all other federations. For the first time in the history of this country, except for constitutional negotiations and acts, the Government of Canada has committed to a more harmonious federation in which the federal spending power will be directed in such a way as to allow us to work in conjunction with the provinces.

This, then, is the Canada the hon. member wants to break up.

**Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I gather from that, that all you have to do is believe. Believe, when all of the premiers of Quebec, since 1960 at least, have tried to ensure Quebec of the means for development. We are not speaking of other federations, we are speaking of the people of Quebec in Canada.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mrs. Lalonde:** And it is precisely because they have had no response that we want to get out.

Can the minister guarantee that the federal government will respect Quebec's exclusive jurisdiction in the area of education, that it will not in any way use the amounts allocated to it for this to impose national standards?

**Hon. Stéphane Dion (President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada respects the Constitution of Canada and the official opposition wants to tear up the Constitution of Canada. That is the truth of it.

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[English]

## JUSTICE

**Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the justice minister is aware that if Bill C-45 does not go through before the

summer recess, Clifford Olson can appeal for early release directly to a jury rather than having to jump through the additional hoop of applying to a superior court judge.

I ask the minister why he waited until there were only eight sitting days left before the summer recess to introduce this flawed, half measure of a bill. Why did he not introduce it months ago, providing the House with ample opportunity to deal with it at all stages before the summer recess?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have just concluded a long and very important consultation process, speaking with victims groups, crown attorneys, judges, defence lawyers, police and others in relation to section 745. The bill is now before the House. I invite the hon. member and his colleagues to support it so we can put it in place and have it available in the law at the earliest possible date.

• (1440)

**Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister knows that his officials have been in touch with me and other members of our caucus. Every overture that has been made has been met with a clear statement that although we oppose the bill we are not interested in delaying its passage.

Bill C-45 contains a royal recommendation which allows for the expenditure of additional funds for section 745 appeals for early release by first degree murderers. I ask the justice minister, what are the additional expenditures? How much more will his modifications to section 745 cost the Canadian taxpayers?

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the royal recommendation is there because there will be additional incarceration costs since fewer people will be released. That is where the extra money is being spent. That is the answer. The hon. member and his colleagues in the Reform Party would repeal section 745 altogether. That would cost even more money.

I am gratified to hear the hon. member say that he and his colleagues in the Reform Party will not stand in the way of speedy adoption of the bill. This bill is going to strengthen criminal law and improve section 745. I look forward to the day when it is law.

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[Translation]

## STUDENT LOANS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

**Mr. Stéphan Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Human Resources Development.

With the Quebec government's announcement in May of a change in the rules for awarding student loans, the minister said that he intended to examine the scope of Quebec's decision. The

*Oral Questions*

federal government contributes only \$98 million of the \$472 million in the Quebec program or 20 per cent.

With its 20 per cent contribution to the Quebec loans and bursaries program, would the minister confirm the government's intention to push Quebec to change its policies?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are neither intending nor in a position to force any province to change its policy on student loans.

However, I think that the vast majority of young people, in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada, would like the opportunity to study in the institution of their choice. This has been an honourable tradition in Canada for a very long time.

The only thing I can say to him is I have suggested and continue to hope that, in Quebec as elsewhere in Canada, men and women wanting to pursue their studies may do so with as much freedom as possible.

**Mr. Stéphan Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean):** Mr. Speaker, as with the proposed partnership in the area of manpower, will the minister acknowledge that his government is simply meddling further in areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think so. The hon. member's question about student loans has nothing to do with meddling. We respect Quebec's jurisdiction.

However, we suggest, discreetly I hope, that it is for the good of young people—just like people in this House who have studied outside their province—be they young New Brunswickers studying in Quebec or young Quebecers coming here to study in French at the University of Ottawa, or Albertans heading to McGill in Montreal. This is a longstanding practice.

I think, on the whole, that young people in Quebec and elsewhere in Canada want to be able to continue their studies in their home province, in their country or abroad. This freedom and this flexibility are what strengthens young people and Canada.

\* \* \*

[English]

**REFUGEES**

**Mrs. Eleni Bakopanos (Saint-Denis, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration.

The Government of China is demanding the expulsion of all Vietnamese in refugee camps before Hong Kong is transferred to China in 1997.

[Translation]

Since several of these people have relatives in Canada, will the minister take the necessary measures to speed up the processing of the applications made by these Vietnamese so as to reunite them with their families?

**Hon. Lucienne Robillard (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and Acting Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to note at the outset that these people are not bona fide refugees. As things stand now, all these cases have been examined by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Hong Kong government. As you very well know, in 1989, several countries made a commitment to act on a global action plan for Vietnamese living in camps. We welcomed in Canada our share of these cases that were considered to be refugees.

• (1445)

As for the others, there was an international agreement providing that these people could go back to Vietnam and the Office of the High Commissioner assures us that it will control the return of these people to Vietnam. By the way, a high proportion of these people are already back in Vietnam.

That being said, I assure the hon. member for Saint-Denis that all the applications made in Vietnam by people who want to come to Canada to reunite with their families will be met with our usual open-minded approach to such cases.

\* \* \*

[English]

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, since Prime Minister Juppé left Ottawa, he has stabbed this government in the back. He has insulted over 50 per cent of Quebecers and most of the rest of Canada. This man is a guest of the Canadian people and we are paying the bill for his trip. The Canadian taxpayers deserve an apology. This House deserves an apology.

My question is for the Prime Minister. Is he willing to stand up for the Canadian people by demanding an apology from Prime Minister Juppé?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has made a whole series of allegations but has not provided the basis upon which he is suggesting apologies be made.

When the Prime Minister was here, he made it very clear that relations with Canada are proceeding well. There are no irritants. He has no interest in interfering in the internal affairs of this country.

Time was spent talking about how we can increase investment, how we can increase jobs, how we can increase cultural relations

*Oral Questions*

and how we can work together in a series of matters dealing with disarmament and international affairs.

It seems to me to be a little ridiculous to be asking for an apology when someone comes to our country and wants to substantiate and expand relations with our country.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**An hon. member:** Look at the Bloc. The Bloc members are applauding.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is very obvious where the support comes from for what the Prime Minister has done.

What would it be like if our Prime Minister went to France and started talking about how great the Basque separatists were? That is exactly what happened. The Prime Minister of France did one thing in Ottawa and another thing in Quebec City. What he did in Quebec City has insulted Canadians. It stomped on our pride in our country and did nothing for unity. What is the Prime Minister going to do about this?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the only comments I read recently about Basque separatism were made by the hon. member for Red Deer.

Fortunately we are blessed in this country with having a Prime Minister whose prudence and good judgment are well known. He would never say anything quite as stupid as the member for Red Deer said.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

We learned this morning in *Le Devoir* that the Department of Foreign Affairs would reduce by almost 60 per cent its assistance to cultural organizations for their international tours.

How can the foreign affairs minister explain the decision of his department to cut by almost 60 per cent its assistance with regard to the exportation of Canadian cultural products?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to say that we support culture as a basic element of Canada's foreign policy. However, we do have to make cuts to stay within our budget, and these cuts affect all activities within my department.

• (1450)

At the same time, I would like to find new approaches with regard to culture. We invited the private sector to form a partnership with us. Recently, there was a huge Canadian celebration in

Sao Paulo that was paid for entirely by the private sector. This celebration, the purpose of which was to show the strength and excellence of Canadian culture, cost \$2 million. Several groups were involved, including some from Quebec.

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, according to the same source, namely *Le Devoir*, Quebec companies are more affected than others by the minister's cuts.

Does the minister realize that, by making these cuts, he is compromising the very existence of several cultural groups that are known worldwide and that, in the short term, it will be difficult for him to show Canadian culture outside the country?

[English]

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let me set this straight. The purpose of the involvement of the Department of Foreign Affairs in culture is not to provide basic subsidies to groups, it is to promote Canadian culture abroad. We do it in a variety of ways. We provide support for groups to travel. We provide money for exhibitions in which we can demonstrate the good quality of our cultural products.

We are now developing new ways to bring the private sector in to work as partners with us. A good example is that this fall we are opening a new Canadian cultural centre in Paris. It will provide a permanent exhibition and display area using the latest multimedia and video techniques. It will give Canadian cultural groups a broad audience.

That is the way we promote culture. That is why we are trying to find the most innovative ways working with the private sector and the cultural groups. The judgment cannot be made based simply upon the number of grants given to groups. It is what is done to promote the entire field of culture abroad.

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### ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

**Mr. John Duncan (North Island—Powell River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, rural municipalities in Saskatchewan receive a one time payment of 22.5 times previous years taxation revenues for any additions to treaty lands. This is to compensate for tax revenue losses and provision of municipal services upon creation of these Indian reserves.

The rural municipalities are being offered only five times for specific land claims, a loss of tens of millions of dollars to the municipalities. My question for the minister of Indian affairs is why?

**Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, just prior to the last government's demise, the minister sent to some a letter which had to be cancelled saying that the ministry would go 20 times taxes. If expanded across the country, this would cost approximately an extra \$50 million. If the hon. member is prepared to put an

*Oral Questions*

amendment to our next budget asking for an additional \$50 million, I am sure we would support it.

**Mr. John Duncan (North Island—Powell River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, these land claims are supposed to be a cost borne by all Canadians, not by rural municipalities in Saskatchewan.

The minister is offloading federal responsibility on to the municipalities. They had a previously negotiated agreement. The minister has usurped that agreement and is now threatening to create tax exempt reserve lands over the objections of the rural municipalities unless they agree to this unfair five times formula.

Why is the minister bullying the municipalities? Why is he offloading federal responsibility on to their backs?

**Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are trying in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta to go back and deal fairly with treaties because there were wrong counts. This is the party that said we should deal fairly with the aboriginal people and we have done that. The remaining issue is the tax issue.

The Reform Party which says that we have to be fiscally prudent is saying to the government that it wants an extra \$50 million. This cannot be done just in Saskatchewan. It has to be done in downtown Vancouver and in Halifax as well. If the Reform Party is saying that, then rather than hiding behind this rhetoric, when we are doing the budget next year, stand up and say so.

\* \* \*

• (1455)

**TAXATION**

**Mr. Alex Shepherd (Durham, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

The Reform Party at its convention last weekend proposed a flat tax, although it is clear that many of them did not understand what it meant. The Reform Party thought that taxing the middle class and giving to the rich would be a fresh start for Canadians.

Can the minister comment on this policy of Robin Hood in reverse, taxing the lower income workers while giving to the rich, and what is he doing to bring more fairness into the income tax system?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is asking me to comment on the tax policy of the Reform Party. I am afraid he is asking me to comment on the indecipherable but I will attempt to make some sense of what appeared at the Reform convention to be a great deal of incoherent and inconsistent meandering around the subject.

The flat tax has been with us for a long time. In fact a number of Liberal Party members have examined this issue in considerable depth. At the same time—

**Mr. Harper (Calgary West):** This is out of order.

**Some hon. members:** Order.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard):** I must say, Mr. Speaker, they are in particularly good voice.

**Some hon. members:** Order.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, I judged the question to be a valid question in the sense that it does deal with the minister's responsibility of taxation.

**Mr. Abbott:** A Reform policy?

**Mr. Harper (Calgary West):** He should cross the floor.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**The Speaker:** I would ask all members to please listen to the answer. I give the floor to the hon. Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard):** Mr. Speaker, I was attempting to explain the Reform Party's tax policy. The difficulty the rest of the country has in understanding it is that the type of debate we have just heard is what happened at their convention.

The flat tax has been around for a long time. The Liberal Party looked at it. Some of our members were pioneers in it. A number of Republican Party candidates in the United States have dealt with it. They have consistently run into the same problems in that it is very difficult to come up with a flat tax which does not benefit the rich at the expense of the poor, or it is difficult to come up with one that does not have so many exemptions and such a great deal of complexity that it vitiates its very purpose.

The fact is that—

**The Speaker:** The hon. member for Louis-Hébert.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**TRAN TRIEU QUAN**

**Mr. Philippe Paré (Louis-Hébert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Taking the whole world by surprise, the public ministry of Vietnam has decided to bring Tran Trieu Quan before an appeal court at a hearing to be held on June 17. Meanwhile, Mr. Quan continues to be shackled every day from 3 p.m. until the following morning.

Given the rather timid reaction by Canada to the treatment being afforded Mr. Quan, can the minister at least make a commitment



that the Canadian consul in Hô Chi Minh will attend Mr. Quan's hearing, in order to ensure that the rights of this Canadian citizen are respected?

[English]

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the comment by the hon. member is not accurate. When our consul in Vietnam visited Mr. Quan and discovered that manacles had been placed on his legs, we immediately issued a very strong protest to the minister of foreign affairs and directly to the Vietnamese officials. We have taken a very strong stand against that.

The fact that the appeal is about to be held is a useful sign. We have been waiting for the appeal to be held. We have been able to exercise pressures by making a number of visits and a number of representations. The appeal in the case is proceeding which is the outcome we have been trying to achieve.

• (1500)

We will certainly provide all the support, legal assistance and presence we can to Mr. Quan during in this period and assure he has the full support of the Canadian government in terms of giving him the kind of presence required.

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#### NOTIONAL INPUT CREDIT

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, how ironic that the finance minister would be talking about the Reform Party flat tax and how it affects wealthy people. It is a great irony.

For the third day in a row I want to ask the minister about the notional input credit on used goods. Let us look at cars. In Ontario there are 9,000 used car dealers. The removal of the notional input credit will mean that all those people who can afford only to buy used cars will have to pay a lot more. Maybe members across the way cannot relate to that but there are many people like that.

Why is the minister sucking hundreds of millions of dollars from low and middle income Canadians and putting many people out of work in all the used good sectors?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of Finance, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as with everything else, the member has it exactly wrong. Under the previous regime when someone traded their car in they were taxed on the full price. Now as a result of this change they are taxed only on the differential. This is a major benefit to the consumer.

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#### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of the Environment. Recently, at the

end of last month, the Manitoba government gave the go ahead to Louisiana-Pacific in the Duck Mountains.

Could the Minister of the Environment tell the House if he intends to live up to a commitment made by a previous minister of the environment and use whatever federal powers at his disposal through the Canadian Environmental Protection Act and in other ways to institute a federal review of that decision before anything further happens in that area?

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of the Environment, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question as well as for his concern in relation to the environment in Manitoba.

The ministry of the environment for the province of Manitoba has issued a licence based on a number of terms and conditions. My officials are currently engaged in reviewing those terms and conditions as they relate to the protection of the environment. Once a full evaluation has been done, the government will be making its pronouncements.

\* \* \*

#### PAGES

**The Speaker:** I would like to take a minute to have our pages come around the Chair.

Colleagues, as many of you know, this year's group of pages will be leaving us to pursue other goals and aspirations.

[Translation]

These pages are living examples of the great promise of our Canadian youth. I wish to thank these young men and women who have served us so well during the 35th Parliament, on behalf of all of you.

[English]

As members we hope all the pages have benefited from their experience here and that someday some of them, one of their number, might return to serve their country again.

• (1505)

[Translation]

They have put a great deal of energy into trying to make our lives easier and learning the ropes in Parliament as well as learning more about their country, while at the same time continuing full time university studies in first year.

[English]

Our pages are very special to us. They help us in doing our daily work. At the beginning, when they came to us, I addressed them as my pages and I surely would claim any and all of them. However, in effect they are not only my pages as your Speaker, they are your pages as members of Parliament in a very broad sense because these young men and women have served our country through us in

*Tributes*

the House of Commons and in that sense they are pages for Canada. In your name, I want to thank them.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Mr. Gilles Duceppe (Laurier—Sainte-Marie, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the government what is on the agenda for the remaining days of this session.

[*English*]

**Hon. Alfonso Gagliano (Minister of Labour and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we shall consider Bill C-45 respecting eligibility for parole. The business for the next week will be arranged through the usual channel of discussions, which is how the House has been working very well in the past weeks. I appreciate and thank my colleagues.

The business next week will also include the bill I just mentioned as well as two other bills the Minister of Justice is discussing with the members of the opposition.

[*Translation*]

We hope to make some progress with the list of bills I had submitted to this House and to the House leaders of the opposition parties. That list comprises bills C-36, C-34, C-38, C-29, C-30, C-4, C-37, C-39 and C-40.

[*English*]

We are also awaiting with keen anticipation a message from the Senate that will require further action by the House.

Next Thursday has already been designated an allotted day.

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**THE LATE STEPHEN NEARY**

**The Speaker:** Our next order of business is a tribute to one of our former colleagues, a member of Parliament in Newfoundland, Mr. Steve Neary. I invite the hon. Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

**Hon. Fred Mifflin (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak this afternoon by way of a tribute to a friend and colleague. Death claimed Steve Neary last Friday. His passing should not go unnoticed by the House.

Steve was first and foremost a son of Bell Island, a very famous iron mining community in Conception Bay. Bell Island and her people were always a part of him. They have always been a very proud and hard working people. The beliefs and the causes for

which he fought so hard and so passionately were instilled in him there in Bell Island and he was always true to them.

Bell Island was also a strong labour town and Steve became involved in the union movement as a young man. He rose to be president of the Newfoundland Federation of Labour. He first sought public office in the 1959 general election as a candidate for the labour party, the Newfoundland Democratic Party as it was then called.

• (1510)

Steve was both a big *L* and a small *l* liberal. It was as a Liberal that he was elected to the Newfoundland House of Assembly in 1962 as the member for Bell Island. I know hon. members would appreciate he was a member until he retired in 1985, winning re-election six times.

He served in the cabinet of Premier Joey Smallwood from 1968 to 1972 and as the leader of the opposition in Newfoundland and Labrador from 1982 to 1984.

Steve was a parliamentarian in the very best sense of the word. He loved the institution and he thrived on it. The whims of fortune decreed that most of his time was spent in opposition. Nevertheless, he mastered the political arts and became a formidable force in the House and throughout the province.

He fought for the cause of the common man, the average person, the little man, in the phrase often on his lips. He was fearless in debate and firm in his convictions. He was fiercely proud of his Newfoundland heritage and equally proud to be a Canadian.

Steve's mastery of the legislative process was legendary. If I may be permitted, one of his most memorable moments came in 1975 or 1976 during a budget debate in the House of Assembly. My good friend and colleague, the hon. member for Burin—St. George's, was the opposition's designated spokesman and as such had the right to respond to the rather lengthy speech of the government finance minister and the corresponding right to speak for an unlimited time.

Steve realized, however, the rules gave him the right as the first opposition member to be recognized by the Speaker rather than to the particular member designated by the leader of the opposition. He was quick to his feet and when the finance minister finally finished the speech he too had unlimited time. Steve caught the Speaker's eye and was duly recognized and began his speech.

Members can imagine the chagrin of those who wanted another member to speak first and at length. Their emotion grew stronger for every one of the six sitting days Steve continued this debate.

Steve was a highly esteemed person and held a highly esteemed place in the hearts of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. He was a friend to everybody no matter what their circumstances or their calling. He stood and fought for any person who sought his help. Fair treatment to all was his common cry.

Steve Neary was a remarkable man. He made an outstanding contribution to his province and to his country. I was proud to be his friend, a pride I share with thousands upon thousands of my fellow Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. It is fitting that we in this House mark his passing and honour him for his life and his work. We are all the better because of him.

I am sure the House will join me and other members in conveying our message of deep sympathy to his wife Mary and their immediate family Andrea, Stephanie, Monique and Pierre, their sons-in-law Aubrey and David, as well as all of Steve's many relatives and friends.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official opposition, I would like to express our sincere condolences to the family of Mr. Stephen Neary, who passed away a few days ago.

Mr. Neary began in union circles and was first elected to the Newfoundland Legislative Assembly in 1962 as the member for Bell Island. From 1969 to 1972 he was Minister of Social Services and led the Liberal Party of Newfoundland from 1982 until he retired from political life in 1985.

As fellow parliamentarians, we know how demanding political life is and how much commitment and generosity it requires. It is therefore important to call attention to the 23 years in which Mr. Stephen Neary gave unselfishly of himself during his political career.

His family and friends have every reason to be proud of him and all that he has done for his fellow citizens.

On behalf of the official opposition, our most sincere sympathies to the bereaved family.

• (1515)

[*English*]

**Mr. Ray Speaker (Lethbridge, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Reform Party of Canada, as the House leader I would like to extend my condolences and sympathy today to Stephen Neary's family, his wife Mary and their children.

We certainly understand why a person such as Steven who made such a major contribution, not only to his province but to his friends, neighbours and his community, should be honoured today in this assembly.

I have spoken with other people about Stephen's contribution, beyond what the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans has indicated to us today. Stephen was a person who worked with the people at the grassroots level, in the community, in their homes, the coffee shops and businesses. He understood what they wanted to do with their

lives and in building their local communities and Newfoundland as well.

That is part of our democratic process which is maintained by the integrity of people such as Stephen Neary.

On behalf of my colleagues, I pay tribute to him and thank he and his family for making a public contribution to Canada. We honour his memory.

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Roger Simmons (Burin—St. George's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I thank my fine friend from Joliette for his sentiments on our friend Steve Neary. I would say Steve Neary and he are similar sorts.

[*English*]

Yes, Steve Neary died in his sleep Friday morning, two weeks short of 71. At least that is what his birth certificate would indicate. But he was much younger, probably 25 or 30, if we judge by the steel trap which was his mind.

As a fighter, Steve was an eternal terrible two. He knew what he wanted and he was single-minded in going after it, and he got it.

That he made the transition so tranquilly from this world to the Parliament of heaven will seem, to some, to be at odds with how he lived. To many, including me before I knew him, Steve's life was a tornado, a turbulent affair. There never seemed to be a time when he was not at odds with someone. Always, there was a battle to be won, a cause to be championed, a case to be argued. And argue he did, and fight and scratch.

Newfoundland is so much the better for his having fought, our people the richer and the institution of Parliament and public debate so much the healthier because of Steve.

But Steve had another side which few saw because he hid it so well. The centrepiece of Steve's life was not turmoil, but purpose. As a result, Steve was actually very much at peace with the world. He always knew what he wanted for himself and he got it. What he wanted for his family, he got it. What he wanted for his people, he got it. He loved to call his people, the "the ragged-arsed artillery".

His family was his pride and joy. If you knew Mary, Pierre and the girls, Andrea, Stephanie and Monique, you would know why. His wife Mary was his pit stop. She kept him on the ground and she recharged his batteries. If you were too big for your boots, Steve could fix that in ten seconds. It takes Mary about five seconds.

Steve knew what he did not like and the top of that list of dislikes were people who took themselves too seriously. Equally, Steve knew precisely what he liked and topping that list was loyalty. He practised what he preached.

*Tributes*

During Joey Smallwood's retirement years, when he was abandoned by every ungrateful wretch that he had plucked from anonymity during his premiership, it was Steve who stood by him and carried the torch.

• (1520)

When I first went into politics provincially, Steve was one of my mentors. His straight talk and his uncanny ability to get right to the heart of an issue with lightning speed and humour made me an early convert to his brand of politics.

After his retirement from politics, he came here and did me the honour of being on my staff for two years in 1989 and 1990. What two marvellous years they were. It was a marvellous doctoral degree for me sitting at his feet and having him around.

It is Thursday, six full days since Steve's promotion to that other place. If heaven was not unionized, it is now. If heaven did not have an opposition, it has one now. The word was out, heaven needed an ombudsman. We sent Steve.

I sat with Steve two weeks ago outside his home. He did not reminisce and drool and paw about past glories. He was too busy talking about what had to be done, wrongs to be righted, causes to be fought. The fire was still in his belly.

That is the legacy Steve leaves us. That is why Steve did not simply pass from the scene. Oh, no. He has only taken his seat in that other parliament for which we are all running. Yes, we have lost a friend. We have gained so much from that friend that we will continue to benefit from it for many years to come.

My sympathies to each member of his family, all of whom he is very proud. There is not only Mary, the girls and Pierre, but also the extended family, the grandchild, the brothers, the sisters and the nieces and nephews.

**Mrs. Bonnie Hickey (St. John's East, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I too want to pay tribute to a close family friend, Stephen Neary, who passed away on May 31. He leaves to mourn his wife and his four children.

I was first introduced to him by my father, Mr. Joe Ashley. I knew Mr. Neary through most of his political career. I am extremely saddened to see him go.

Steve was active in politics for more than 20 years on both the political and federal scene. Mr. Neary spent a great deal of his career working with the past premier, Mr. Joey Smallwood.

He was first elected to the Newfoundland House of Assembly in 1962 to represent Bell Island. In 1988, Steve attempted to break into federal politics by running in a riding that I now represent, St. John's East.

Good hearted and outspoken, he was always a champion of the poor and downtrodden. He aggressively represented his constituents of St. John's East and Bell Island. Never one to back down from a fight, he worked tirelessly to ensure their views were well known in the political legislature. He accomplished a great deal for his constituents right to the end of his day.

Bell Islanders knew he was always available to champion their causes. Mr. Neary will leave a great void on the Newfoundland political landscape as well as here in the House of Commons.

He worked very hard for his constituents and he has great friends in the Mr. Simmons and Mr. Mifflin. It is indeed a sad occasion to have to say goodbye to such a man. He will be missed by his family and friends.

**Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I want to pay tribute to Steve Neary today because I used to have constituents from time to time come to talk to me about him. Many Newfoundlanders were members of the Canadian forces. They would end up in Petawawa and retire there. They all knew Steve Neary.

Lois and I want to extend our very sincere condolences to his wife Mary, to Andrea, Stephanie, Monique and Pierre. It is a big parting moment for them, but I can say that, from having known Steve for a long time, he was a great Canadian. He was a great Newfoundlander and he was very proud of his wife and family.

• (1525)

He was a gut cause guy. This has come out in the words of other people today: to spend 23 years in the legislature of his province of Newfoundland, to be in the cabinet of Joey Smallwood, but most of all to remain dedicated and loyal to his leader, to his party and to his cause. That is what real public service is all about.

He was a great orator, which has been alluded to today. We have had a few other great orators who have come to this place from Newfoundland over the years. I have seen them come and go and they have made a great contribution to Canada.

As I think of Steve Neary's life today, he was outstanding for the labour movement. It has been pointed out that he was a fighter for the underdog. He had his cause. I always called him the gut cause guy. The more gut cause people we can get in Canadian politics and in our provincial legislatures, the better off our legislatures, our provinces and our Canada will be.

I want to say how privileged I feel to have known Steve Neary, how proud I am of his public life. Canada needs such hardworking and dedicated people in public life. We can well look to Steve Neary for our example.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### SUPPLY

#### ALLOTTED DAY—FRANCOPHONES IN MINORITY SITUATIONS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to speak on this motion. It gives us an opportunity to dispel once again the myths that have been put forward by the separatist politicians, not I might add by the people of Quebec.

The motion by the member for Québec-Est reads:

That the House encourage the federal government to acknowledge the urgency of the situation of francophones in minority situations in Canada, and take the exceptional steps required in order to counter their assimilation and allow their development.

I was on a debate with the member for Québec-Est who put this motion forward. That debate was televised this past weekend. After the cameras went off our debate continued and was quite heated. I said to the member for Québec-Est: "If Quebec separates, the French speaking people in the rest of Canada are very concerned that they will disappear. By virtue of separation the people you will affect the most are your French speaking brothers and sisters outside of Quebec because their language and culture may truly disappear".

He shrugged his shoulders and said: "Who cares?" The member who put this motion forward said: "Who cares what happens to the people who speak French outside of Quebec." That shows the selfishness of this individual and as far as I am concerned he has absolutely no credibility whatsoever in putting this motion forward because it is completely and utterly hypocritical.

In his speech the member for Québec-Est said: "English people hate French Canadians". Let us take a look at the facts. Let us show what the rest of Canada thinks about Quebec. Let us show the tolerance and accommodation that the people outside of Quebec have shown to the people of Quebec for decades.

In 24 of the last 26 years, our prime ministers have been from Quebec. The Supreme Court has three reserved seats for people from Quebec. In my province of British Columbia the French speaking population, la francophonie, represents 1.5 per cent of the population. Yet what percentage of jobs do they get? They occupy two and a half per cent of the federal jobs in British Columbia.

Ottawa has sent to Quebec at least \$2.6 billion more than what it has taken in from Quebec every single year for the last 30 years. Quebec has received over \$160 billion more than what it has given

### Supply

to Ottawa. These facts are never acknowledged by the separatist politicians. They close their minds to them. They do not acknowledge the favourable position Quebec has received in Confederation.

• (1530)

Let us talk about the referendum. Let us talk about the attitude the rest of Canada has toward Quebec. Tens of thousands of people descended on Montreal to extend their love, their compassion and their strong desire to keep Quebec in Canada as an equal. If that is how the rest of Canada deals with Quebec I would profess that is not hate, that is love. That is what the rest of Canada feels about Quebec. If the member for Québec-Est believes otherwise, I would suggest it is that member who has hate in his heart, not the rest of Canada.

We talk about the French. The Bloc members have often labelled the Reform Party as being anti-French. I suggest that the Bloc members look at their Internet site. The Reform Party has more French services on its Internet site than the government or the Bloc. Is that hating French? Is that not promoting French? Is that not trying to build bridges of understanding and tolerance between Quebecers and the rest of Canada? If that is abuse, then sign me up.

Let us counter the member's argument about assimilation of la francophonie outside of Quebec. Let us look at the efforts of Canadians outside of Quebec to try to preserve and ensure that the French culture survives not only inside but also outside Quebec. There are many issues.

Official bilingualism is a concept we do not agree with. We believe that regional bilingualism would be more effective. The official bilingualism policies are disagreed with by the majority of people outside of Quebec and interestingly enough by the majority of people in Quebec. It is not what Quebecers want.

The government claims it is costing \$600 million per year to preserve official bilingualism but the facts are much different. It costs about \$4 billion, money which is taken away from hospitals in Quebec, from health care in the rest of Canada, from welfare, from unemployment insurance, from pensions. That is where that money should go. Preferably we would like to use the money to get our debt and deficit down to ensure that Canadians are employed in the future. It costs \$4 billion for official bilingualism.

There is \$2.7 billion which goes into government services such as translation. Canadians would be appalled to know that it costs the taxpayer 27 cents per word to translate every single document, not on the basis of need but on the basis of official bilingualism which has been rejected by the people of Quebec as well as people in the rest of Canada.

Let us talk about government jobs. In British Columbia, as I said before, the francophonie represent 1.5 per cent of the population

*Supply*

yet they receive 2.5 per cent of the jobs. They represent 35 per cent of the population and receive 38 per cent of federal jobs in Ontario.

Let us look at what happens in Quebec. Let us see how Quebecers, the separatist politicians in the provincial government, feel about preserving minority rights in Quebec. Anglophones represent 13 per cent of the population in Quebec and what percentage do they receive in terms of jobs in the provincial government? One per cent. Thirteen percent of the population in Quebec receives one per cent of the jobs. That is discrimination against the anglophone population in Quebec. That shows how the separatist leadership in Quebec cares about minority rights.

In Quebec the anglophones represent 15 per cent of the population yet they only receive 5 per cent of federal jobs. Why? Again it is favouritism.

• (1535)

These are facts which have come right out of a Treasury Board report. It states that the government must be very concerned about the minority rights of English speaking people in Quebec because repeated actions by separatist politicians, the Parti Quebecois and its current leader, have done everything in their power to trample on the rights of minorities. They make them unwelcome in Quebec. They want them to leave so they can have a yes vote in the next referendum. Those are the facts.

Why is there such a thing as a language policy in Quebec? I will ask this question of my hon. friends from the Bloc Quebecois, and some of them are my friends. Why do they have language police in Quebec who go around making sure that only French is being spoken and not English? The purpose of language is to communicate. The purpose of communication is to understand each other in order to live together in peace and harmony and in an environment of tolerance and understanding.

When we interfere and squash the ability of people to communicate with each other, we separate populations and breed intolerance and misunderstanding. It allows myths to start and it polarizes communities. When I was in Montreal a month ago I found that was happening unfortunately. It was very sad to see that the yes and no communities were polarizing and separating from each other. In doing so, myths are building in both of those communities. It is engendering hate, intolerance and I fear, violence. This can be averted if the federal government puts forward a constructive plan based on listening to the concerns of the people inside and outside Quebec.

If Bill 101 was put forward in Ontario, Newfoundland or British Columbia, we would hear the words bigot and intolerant screamed all across the country. We would never do that in British Columbia because we recognize that kind of legislation prevents people from communicating with each other. However, the rest of Canada has turned a blind eye to a lousy piece of legislation, Bill 101 in

Quebec which is only being used to separate populations and make the non-French speaking people unwelcome in Quebec.

What was done after the referendum? Hospitals were closed in the allophone communities in Quebec. Mr. Landry also blamed the immigrants on the failure of a yes vote in Quebec. That is absolutely racist. The people within Quebec, the allophone and anglophone populations, voiced their displeasure but chose to stay in Quebec to build a stronger province and a stronger country. They deserve a great deal of credit for their courage in standing up for their rights in the province.

The financial adviser to the premier of Quebec told Mr. Bouchard that if there was a yes vote the financial penalties paid by the people in Quebec would be horrendous. What happened to those facts? They were deliberately buried and that individual was muzzled. That does not serve the people of Quebec at all. In fact, it is hiding the truth from them. Those individuals ought to be ashamed of themselves.

It is true that French Canadians were discriminated against in the past. Historically the church, their own politicians and the English speaking minority industrial complex served to discriminate against French speaking people in Quebec. They tried to keep them down. They discriminated against them, their language and their culture. There is no denying that. They should be ashamed of themselves because that kind of intolerance has no place in this country.

However, for the past 30 years the strength of the French people in Quebec has increased dramatically. Policies have been put forward by successive governments to ensure that discrimination against them does not occur. These are good policies. It is good to fight against discrimination on this level. We must not create a situation where one group is elevated above another. We must create a situation where all people are treated equally, where all people have the right to enjoy their culture and speak their language free from interference.

• (1540)

The situation now and the zeal to pursue separation has nothing to do with the holy grail of developing and preserving the French culture in North America. It simply has to do with power. The premier of Quebec has one goal and one goal only. It is not to carve a better deal for Quebec and French Canadians in the federation called Canada, it is to create a separate country called Quebec where he can be the president. That is what he is pursuing. Let there be no doubt about it.

That is why any efforts by the Prime Minister to offer distinct society or veto powers to Quebec will fall on deaf ears. Preserving the French culture is not the primary goal of the BQ and PQ; separation is and they are not interested in negotiating with the federal government. The Prime Minister has to work with all members of Parliament to create understanding and tolerance

between groups in Quebec and the rest of Canada and to dispel the myths that have been created over so many decades.

When I speak with members of the Bloc Québécois it is interesting trying to understand where it is they are coming from. It is interesting to hear the myths they subscribe to. Those myths need to be torn apart. If they believe them, then other people in Quebec believe them. The people who live in Chicoutimi, in northern Quebec, in east Montreal and in the small towns of Quebec are getting a very distorted view of the world.

The propaganda getting to the people is not changing. It will not be changed in this House. It will not be changed by the separatist leaning media in Quebec. The only way to dispel those myths that have been supported for so many decades in Quebec is for members of the House and the Prime Minister to go into Quebec and meet directly with the people.

The Prime Minister must also have a plan. It is increasingly disturbing that in spite of the last referendum the Prime Minister has demonstrated that the government does not have a plan on the national unity issue. There is no plan for a renewed federalism. There is no plan to strengthen the powers of the government and the provinces in areas where they can both do their jobs better. The Prime Minister has not democratized the system. He has also failed to tell the people of Quebec what the terms and consequences of secession will be.

Many separatists in Quebec are under the delusion that they are going to engage in some kind of Maastricht treaty situation such as in Europe and that it will somehow give them more autonomy than they have now. The cold, hard fact is that the Maastricht treaty, if that is what they want to pursue, will give an independent Quebec less power than it has now. Quebec will not accept any fiscal and monetary policies dictated by Ottawa but that is what will happen if there is a separate Quebec and a Maastricht treaty situation is pursued.

It is sad that our country has come to this point. Many people in British Columbia and Quebec are fed up with the national unity issue.

• (1545)

Efforts by such people as the member for Québec-Est with his hateful, spiteful, intolerant comments such as English Canadians hate French Canadians only seek to polarize communities. I know that is what he is trying to do. He is trying to polarise communities. He is trying to get us mad because in getting us mad he is hoping

### *Supply*

the rest of Canada will say to Quebec "get lost", but that will not happen.

Canadians are a tolerant and understanding people who want Canada to stay together for the betterment of all Canadians, French Canadians and Canadians outside of Quebec. They want the country to stay together because they believe in their hearts that a united Canada provides a stronger, better, safer future for all people in the country.

Some time ago I spoke to a French Canadian separatist who said to me she did not understand. She thought she would have more in common with the people of France than with Canadians outside of Quebec, but that was simply not true. She has a greater kinship with people in Canada than with any other person in any other country. I think it is wise for our fellow Canadians and the Bloc Québécois to understand that.

Bloc members should look in their hearts to see if the course they are pursuing will truly be better for the people they profess to represent and whether it will truly make their people stronger. Put themselves in our shoes and try to understand that the rest of Canada has for decades continued to tolerate situations which if they occurred in other parts of Canada the people of Quebec would find intolerant.

Whether we are speaking of bill 101 or situations such as the Jewish food importers prevented from selling their product because they were only labelled in English, if those situations occurred outside Quebec they would rightly scream intolerance.

I urge the government to look at the Reform 20-20 principle. We have laid the terms down of a new and stronger federalism for all Canadians and have stated the cold hard facts about the terms of secession. I encourage it to do that before it is too late. If we do not, the country will surely fracture. The Canada we know and see today will not be the Canada we will have tomorrow.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Nic Leblanc (Longueuil, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I would just like to say that English Canada is misinformed, and especially the hon. member, in thinking that there is a French language police in Quebec. There is no language police. We have the Office de la langue française to protect French.

What English Canada must understand is that the situations of anglophones and francophones are not comparable. We franco-phones live in an anglophone continent, we need protection, we have to look after ourselves or we will quickly disappear. This is why the Government of Quebec set up the Office de la langue française and appointed a large number of people to give the French language its due.

*Supply*

We also know that immigrants coming to Quebec tend, and probably legitimately so, to learn English when they arrive on an English continent, because Canada's embassies abroad tell them that Canada is an English country. Often they do not say there are francophones in Canada.

They come here and then, and I understand them, learning one language is difficult enough, learning two is even harder. So they choose a language, because according to the rules of the federal government, immigrants choose themselves the language they think they will most easily master. Obviously, immigrants choose the English language because they think: "I am on a continent where people speak English, therefore I choose the English language".

In Quebec, we are stuck once again with federal rules that prevent us from promoting French. If we were to say that the only language you can learn in Quebec is French, when the federal government pays for language training in Quebec, it should only pay for French class. But immigrants are the ones who choose which language they think is the best to help them succeed. So we will do what it takes to make sure that there are still francophones in Quebec.

• (1550)

In spite of all our efforts, we realize that in Montreal-West, for instance, immigrants speak English mostly. In spite of all our efforts, we cannot even manage to maintain the level of French nor get people to speak French.

This is why I am telling the member he has a very bad grasp of things. What he just said does not help to understand Quebec's reality. Members from the west and Ontario should come and see the situation in Quebec before criticizing it, and giving speeches that have nothing in common with reality. They are the ones who are making matters worse. This is what I wanted to say in response to his speech.

I suggest that he study history a little bit better and not make such speeches. He said our speeches are bad, but he should understand better what the needs of Quebec are, and try to understand why Quebecers need the Office de la langue française to protect the French language in Quebec.

This is not the subject of our debate today, we are talking about francophones outside Quebec, but since he mentioned it, I wanted to set the record straight. It is important to give speeches reflecting Quebec's reality so that English Canada, mainly people in the west, really understand the situation of Quebecers. I caution him about that and I ask him from now on to give speeches that are a truer reflection of reality.

[English]

**Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca):** Madam Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his comments. I would like to commiserate with him on a couple of facts.

We understand completely the fear French speaking people have in their culture and language being diluted in a sea of English speaking people in North America.

I find it hard to imagine that the hon. member feels the rest of Canada has been somehow against French speaking people or has somehow prevented the province of Quebec or the people of Quebec from living their culture and their language.

We in the Reform Party have continued to put forward to give culture and language to all provinces, including Quebec. Today Quebec has the right to preserve and deal with its own French culture and French language.

The responsibility for maintaining French language and French culture in Quebec is entirely the responsibility of the province of Quebec. Whether it lives or dies is its responsibility and not that of any other province.

Nonetheless, this government and previous governments have poured billions of dollars trying to further help the province of Quebec and the French speaking populations in Quebec preserve their language and culture.

I find it passing strange that no other culture in this country, which is made up of so many, not the Italians, not the Scottish, not the East Indians, not the people from Africa, has asked for protection to preserve its culture and language. What do those cultures do? They come to Canada and say to themselves "we will take it upon ourselves to preserve our culture and language and teach the rest of Canada and Canadians about our cultures, our languages to enrich us all". That is what they have done.

They have made this country stronger by doing that. It makes no sense to me why this member feels his people have been somehow hard done by when in my speech I gave illustration after illustration after fact that shows the French culture and French language have taken a preferential place within Canada. Their culture and language have received preferential treatment for decades. If anybody should feel hard done by it is the rest of Canada. The rest of Canada by and large does not because of the tolerance and understanding it has shown to the people of Quebec.

• (1555)

I would be happy to speak to that member or any other member in the Bloc Québécois, as I know my colleagues would, to understand them better in the hope they too will try to understand us better.



*Supply*

[Translation]

**Mr. Ghislain Lebel (Chambly, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I simply wanted to tell the member who just spoke that he is giving a strange view of history when he says that Italians, West Indians and all ethnic groups that came to this country are independent, develop their own culture and do not ask anything from the state.

I must remind him that the situation of the French people is very different. The French people occupied the region where you are now living, sir. They were there 200 years before your ancestors. The French were there and you dislodged them. This situation cannot be compared to that of a West Indian who arrived here last week, decided to form a group with other people from his country and friends and to live according to his own culture with those who share that culture. You are altering history shamelessly, dear colleague. Such an attitude is inappropriate for a member of this House. You should go back to your history books.

[English]

**Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca):** Madam Speaker, as I illustrated in my speech, I acknowledge that in times past the English industrial complex abused the majority French speaking people in Quebec, as did the church and their own politicians.

Out of that has come, unfortunately, an inferiority complex among some French Canadians, a second class citizen complex, which is unfortunate and sad. The French Canadian people are not second class citizens even though they believe they are in the eyes of others.

French Canadians are as beloved and respected in Canada as any other group and they are equals in Canada.

[Translation]

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I would like to take the few minutes I have to indicate how totally I disagree with this motion by the hon. member for Québec-Est. The motion reads as follows: "That the House encourage the federal government to acknowledge the urgency of the situation of francophones in minority situations in Canada, and take the exceptional steps required in order to counter their assimilation and allow their development".

**An hon. member:** You cannot be against that.

**Mr. Boudria:** Yes, I can be against that. I will say why and I hope my colleagues opposite will understand. I also hope Canadians will see the political motives behind this type of motion and will see once again that what we have before us is, on the one hand, an show of opportunism on the part of the Bloc Québécois and, on the other hand, a show of arrogance on their part. They always claim to know what French speaking Canadians outside Quebec want. They want a divorce and, at the same time, they want to be the spokespersons for the spouse they intend to divorce. That is the Bloc Québécois' attitude toward all of us who live outside Quebec. That is what we are seeing.

We heard the hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata say in the past that francophones outside Quebec had vanished. "The francophones—poof", she said.

• (1600)

We were told to mind our own business as francophones outside Quebec when we wanted to keep the critical mass of francophones in the country. We were told all kinds of things, we were scorned, and separatists still continue to do so. It is this same scornful attitude we are seeing today in the House, as shown in the motion of the member for Québec-Est, unfortunately supported by some of his colleagues.

**Mr. Dubé:** You are exaggerating.

**Mr. Boudria:** No, Madam Speaker, I am not exaggerating. We, francophones outside Quebec, know the separatists and their agenda. Madam Speaker, you probably remember better than I do the day—

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Boudria:** I know the hon. member for Québec-Est unsuccessfully ran for the office of mayor of Penetanguishene. I know that. It has just been brought to my attention. That is true. I remember it well, but that is not what we are discussing today.

**Mr. Dubé:** We remember.

**Mr. Boudria:** I was not going to bring it up, but the hon. member opposite has just reminded me that the hon. member for Québec-Est comes from Ontario, and he must know what he is talking about. Yes, I, too, remember that he was ran for the office of mayor of Penetanguishene and was defeated.

But now I want to get back to the comments I made earlier. The House may remember what was said about the Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne. It was said that they had been bought off, that francophones outside Quebec sold out in return for federal grants. That is what the Bloc Québécois said, and we remember.

What happened on the eve of the referendum? The hon. member for Rimouski—Témiscouata was burned in effigy at the Cité collégiale here in Ottawa. That is what was done and what people think of the arrogant attitude exhibited by some of the people across the way and of the policies they represent. This was done by francophone students; that is what these people think of the hon. members opposite.

The current premier of Quebec, the former leader of the Bloc Québécois, says that when he was Leader of the Opposition, he had a policy concerning francophones outside Quebec. As you may remember, he visited the Acadian community and told them that he was going to build schools for them, until he was told to go back home, because Acadians had been there long before he came onto the scene and would be there long after he was gone. He was not kicked out but, when he announced his policy, they came right out and told him to go back home.

*Supply*

Again, we remember the Bloc's arrogance, its scorn for francophones outside Quebec, and its claims that it always knows what is best for us.

The Bloc now maintains that Quebec is French, while the rest of Canada is totally or almost totally English. In his question to the previous speaker, the hon. member for Longueuil referred to English Canada. Others talk about English Canada. Another expression of contempt came from this member who stated that francophone communities were becoming extinct, when in fact the number of francophones outside Quebec is growing every year in Canada. He knows, but he does not care. He continues to show contempt, as he did just now and will again, because this is the way the Bloc thinks and acts toward us. But we will not stand for that.

These comments are not true and should not be made. The fact remains that he keeps making that kind of comment. Coming back to francophones outside Quebec. The Bloc Quebecois is depicting Quebec as unilingual francophone or almost, and the rest of Canada as unilingual anglophone. I can see my colleague from Argenteuil—Papineau behind the hon. member opposite. He knows that, when he hears two people speaking English in a shopping center in Hawkesbury, in my riding, chances are they are his constituents, because in the immediate area, the English speaking population lives in Quebec while the French speaking population lives in Ontario.

That is the way things are in our area. He knows as well as I do that the people living in Lost River or Harrington for instance are more likely to be anglophones. On the other hand, people living in Hawkesbury, Alfred, Saint-Isidore, Saint-Eugène or Sainte-Rose-de-Prescott are more likely to be francophones. That is how it is in our area.

• (1605)

In my riding, hundreds and even thousands of people only speak French. They did not arrive from Chicoutimi or France yesterday. They are my constituents and they have been living in Ontario for generations.

Let me tell you about my family. Next year, my son will marry a young French unilingual woman from Ontario who may be part of the tenth generation of her Franco-Ontarian family, which is perfectly fine. This young woman did all her elementary, secondary and post-secondary studies in Ontario. My son has a Master of Arts in History and a Bachelor of Education. He never attended an English language school. He works here, in Parliament, for an English speaking member. This is the Canadian reality.

Why claim this reality does not exist? Why do members opposite tell us that francophones outside Quebec have disappeared, or are disappearing, when the figures show otherwise? Why do they say

that? This is what they are saying and we are fed up with this kind of contempt.

I want to tell you about a speech made by someone whom I consider to be a distinguished speaker, Daniel Poliquin. His article appeared in *Cité Libre* and dealt with the martyr's complex. Mr. Poliquin said that some separatists always have to rely on the element of pity. As he said, they tell themselves that they are to be pitied, therefore they exist, and therefore they are the only one that exists, and deserve reparation. Such is the mentality of the members opposite. This is how they act and talk.

But there is a risk. Not only does this attitude hurt relations between the peoples of Canada, it is also harmful to francophones living outside Quebec. Let me explain. My constituents and other francophones outside Quebec, whether they live in your province, Madam Speaker, or mine, sometimes have grievances having to do with the fact that they are a minority. To what degree do they feel constrained in their ability to air such grievances?

They know that if they state their grievances, members opposite will exploit the situation, as they did a few days ago when a French language school board announced its intention to close a French language school in Ottawa, because it no longer needed that school. The member for Québec-Est made a big thing of the whole issue, to use acceptable parliamentary language.

There are 60 French schools in Ottawa and a French language school board managing these schools found that, because of a population redistribution, schools had to be moved. This finding was exploited by a Bloc member. To what extent does that hurt the freedom of expression of members of the francophone community? They are concerned they will be exploited by the members opposite. That is wrong.

We are being exploited by the Bloc and by other separatists who are not representative of the majority's position neither in Quebec nor elsewhere. That is not true, that is not the Canadian reality.

[English]

I have something to say about the people who claim the official bilingualism policy is some sort of a failure. I disagree with them. I normally agree with a lot of things the hon. member for Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca says in the House, but not with the proposition that bilingualism is a failure. I will probably get two or three letters tomorrow from irate people claiming it is a failure because something did not go their way at one point or another, but that is not the issue.

• (1610)

The issue is we have been able together as francophones and anglophones, coupled with all other Canadians, to make this into

what is the greatest country in the world according to the United Nations. We must have done something right.

Yes, maybe it costs 25 cents a word to translate government documents so that I am able to read them in my language and so that my unilingual daughter-in-law can read in her language, so the hon. member can also, so that all others can read those documents with equal force in either language. Notwithstanding that cost of 25 cents a word, we are still the best place in the world in which to live. I say to the hon. member across that is not so bad. That is not a sign of failure.

The hon. member says a policy of territorial unilingualism is the correct approach for Canada. I have enormous respect for his views, but not on this subject. I suspect they are not his views. That is the policy of his party. Knowing him to the limited degree that I do, those could not be his personal views on this subject because they are so hopelessly wrong. I can associate them with some of his colleagues, though.

As Canadians we must recognize we have been able to do great things together. We are one of the most productive nations in the world. In terms of the human development index, we have the best conditions of life of any nation in the world. As linguistic groups we have been able to get along very well.

Whenever we do not it makes headlines but when we do get along well it does not. How many times has it made headlines in the House that the hon. member for Simcoe North, a francophone, was elected in a constituency which is 95 per cent English? How many times has that been said? None because it does not make headlines.

How many times has it occurred in the country when the people of a majority francophone area have elected an anglophone to Parliament? It does not make headlines. Those things are also true. Things being as they are, sometimes regrettably, coverage is given to those things which are contentious. Harmony by definition is not contentious, but it is there and we should recognize it as Canadians. We should recognize that when we do not get along, it does not mean we never do. It is quite the opposite.

[*Translation*]

In a few days from now, we will celebrate in this country the feast of French Canadians, Saint John the Baptist's Day.

**Mr. Lebel:** Of Quebecers.

**Mr. Boudria:** The member opposite just tried to correct me. He says that it is the feast of Quebecers. Yes, in part, it is true that June 24 is the feast of Quebecers.

But it is not exclusively the feast of Quebecers and even less exclusively the feast of the separatists, although some of them say

### *Supply*

so. It is the feast of French Canadians. I am sure that the member opposite—knowing his history—is well aware of that.

In my riding, every year, we celebrate Saint John the Baptist's Day, as you probably do in your riding, Madam Speaker. In our area, this decision is considered to be highly important. Every year, each village approaches the county council, or the regional county municipality as it is called in Quebec, with a proposal to organize festivities surrounding Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day. The issue of which municipality is chosen each year is settled by a government decision. That choice has become an annual government decision. The council has to decide which municipality will have the honour of organizing these festivities for us, French speaking Canadians in Ontario.

I would like to know if that issue is discussed in the ridings represented by members of the Bloc Quebecois. They probably do not brag about it. This is how things are done in my riding.

• (1615)

This year, for example, the village of Alfred, which was given this honour, will be celebrating the 125th anniversary of the parish on Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day. By the way, the village of Alfred, located in my riding, is 99 per cent francophone. We will celebrate Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day elsewhere in the years to come.

The byelection in Hamilton East is just four days away, and I hope Ms. Copps—soon to be called the hon. member—will be chosen by her constituents—I wish her the best—to represent them in the House of Commons. She is the one who told the House not so long ago that Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day was the official holiday of all French speaking Canadians and that Canadians of other linguistic groups should join the francophones, wherever they are, to celebrate Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day and honour the francophones of our country. Some members opposite laughed at that proposal; they scorned it.

On June 23—the Sunday before Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day when we will celebrate in my region, in Alfred—I hope Ms. Copps will have been elected and will be my guest, if her constituents have chosen her, and I hope she, an anglophone from Ontario, will join me in Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, in Alfred, to celebrate with the francophones from my area Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day, the official holiday of French speaking Canadians, as it was known originally and as it is still known where I come from.

In my region, anglophones celebrate Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day alongside francophones, because it is an expression of national unity. The Franco-Ontarian flag and the Canadian flag fly side by side, evidence of the contribution made by French speaking Canadians and of the wish of all Canadians to join with francophones to celebrate this great country, Canada.

**Mr. Nic Leblanc (Longueuil, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to the hon. member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, who is a good friend of mine, but I really have a hard time

*Supply*

understanding how he can suggest that the Bloc Québécois despises francophones, when in fact it is trying to defend them.

Let me remind him that the one who showed the most contempt for francophones is one of his former leaders, Pierre Elliott Trudeau. In my view, this man is the one who had the most contempt for the French speaking community in Canada. Why do I say that? Because, with his multiculturalism policy, he has tried to trivialize francophones. He put them on the same level as all newcomers. That is the policy that has been the most scornful of francophones ever, and it was put forward by the hon. member's former leader, Mr. Trudeau.

When you put on the same footing the francophones in Canada and a small Montreal Italian community—for whom I have a great deal of respect—you are showing contempt for one of the founding peoples in Canada. Concerning the problem with promoting French in Canada, we should perhaps pause and as ourselves if this has not been one of the main reasons why French has been losing ground, as confirmed by Statistics Canada. Multiculturalism has been the most scornful policy for the francophones in Canada.

Canada is now said to be multicultural. It is no longer a country with two nations and two peoples. This is the doing of his former leader, Mr. Trudeau.

Two weeks ago, I attended a meeting of the Standing Committee on Official Languages. Ministers make nice speeches. The Prime Minister issues nice statements saying that French has to be protected in Canada, that it is useful, etc. Nice speeches, and nice statements. But if we stop and think about the resources the federal government puts into the promotion of French in Canada, it is quite another story.

• (1620)

I will not name names but there are even some deputy ministers who find that francophones are rather a nuisance in Canada. When a deputy minister responsible for the promotion and implementation of the Official languages Act thinks that way, we have a problem.

What I am saying is that the rhetoric and declarations of love are there, but when the time comes to give ourselves the means to protect and promote the French language in Canada, nothing happens. That is what representatives of the Association des francophones hors-Québec told the official languages committee not more than two weeks ago.

When the time comes to give ourselves the means to protect and promote French in Canada, then there is a total blank. The minister should at least have the decency to fire a deputy minister who does

not abide by the rules. In many cases, the ministers themselves are hand in glove with the deputy ministers who are supposed to enforce laws and regulations.

When it comes to the French language, rhetoric and love declarations are there, but not the means. It is quite obvious. The very people whose job it is to promote French have said so.

While the Bloc Québécois is sincere in saying that francophones outside Quebec must be protected, it is a shame that this degenerates into a political debate and that we are scorned for wanting to promote and safeguard the Francophonie in North America. I would go as far as to say that we want to save not only the Canadian Francophonie but the North American Francophonie. Because we are surrounded by an English speaking society, we must give ourselves the tools we need to protect French in North America.

In Canada, nothing is really done to protect francophones outside Quebec and this is what we are saying to the government. We are asking it to stop its rhetoric and to start giving francophones the tools to survive in Canada.

This is what I wanted to say to the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, whom I respect a lot, by the way. I have known him since 1984; we have been here, together, for 12 years. We went to Paris and we spoke French. I know his wife. He is a good friend. But the member has to be careful when he uses words like “scorn”. Maybe he should look at the situation within his own ranks.

The most influential and scornful man I have known and who did much harm to the promotion and the safeguard of French in Canada is his former Prime Minister, Mr. Trudeau.

**Mr. Boudria:** Madam Speaker, I think the members opposite are applauding a little too soon. I think if they examined this with more objectivity, they would recognize—as I do and, I hope, as all Canadians also do—that Pierre Elliott Trudeau did a lot for francophones across the country and that he was one of the greatest prime ministers of the history of Canada, if not the greatest.

Yes, Mr. Trudeau struck a serious blow to the separatists, and maybe that enrages the member opposite because Mr. Trudeau did a very good job as Prime Minister, and that offends certain members across the way. They would have preferred that he failed. They would have preferred a weaker Prime Minister, but that is not what they had. They had great men like Mr. Trudeau and the present Prime Minister and other very good prime ministers, especially from the Liberal Party.

As we all know, Mr. Trudeau became a member of Parliament at the time the Laurendeau-Dunton report was made public. He was the Minister of Justice. He was responsible for the introduction of

an official languages act. Once more, this enrages the separatists because Mr. Trudeau was too successful in this regard, it destroys the separatist agenda. Mr. Trudeau later recognized the contribution of the multicultural community. I acknowledge it and am delighted by it.

The member opposite claims the multiculturalism policy is identical to the official languages policy. I am sorry, but since the member has been here for a long time, he should know that that is totally false.

• (1625)

What official status does the multiculturalism policy have in this House or elsewhere in the federal institutions? None, and that is a well known fact, but nonetheless, the ethnic communities deserve to be promoted. I think that the hon. members from the Bloc and their friends in Quebec City should be very cautious when they talk like that about ethnic communities. I remember some statements on ethnic groups made by Mr. Landry, Mr. Parizeau and others. But we will not get into that.

Mr. Trudeau also worked very hard for the recognition of linguistic minority groups. We know that it is thanks to his government that groups like the French Canadian associations of my own province, the Acadian federations and others received public funds to ensure the development of French language minority groups. I am happy that the hon. member for Longueuil reminded me of the excellent work done by Mr. Trudeau. That allows me to speak about it in this House. Maybe that was not what the hon. member intended when he mentioned Mr. Trudeau's name, but the fact is that it allowed me to thank him publicly for his excellent work.

**An hon. member:** Do not forget patriation.

**Mr. Boudria:** The hon. member also mentioned the patriation of the Constitution, thanks to which we now have section 23 in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Once again, I thank the hon. member for reminding me of other elements of the excellent policy of Mr. Trudeau.

**Mr. Dubé:** You need more help. There was also the War Measures Act.

**Mr. Boudria:** The hon. members across the way are welcome to continue their heckling, as they allow me to praise all the good Liberal policies in language and many other areas.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the question to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment is the following: the hon. member for Shefford—employment centres.

## Supply

[English]

### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** A point of order, Madam Speaker. I think you would find unanimous consent for the following motion. I move:

That at the conclusion of private members' hour today on Motion M-166 in the name of the member for St. Albert, that a recorded vote on that motion be deemed to have been requested and that the said recorded vote, notwithstanding our Standing Orders, be deferred until next Tuesday at 5.30 p.m.

(Motion agreed to.)

\* \* \*

### SUPPLY

#### ALLOTTED DAY—FRANCOPHONES IN MINORITY SITUATIONS

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

[Translation]

**Mr. Ghislain Lebel (Chambly, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I just heard what the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, a francophone, had to say, and I can tell you that it would be less painful to swallow razor blades than to hear his remarks. He is a token francophone who has spent all his life in the wings of power, who has been taking advantage of the system, who has been eating tasty little dishes prepared by the Governor General's chef for the past 15 years.

However, in return, since any privilege requires something in return, he has to reassure his people, restrain them, make them admit that their situation is enviable after all. We have always had French Canadians of this calibre since Étienne Brûlé, and we still do.

In 1742-43, La Vérendrye and his two sons left to explore western Canada. The expedition split at the Great Lakes head. They scattered over a territory ranging from west of the Appalachians to the Rockies and from the Mississippi to the far north.

• (1630)

These few Frenchmen are the ancestors of what became the Metis people of North America. They are the ancestors of Louis Riel, Ovide Mercredi, Chief Fontaine and possibly several members of this House, including the Secretary of State for Training and Youth and the member for St. Boniface.

Between 1880 and 1910, about 2 million Quebecers, facing an unbearable financial situation, decided to leave Quebec for New England. The number of their descendants is estimated at about 10 million today. Let us try to imagine what Quebec would be with a population of 17 million.

*Supply*

Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of immigrants from Eastern Europe were given lands and what they needed to start a farm in the Prairies and in western Canada. Each time the official opposition has raised language issues in this House, the government has asked its francophones from outside Quebec to do its dirty work. The member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell has just given us the best example of that.

When we refer to these historical facts, these token francophones tell us that it is in the past. True. However, how can we rectify a situation if we are not allowed to refer to history? Did the Governor General himself not say last week in this House that those who choose to ignore the past risk repeating their mistakes?

This morning, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration gave us a list of various programs designed to help francophones outside Quebec. As if money rules everything. With her money, the minister thinks she can strike a balance, break the phenomenon of assimilation.

That is not where the problem is. Assimilation will stop when francophones have understood their origins are as noble as the anglophones', that there is no shame in being of French origin. The government should, in translating its good faith into action, promote the notion of pride, somewhat as it does when it pours millions of dollars of public money into promoting national unity.

In part VII of the Official Languages Act, the federal government of the day made a commitment to enhance the vitality of the English and French linguistic minorities in Canada. What has it done in this regard. Zilch. Subsidies and injections of funds will not advance the cause of French in Canada; it will take a resurgence of pride in one's French origins.

Let us start by putting a stop to changing place names to erase all trace of the French presence in North America, and one that came before the English presence. Why not give the Peace River its old name of rivière de la Paix and the Red River, its original name of rivière Rouge? If I asked the members of the Reform Party and perhaps three quarters of the members of the party in power where the rivière Rouge got its name, they would not be able to tell me. How many names like Grand Portage, lac Lacroix, rivière à la Pluie, lac à la Pluie, portage du Rat, île de l'Élan still exist in western Canada?

The problem with the francophones outside Quebec is that most of them have lost respect for their language. A combination of disdain, derision and intolerance have made many francophones feel second class or inferior because of their French heritage. Many francophones outside Quebec suffer from the victim syndrome. Psychologists agree that women and children who have been sexually assaulted end up feeling guilty for something or some failing and turning the aggression they suffered on themselves.

• (1635)

The only Reform member of French origin is the only one of his party to have never, in close to three years, even tried to say a word in French.

The member for St. Boniface speaks French and a very good French at that, but he reserves this language for instances when he is called upon to do a number on his colleagues from the Bloc Québécois.

This phenomenon also exists inside Quebec, it is not particular to the rest of Canada. A francophone called Leduc, in my riding, who used Canadian flags in huge amounts, told me during a discussion we had in my office: "All my life I have been ashamed of being a francophone. It hindered me in every endeavour. I was passed over because I was a francophone. Wolfe should have"—and he was quite adamant—"kicked all them damned Frenchies off Cape Diamond in 1760, and there would be no more French in Canada". This is what he said in my office, in front of a witness.

A resident of St. Boniface told me something similar last summer, as I was meditating on Louis Riel's grave during a stay in that town. He was French speaking and derived tremendous benefits from the fact, from what he told me. He could go to Ottawa two or three times a year, all expenses paid. He had fun. I incurred the wrath of somebody who was really feeling second rate inside.

If the government wants to maintain French as a common language, it must take vigorous means to revive in the minds of French Canadians the pride it tried for so long to extinguish. This is really the meaning that must be given to Section 41, Part VII, of the Official Languages Act.

Contrary to what the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell has suggested, members of the Bloc Québécois have no political advantage in proposing the motion introduced today. No Bloc candidate is running for elections outside Quebec, not even in the riding of the member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. What we want to do is stop francophones outside Quebec from being anglicized, slowly but surely.

The survival of francophones in Quebec, like the survival of anglophones outside of Quebec, is contingent upon measures that will be taken in order to protect them, or at least to protect themselves. This is the true meaning of the motion of the Bloc, introduced by my friend, the member for Québec-Est. We will not let ourselves be pushed, we will not let ourselves be told stupidities like those I heard earlier, in the name of what, nobody knows, but inspired, we believe, by the possibility of profit, of privileges.

I see the member for Vancouver Quadra. I would be surprised to hear him disagree, if I were to tell him what the word "utilitarianism" means. It is a theory developed by the British monarchy as a means to maintain itself in its colonies. "The King can do no

wrong”, do you remember that, my hon. friend from Vancouver Quadra?

“The King can do no wrong”, in other words, the King can do as he pleases. Everything was allowed, including turning a man into a woman, almost. The member for Vancouver Quadra agrees with me. According to this utilitarianism principle, colonies were set up, privileges were created and people became what were called “white niggers of America”. There was always a foreman, someone who dominated the others. This has been the case in South Africa, in India, everywhere, here too.

Privileges were granted in order to maintain their presence. I am sure I will be asked a question on that. I will conclude my explanations in my answer.

• (1640)

**Mr. Ted McWhinney (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, can I put a question to the member for Chambly? He certainly remembers the friendly agreement between Premier Lesage and Premier Robarts of Ontario, who was a constitutional adviser at the time. That agreement was respectful of the territoriality principle and it was carried out by all of Mr. Lesage’s successors. It stated that the protection of the minorities’ rights within each province should be entrusted to the province.

In this sense, I think we should admit that Prime Minister Trudeau, who maybe deserves a bit more recognition on the part of members across the way, and whom we should trust as we used to, had that same attitude concerning Bill 22, the censorial bill, preventing disputes before the Supreme Court of Canada, except in some rare instances.

Does the member agree that today, this principle of territoriality must make way for the principle of nationality or personality—how should I say—under the common law or otherwise? We must recognize the undercurrent we find today in linguistic and cultural policies. Maybe things have to be different now.

**Mr. Lebel:** Madam Speaker, I thank the member for Vancouver Quadra who is trying to drag me into the constitutional quagmire of 1964.

I can tell you that the territoriality of Quebecers stops at their present borders. One of the consequences of the quiet revolution was, for instance, that French Canadians, francophones who saw themselves first as French Canadians, dropped this expression nearly overnight, to identify themselves with their territory, thus becoming Quebecers.

We let English Canadians, who wanted it and were more numerous, have the term Canadian. For the second time in 200 years or so, we retreated into our territory. This is the reason why today we call ourselves Canadians.

### *Supply*

We even let you have our national anthem, which was first written in French. You never sing the second and third verses, you would look too silly. You sing the first one because it is neutral enough and applies to everybody. If you ever sang the other verses, you would change the national anthem post haste.

But when it comes to territoriality, as the member for Vancouver Quadra said—I have a lot of respect for him; in those days, he was quite a distinguished advisor on such matters, including to Quebec premiers; I have nothing against him, he understands a lot of things.

If only all the anglophones in Canada and in the present government could understand as much as he does, we would not have as many problems and we might even be able to reach some kind of partnership agreement without too much trouble. Unfortunately, their frustrations and the blinkers they have on both sides of their heads prevent them from seeing the way. They can only see the ruts in front of them.

In closing, I come back to the notion of utilitarianism. The British government maintained its presence in the colonies by granting privileges. As the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra knows, it was not allowed to take legal action against an anglophone in Quebec after the conquest, in 1760. It was not possible to take a case to court. A francophone could not bring legal action against an anglophone.

In 1808, Ezékiel Hart, a Jew, was elected to the Quebec Legislative Assembly as the member for Trois-Rivières. They forbade him to take his seat, in 1808. This came straight from London. It is his son who defended the Patriotes in 1837. There were anglophone patriots, but there were also francophone patriots.

Few people wonder today how it came about that two brothers, the Nelsons, anglophones, fought with many others alongside the Patriotes in 1837.

• (1645)

They wanted a responsible government, something the British Crown denied them because of its utilitarianism. Amusingly, they got a vertically striped flag almost identical to the ones of the Italian or French republics.

**Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am tempted to use the rich historic seam that my colleague is exploiting, but I will bring the House back to the consideration of the actual grievances of francophones, those we have become used to calling francophones outside Quebec and Acadians, their actual grievances towards this federation.

However, by way of introduction, I will point out how the history of the “Canayens”, who became French Canadians—before a group of them became Quebecers—is one of being torn between the will to survive and the daily heroism that is impossible and that explains assimilation when it takes place rapidly, and this heart-

*Supply*

breaking will to achieve full development and finally have their own country.

Telling the history of Canadians in North America is extremely fascinating, although this history is sometimes tragic. This afternoon, I will talk about a tragic part of it.

I would like to point out that, for francophones living in minority situations, the inability to benefit from manpower training or manpower adjustment measures in their own language is a not inconsiderable assimilation factor. I did say "inability".

The Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne du Canada and the Conseil canadien de la coopération formed a committee on this issue of manpower adjustment measures. The mandate of this committee was to establish a master plan in favour of the development of francophone and acadian communities, while considering their specificity.

In its report, this committee assessed the situation of francophones everywhere in Canada and came to various conclusions that are very interesting for the purpose of our discussion today. First—and this is the committee's conclusion—there is no unique situation, but many different situations among the problems facing francophones in various environments—we are still talking about francophones living in minority situations; if the weakness of francophones was evident in the past through their absence from large businesses with more than 500 employees, we have to admit today that their presence in job creating small businesses may be considered, if not as an asset, at least as the end of this weakness; francophones living in urbanized areas have a higher education and make a better living, but their assimilation rate is higher than among those who live outside urban areas, in environments where the economy is more resource-oriented.

I take this opportunity to point out that, in this case, the finding of assimilation is not made by Bloc members for allegedly perverse reasons, but by this same committee, which, being aware of the stakes, wants to find out what conditions are needed so that francophones who live in minority situations can stop assimilating at this accelerated pace and live decently in French.

• (1650)

The committee noted that francophones are less educated, and that is big problem in a knowledge-based economy. According to the report, there has been some improvement in the past few years, but the level of schooling of francophones remains substantially lower than that of anglophones across the country. In several francophone areas, more than 30 per cent of the population is illiterate, and this rate is closer to 50 per cent in depressed areas.

The committee noted that more francophones than anglophones have seasonal jobs. It noted that, from 1977 to 1992, the income gap between anglophones and francophones across Canada in-

creased from 9.9 per cent to 14 per cent, in spite of the fact it actually went down from 8.2 per cent to 1.9 per cent in Quebec. This goes to show how substantial the increase was outside Quebec. The evil separatists are not the ones saying this. This is the assessment the joint committee on francophones outside Quebec made of this situation, as stubborn and cruel as the facts may be.

These facts clearly seem to indicate that specific measures to help francophone Canadians in a minority situation are required and urgently required. Let us tell it as it is: to date, their uniqueness in the particular area of manpower training and adjustment has not been recognized by the federal government.

We will recall that, in December, the Commissioner of Official Languages investigated the professional training services offered by the Government of Ontario and reported as follows: "Our investigation has determined that, because of the limited character of the offer and the delays in getting in French courses, Canada employment centres often refer francophones for English courses. It has confirmed the existence of a qualitative and quantitative difference between the training provided in French and the training provided in English".

In fact, according to the report, based on the money spent on manpower training in Ontario between 1991 and 1993, \$80 million, or nearly 5 per cent of the total amount, should have gone to francophones. As for Acadians, they should have received \$50 million. And I quote: "All Franco-Ontarian stakeholders from the labour community unanimously agree that they did not have access to one-tenth of these resources and that the provinces did not respect either the letter or the spirit of these agreements. Federal resources were simply diverted from their main target, keeping francophone and Acadian communities beyond the reach of key Canadian labour development strategies and taking away their manoeuvring room in assuming control over their own economic development."

The committee also identified what it sees as the concepts and key principles underlying these proposals regarding, among other things, labour and the denial of rights, which played a large part in the chronic undereducation of community members and forced them to play catch-up, a situation the committee finds alarming. The illiteracy rates recorded in these communities are unacceptable in an industrialized country like Canada.

Job training is a basic right. It is essential that the francophone and Acadian communities have control over their own economic space. Other essential elements are an active supply of services in French in order to create a demand, a network of francophone clusters, the support of existing forces and full enforcement of the Official Languages Act. Those are the findings in the report of the committee consisting of the Fédération canadienne des commu-



*Supply*

nautés francophones et acadienne du Canada and the Conseil canadien de la coopération.

• (1655)

The Bloc Quebecois agrees with these findings and will support the demands made by this committee. If the Bloc Quebecois supports these demands, it is because it seems obvious that words and goodwill are not enough. Contrary to what the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs said today, it is not enough to believe in it.

**Mr. Dan McTeague (Ontario, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I guess it is always annoying to find a bilingual member from a province where—according to the Bloc Quebecois—French is not spoken.

As you can see, I am not a francophone, but I am a francophile. It is not by chance or by accident that some members of my generation can express themselves in both official languages.

Unfortunately, I arrived here a bit late because I was held up by my work in committee. I would like to ask the hon. member how she can claim to help francophone minorities outside Quebec, considering the Bloc Quebecois' proposal, ideology and philosophy is to separate Quebec from these minorities? What kind of leadership does she think the Bloc can give to protect French language minorities outside Quebec, if its goal is to leave Canada?

**Mrs. Lalonde:** Madam Speaker, as the person responsible for this issue, I had the privilege of representing the Parti Quebecois on several occasions before Acadian or francophone communities outside Quebec. I was often asked that question and I would always give two answers.

First, for young francophones who are part of a minority, it would be an extremely interesting and stimulating example to see a French language country developing and thriving. It is very hard for these young people to preserve their language, as witnessed by the fact that they tend to use it less, and who can blame them, considering how hard it is to do so? Certainly not me.

The second answer is that a sovereign Quebec will be in a good position to sign reciprocity agreements, to make it easier for francophones interested in studying in Quebec, etc. For example, we should not underestimate the effect of the support given to New Brunswick by France and Belgium.

Indeed, if you ask these communities, you will find out that it is not negligible. As for us, given that the North American francophone will import us, if you will, and that we will also be an important model for francophones and francophiles across North America, we think we will do an even better job at fulfilling our role.

• (1700)

**Mr. Guy H. Arseneault (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, our francophone communities in Canada have, over the past 25 years, acquired a maturity and an assurance that our colleagues in the opposition do not seem to suspect. They want and they can take into their hands their own future and, to do that, they have a new tool, the Canada-communities agreements, which are proof of continued direct support by the Canadian government.

The needs of official language minority communities, like those of any other groups of Canadians, are increasing, whereas the resources of the Department of Canadian Heritage, like those of every other department, are decreasing. The challenge is to fill the gap between needs and resources.

In 1994-95, the Department of Canadian Heritage dealt head on with this challenge, which was all the bigger because the department could not have disregarded 25 years of close co-operation to impose some procedures to communities.

As it realized that it could not and should not stop its action, the department undertook to redefine its direct support to official language communities while trying to find with them new ways to operate in order to be more efficient than ever.

The exercise was launched with the release, in May 1994, of a discussion paper dealing with a redefinition of the relations between the department and its client groups to enhance confidence in the future. This was essentially meant to redefine the relations between the department and the official language communities on a basis that reflects the maturity acquired over the years. The department established a new partnership that would preserve the major contributions of the past and would allow the communities to continue to grow. All that in spite of the fact that the public funding could not keep increasing as it did in the past.

Keeping in mind its constitutional and legislative commitments and its obligations in other such areas as, for example, interdepartmental joint action, the department proposed to the communities various possible solutions that could lead to new co-operation and funding mechanisms taking into account the ever decreasing resources.

Consultations were held with communities in all the provinces and territories and with national French language organizations. A lot of people took part in these consultations, including many community organizations.

Some points in particular were raised. For instance, organizations recognized the need to act very soon considering the new budget realities; communities said they were ready to explore a new partnership with the Department of Canadian Heritage as well as to consult more and set real priorities; they expressed consider-

*Supply*

able interest for mechanisms based on an enhanced managing role for the communities; the organizations recognized that to apply the same budget cuts everywhere would not be efficient and that we needed a better approach; they thought this was a necessary and useful process only if we found mechanisms to meet the new development needs of the communities.

These francophone minorities have shown great maturity and a deep sense of responsibility. Instead of feeling sorry for themselves, as my hon. colleagues opposite would have hoped for it seems, they worked with the Department of Canadian Heritage to develop the terms of a new co-operative approach, the Canada-community agreements.

• (1705)

These agreements help to better take into consideration the different needs of the official language minorities from various provinces and various areas. These differences do have an impact on the ways to ensure the development and growth of the communities.

Increased co-operation will help the communities to develop a vision based on their needs and to reach a consensus over their priorities in terms of development. The Department of Canadian Heritage subsidies will be allocated in accordance with this vision.

The department can thus ensure that its support goes towards issues viewed as priorities by the communities themselves, while at the same time involving the communities in the realization of projects and the attainment of results. By turning to those who have the greatest and most genuine stake in the matter, the department achieves better results.

There is no doubt that the results thus obtained, whether in the fields of culture, communications, the economy, education, or whatever, make it possible for our francophone communities outside Quebec not just to survive, but to affirm their vitality throughout the country. Thanks to their schools, their artists, their business people and their institutions, they are increasingly recognized as "value added" for their province or territory, where, furthermore, they are making quite a name for themselves.

Our government will therefore be supporting the francophone economic forum to be held in Beauce this fall, which will showcase their energy and desire to excel in the economic field, by creating exchanges and sharing their experiences with francophones throughout the country. Taking charge of their own destiny and taking it one step further are another sign of their vitality.

The Department of Canadian Heritage also recognizes that the consolidation of the communities' long term development requires that efforts be made to increase their independence from government funding by promoting the development of their capacity to themselves fund any measures they wish to take.

The efforts of the Department of Canadian Heritage will therefore not stop with the signing of the Canada-communities agreements. Our government remains strongly committed to providing to official language minority communities the support and the tools they need to continue to develop and flourish.

By devising a new way of managing their relationship, official language minority communities and the Department of Canadian Heritage have one more tool at their disposal to fill the gap between their respective expectations and resources.

Needless to say, the success of this initiative largely depends on the spirit of co-operation that has driven the two parties concerned for a quarter of a century now.

In my province of New Brunswick, the federal government's commitment has allowed the Acadian community to develop and flourish at exceptional levels. The federal government supports our cultural groups, our museums, our universities, our community associations, our school-community centres, and so on.

Therefore, it is very disappointing to see that members opposite continue to ignore such determination and such goodwill and to be blind to the increasingly vigorous presence of francophone communities outside Quebec.

**Mr. Patrick Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to listen to my colleague, my neighbour from across the bay. I should explain to the public, and particularly to the hon. members in the House, that right across from my riding of Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, across Chaleur Bay on the south shore, you find the distinguished gentleman who is among us today.

• (1710)

I should point out that there are very close links between the Gaspé peninsula, the Magdalen Islands, and of course the Acadian people who are rather well represented here in the House. There are Acadians to be found not only in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, all the maritimes, but also in the province of Quebec and elsewhere in Canada.

I would like to hear the parliamentary secretary describe some of the changes that have taken place in his province. The words of some of the opposition members have revealed their ignorance of the existence of a vibrant community, one that is working hard to improve its future. I feel that they have a most promising future, moreover.

I can tell you that a great deal is being accomplished in New Brunswick in connection with multimedia and the information

highway. I must admit there are even some Quebec government ministers who are envious of what the francophone community of New Brunswick has accomplished. Unfortunately for us, although their programs have been working very well, I feel, for a quarter of a century now, we have not been able to adapt them.

I have been listening to the hon. member for Mercier, who was telling us that an independent sovereign Quebec will put in place a program to assist francophone communities, since it has a Quebec model. I would point out that the hon. member for Mercier served as a minister in the Parti Québécois government during the 1980s.

And you know that the PQ model, then and now, is openness to the cultural communities. In other words, the percentage of allophone and anglophone public servants, which has been 1 per cent for the past ten years, is to be brought to close to 5 per cent, which is a proportion equivalent to the allophone and anglophone population in Quebec.

Unfortunately, hardly 2 per cent of the Quebec public service are anglophones and allophones. I do not believe that the model proposed by the hon. member for Mercier could be applied to the whole francophone population of Canada. I believe we should look at the successes of New Brunswick which has come a long way in the past 25 years.

I had the opportunity to discuss this with former Premier Robichaud who sits in the other place. I respect his work and I admire the efforts made by the Government of New Brunswick to enhance the image and role of the Acadian community in this province. In my opinion, this is the model to follow.

We must not forget that the Gaspé Peninsula and northern New Brunswick have fairly close ties. I believe that the exchanges between families and fishermen now extend to business. Increasingly, we see joint ventures with several well-known figures of the business world in northern New Brunswick.

I believe several developments occurred in recent years. I do not want to use up all the time I have, but I would ask the member to explain to us the changes he has witnessed since his childhood. I would ask him to describe what has happened and what it still going on in New Brunswick.

• (1715)

I think we might apply this model not only in Quebec but throughout Canada. This is why I look forward to the speech by the parliamentary secretary.

### *Supply*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** I am sorry, but the five minute question and comment period following the hon. member's speech has expired.

Resuming debate with the hon. member for Argenteuil—Papineau.

**Mr. Maurice Dumas (Argenteuil—Papineau, BQ):** Madam Speaker, listening to the member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, I thought he would continue right to the end of the debate.

Ottawa is the capital of Canada, and yet the rate of assimilation of francophones there is 30 per cent. I think we have to stop denying the problem and take some action to stop the disappearance of francophones outside Quebec.

Before I give you the figures on the assimilation of francophones in Ottawa—Carleton and Vanier, it is important to give you a brief background on Canada's capital and its founding.

The city is located on the Ottawa River, on the eastern side of the border between Ontario and Quebec, some 160 kilometres from Montreal. I believe the word Ottawa comes from the name of a tribe and means perhaps "do business". In 1827, the town, already of some size, was known as Bytown and the City of Hull was known as Wrightstown.

On the last day of 1857, officials in the colonial office announced that the city of Ottawa would be the national capital. Construction of the Parliament buildings began in 1859 and was completed in 1866. The city became the capital of the new Dominion in 1867.

In 1949, the federal government was the principal employer. For some 30 years, the federal public service grew by leaps and bounds. Until quite recently, government services were concentrated essentially in Ottawa, which became a tourist centre making tourism today its second largest industry. Annually, Ottawa welcomes some 2.5 million visitors.

Generally speaking, the Protestant and English community settled in Upper Town while the Catholic and French community settled in Lower Town. It went the same way for religious establishments, that is churches, schools, hospitals, as well as for ethnic groups and even political organizations.

Ottawa, at the end of the 19th century, became the centre of Catholic and Protestant Orangemen activism. Being the Franco-Ontarian capital, it was at the very heart of the language conflict. In 1927, the secret order of Jacques Cartier, to counter the Orangemen's influence and promote advancement of francophones in the civil service, was founded.

*Supply*

There was a time when francophones could stay inside their community in Lower Town, since they had their own French schools, cultural life and economy.

Today, the assimilation rate is the following: the proportion of French speaking residents in Ottawa—Carleton dropped to 16 per cent in 1991, compared with 19 per cent in 1981. In Vanier, a town with a French majority, French speaking residents went down to 52 per cent in 1991 from 63 per cent in 1981. Now, only 47 per cent of Vanier residents still speak French at home. In Lower Town, the francophone stronghold, 60 per cent of residents described French as their mother language in 1981, but there were only 40 per cent of them in 1991.

The fact that the community was decreasing this way led to the closure of five schools: Guigues, Duhamel, Routhier, Brébeuf and Bolton. Sainte-Anne's school had a one year reprieve thanks to the support of my colleague for Québec-Est. In the whole of Ottawa, the proportion of people having French as their mother language dropped from 19 to 16 per cent, while those who still speak French at home account for only 11 per cent.

• (1720)

Ottawa is Canada's capital. This city should reflect the linguistic duality. Given the fact that English is the official working language, the federal government becomes an assimilation agent for francophones and has a direct impact on the assimilation of the francophone communities of Ottawa—Carleton—Vanier.

In a press conference given on October 17, 1995, my colleague, the member for Rimouski—Témiscouata who was the critic of the official opposition for Canadian heritage at that time, criticized the governments of the anglophone provinces and the federal government.

She accused them of enforcing linguistic policies that did nothing to slow down the assimilation of francophones outside Quebec and have led to the erosion of Quebec's cultural specificity.

She concluded by reaffirming the support of the Bloc Québécois for the francophone and Acadian communities. She also mentioned that her party had made specific commitments with respect to them and approved the proposal of the Partenaires pour la souveraineté advocating the creation of a commission, whose mandate it is to investigate and make recommendations concerning the promotion of rights, as well as the preservation of the culture of francophone and Acadian communities in Canada, and that of the anglophone community in Quebec.

The federal government has the gall to describe Ottawa as a bilingual city based on the size of its francophone population. In 1968, the Canadian government passed the Official Languages Act. The City of Ottawa only became bilingual in 1970.

Even if the Ontario government claimed to offer more and more services in French during the ensuing years, Franco-Ontarians always found them insufficient.

In 1976, a movement called "C'est le temps" came into being. Hundreds of motorists in Ottawa refused to renew their licence plates because the forms were only in English. Twenty-seven francophones spent a few hours behind bars for refusing to pay a fine. The government finally came out with bilingual forms.

In 1986, Ontario passed Bill 8 dealing with services in French. This Act grants francophones an important right. They can receive from the provincial government services in French in the Ottawa region and in 21 other French-speaking regions in Ontario.

I want to congratulate all the francophones outside Quebec who have been fighting for their culture. I admire the tenacity and courage with which they are trying to slow down the ever increasing threat of assimilation.

Unfortunately, reality is different. In spite of the continuous fight put up by francophones in Ottawa and elsewhere, Ottawa, the nation's capital, is far from bilingual. Journalist Michel Vastel wrote an article for *L'Actualité* entitled "The capital, bilingual? Only the walls speak French there".

He described, among other things, the situation of the movie industry in Ottawa, saying that in Vanier, a small francophone municipality of 18,000 people living in the very heart of the capital, there were eight theatres of the Cineplex Odeon chain and they all presented movies in English most of the time. In Gloucester, where one third of the population is French speaking, Famous Players made a commitment to present French movies in order to obtain its licence, but in its six theatres, movies are in English all the time.

Madam Speaker, since you are saying I must conclude, I will just say that clearly the national capital is not bilingual, in spite of what members of the federal government and the Reform Party claim. The Bloc Québécois wants to counter the growing assimilation of Acadians and francophones outside Quebec. The motion by my colleague, the member for Québec-Est, depicts reality as it is and must be agreed to.

• (1725)

**Mr. Dan McTeague (Ontario, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, once again I listened carefully to the speech made by the hon. member who is from a party who wants to divide the country, a party with a philosophy, an ideology. I am neutral in this debate because, even though I sit on the government side, I remain a pure product of Canadian bilingualism.

The hon. members from the Bloc Québécois do not like the fact that some French speaking people become English speaking people and vice versa. The hon. member quotes statistics and tries to show that the fate of francophones outside Quebec is very serious. I must say this question to the hon. member: If you did separate from Canada, you would be backing off and you would abandon the francophones outside Quebec like me. I find a bit disgraceful for you to claim to be there to protect and defend the interests of the

francophones outside Quebec when your agenda goes totally in the opposite direction. So, I ask this of the hon. member: When will you finally change your policy, whose result would be to leave the francophones outside Quebec to fend for themselves, into one that would help them?

**Mr. Dumas:** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to answer the member's question, especially since I lived in Montreal in the years 1935-1940. I lived in the western part of Montreal, where it was impossible then to be served in French.

If Quebec does not achieve sovereignty, it may very well meet with the same fate as Louisiana did. I am sorry that minorities are in difficulty. But the fate that awaits minorities outside Quebec is the same fate that awaits Quebec.

I think premier Lévesque, at one time, talked about a reciprocal agreement if Quebec ever became independent, saying that if the rest of Canada protected francophone minorities, Quebec would do the same for the anglophone minority. That is why I do not think Quebec sovereignty will jeopardize minorities in the rest of Canada.

**Mr. McTeague:** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased to have another chance to speak. Although the member spoke of things that took place in the thirties, the members across the way and I are members for the nineties. It would be very dangerous to have a form of blackmail. To my way of thinking, making threats about not protecting anglophones in Quebec if the same protection is not given to francophones outside Quebec really illustrates the crazy thinking of the Bloc Québécois.

I would like to ask a question somewhat different from the first one I put. It is simply this: Given that, in the Toronto area, more and more people can be seen speaking French to each other, and given that the political, and perhaps even the economic, pendulum is in the process of swinging the other way in that same area, and that it is now the thing to speak two languages, does the member not recognize the importance of French, not just in Quebec, but elsewhere in the country?

**Mr. Dumas:** Madam Speaker, I will simply say to the member that the reason I spoke about the period from 1930 to 1940 was because the situation seems to be going back to what it was during those years. This is because of the many immigrants arriving in Montreal, who usually tend to adopt the English language and culture. I think that is how I could answer him, given that you are telling me my time is up.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** It being 5.30 p.m., it is my duty to inform the House that proceedings on the motion have expired.

The House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

*Private Members' Business*

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[*Translation*]

### FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION ACT

The House resumed from May 17, 1996, consideration of the motion: That, in the opinion of this House, the government should introduce amendments to the Financial Administration Act requiring all departments and agencies to table in the House of Commons a specific response to the auditor general's report on their activities, including time frames within which corrective action will be taken regarding any shortcomings or failures of administration identified by the auditor general; and such reports should be referred to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and any other relevant standing committees.

**Mr. Michel Guimond (Beauport—Montmorency—Orléans, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to speak to this motion tabled by the hon. member for St. Albert. We know he has been a member of the public accounts committee since the opening of the 35th Parliament. In fact, he is the only member of the committee who has been there since the start.

The hon. member for St. Albert has then had the opportunity to see how the public accounts committee works and how the different chapters of the annual report and the periodic reports of the auditor general are examined. In tabling this motion, the member for St. Albert seeks to maximize the impact of the report of the auditor general in terms of accountability.

Since becoming the chair of the public accounts committee, last March, I have seen how this committee has an important role to play, since it has to ensure public funds are well spent. To achieve this goal, the committee can rely on the excellent work done by the Auditor General of Canada, Denis Desautels, through his reporting to Parliament on the management of public finances.

To that effect, I would like to remind the House that the public accounts committee is currently in a deadlock, because the Liberal majority refuses to examine the two cases that were criticized by the auditor general in his May 7 report, that is, the two family trusts that were able to transfer \$2 billion tax free. I want to reiterate that I fully support the Auditor General of Canada, unlike the hon. member for Willowdale, who chairs the finance committee, and who mocked and ridiculed the evidence recently given in all honesty by the auditor.

That is the role of the committee. The committee must try to find solutions to improve the management of government finances. It is responsible for warning Parliament either by holding hearings or by tabling reports in the House when taxpayers' dollars are not spent in the most effective and efficient way possible.

*Private Members' Business*

I can say that the committee takes this role very seriously. In a little over two years, the committee, chaired by a member of the official opposition, has tabled close to 20 reports in this House. It has held meetings on a wide variety of topics, ranging from assistance programs for seniors to the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions.

The committee recently dealt with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. The auditor general recommended, among other things, that the agency make its program objectives clearer and easier to measure. Since the answers I got during the meeting were rather vague, I asked the agency's president, Norman Spector, to send us a list of the concrete actions he intends to take in response to the points raised during the meeting.

If the committee is not satisfied with the response, it can summon witnesses to appear again. The auditor said he would, as usual, follow up on this matter in two years. I asked him if our request was inconsistent with his work and his answer was: "This can only help by speeding things along".

In essence, this request made by the committee is identical to the motion put forward by the hon. member for St. Albert. Some members will immediately see overlap in there. The fact is that, as hard as the committee tries to fully review the auditor general's report, not all chapters are reviewed. Take the 1994 report for example. Only half of the chapters were reviewed by the committee.

• (1735)

Less than 25 per cent of the chapters in the 1995 report were reviewed. I do not wish to give the impression that the departments act on the auditor general's recommendations only when the public accounts committee holds hearings on the subject. I am simply suggesting that, if departments were to table detailed reports, including time frames and action plans, the departments could then be asked by the committee to account on the basis of these interesting reports. They would also be useful in the follow-up audits the auditor general conducts two years after a chapter's publication.

During the first hour of debate on this motion, the Liberal member for Bruce—Grey said that each department or agency has the opportunity to respond to the comments made by the auditor general and that a response accompanies the report. It is true. However, the responses vary, both in terms of quantity and quality. In several cases, the department will say it agrees with the auditor's recommendations and that it will make efforts to implement them. However, little is said about how and when this will be done.

A compulsory response, with a specific time frame to implement necessary measures, would encourage the department to take a more serious look at the auditor general's recommendations and to take concrete action. This should not be an undue burden for departments that already provide satisfactory responses. As for the others, it could be argued that the additional resources required

would be more than made up for by the savings that would result from a more in-depth review of the auditor general's recommendations.

Finally, in recent years, it has been the practice to write to the departments that did not appear before the committee and to ask them precisely what the motion of the hon. member for St. Albert proposes. Again, some members might say: "Why this motion, since the committee already does that work?" There are two reasons. First, there could be some years when the committee would not be in a position to send letters, for example because of an election, or because of a lengthy adjournment of the House. Second, technically speaking, the committee cannot force the departments to follow up on its request, even though most of them do.

For all these reasons, I would ask my colleagues of all parties in the House to support the motion of the hon. member for St. Albert. I can assure you that these responses to the auditor general's reports will improve accountability, help the auditor general carry out his duties, and compensate for the fact that the public accounts committee does not have time to examine all of the chapters in the auditor general's report.

**Mr. Dan McTeague (Ontario, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am happy to have this opportunity to take part today in the debate on Motion M-166 put forward by the hon. member for St. Albert. The hon. member has much experience in this area, having sat on the Standing Committee of Public Accounts for several years. The motion would call for amendments to the Financial Administration Act.

Departments and agencies would be required to table in the House action plans including specific time frames in response to the recommendations of the auditor general.

[English]

On the surface there appears to be some merit to the proposal. We are all interested in doing whatever we can to improve the level of affordable service to all Canadians. All members of the House want to see weaknesses corrected and problems addressed, however, there are several issues that must be perforce discussed.

As members are aware, one of the main tasks of the public accounts committee is to review on behalf on Parliament the reports of the auditor general. This is done by examining in detail with departmental and auditor general officials the issues and recommendations raised.

At that point, the committee, based on its hearings, submits reports outlining its conclusions and recommendations to Parliament. The government is expected to table within 150 days formal responses to the committee's recommendations. As quite often happens, the public accounts committee asks the auditor general to do further follow up work on the responses provided by the government. The committee wants to know just how far departments and agencies have gone in meeting the original recommen-

dations. If it is judged the progress is unsatisfactory the committee can hold further hearings.

• (1740)

This process is an important part of the accountability process between government and Parliament. I must admit that in the past it has worked well.

[Translation]

Successive governments have taken the reports of the auditor general seriously. A review of the supplementary activities on which the auditor general reports every year in his annual report shows that departments and agencies have, on the whole, reacted positively to the auditor general's recommendations.

Will the amendments suggested in Motion M-166 add any value to this accountability process?

Will the departments and agencies improve their performance by settling the problems raised by the auditor general? Or would it be simply introducing an additional, and often useless, stage in a process that is already working well?

[English]

We must also consider what impact this proposal may have on the workload of the auditor general. In recent years there have been important changes to the Auditor General Act, significantly impacting on his office.

In 1994, as a result of a private member's bill, this act was amended to allow the auditor general to report to the House more frequently. It was a fairly substantial change. In previous years he was limited to reporting, except in emergency situations, only once a year.

[Translation]

The auditor general is now authorized to publish, in addition to his annual report, up to three other reports each year. In 1995, he tabled three reports in the House. I suppose he will take a similar approach in 1996.

[English]

Because of this change, the House now receives information from the auditor general in a much more timely fashion. The public accounts committee is able to examine problems as soon as they are identified and departments and agencies are able to respond more quickly with the necessary corrective action.

In December 1995 the Auditor General Act was again amended. A new position was created within the Office of the Auditor General entitled the Commissioner of the Environment and Sus-

### *Private Members' Business*

tainable Development. Substantial new responsibilities relating to environmental issues were given, obviously, to this new position.

As a result, the auditor general must now report to Parliament on the degree to which departments are meeting the goals and targets set out in their approved sustainable development strategies. These strategies must be tabled in the House by individual ministers beginning in 1997. This will be a tremendous task.

These amendments will provide real challenges for the auditor general as he seeks to effectively allocate his resources to his many responsibilities.

The motion before us today may well lead to even more demands on the auditor general, not only from a public accounts committee point of view but also from other committees.

[Translation]

I must ask again whether this additional work will be of great value or whether it will simply prevent the auditor general from exercising his other responsibilities. Canadians want the auditor general to use his meagre resources as efficiently as possible, like all the other government agencies.

Some said this motion will increase the transparency of government and improve the accountability of the government to Parliament. Again, this is an objective that we find admirable, on the whole.

I would like to take a few minutes, however, to remind the members of the many other important sources of information and of analysis already at their disposal. We often forget, in debates such as this one, that the auditor general is not the only source of information on government operations.

[English]

The sources of information are in addition to those provided by the auditor general. They provide us with the substantial tools by which the government is held accountable for all of its actions. The findings of the auditor general are important but they are only a part of the story. We need much more to truly understand and hold this government and all governments to account.

First, other parliamentary officers and organizations table important reports in this House. These include those from the Commissioner of Official Languages and the Offices of the Information and Privacy Commissioners.

[Translation]

Second, many reports are submitted to us by departments, organizations and crown corporations. These report concern their activities, their achievements and their plans. I would mention, among others, the annual reports, the economic outlook and part III of the Estimates.

*Private Members' Business*

• (1745)

The government has undertaken many initiatives to improve the quality of its tools.

Third, the reports prepared within the departments by internal program evaluation and audit groups. These reports, which can provide good explanations on matters hon. members are concerned with, are not well known.

[*English*]

A major step in promoting the use of these reports was taken in November 1995 when the President of the Treasury Board tabled in the House the first annual report on strengthening government review.

This report provided detailed listings of the many important reviews undertaken by government departments. These reports are available to parliamentarians.

It is important when assessing the success of government operations that we consider all of the information available to us. We must not spend too much of our time focusing on one source, the auditor general.

There is no doubt the government has demonstrated its seriousness about following up on issues raised by the auditor general. The record speaks for itself. I was pleased to note that in February 1996 the Minister of Finance included as an annex the government response to the auditor general's report. The annex addressed the government's actions on selected important issues raised by the auditor general.

I refer to the minister's address to the comments raised by the auditor general in the 1995 report on the need for better information about the public debt. The minister provided an update on the actions taken and the results achieved to date.

[*Translation*]

To conclude, let me reiterate how much the government's accountability to Parliament means to me and how important a role the auditor general and his reports play in this process. However, as I said, this debate cannot come to an end before we examine all these issues.

[*English*]

Taxpayers want their government to be effective and affordable. To help achieve this goal we must always look at what works and what does not. We must put our time and energies into those areas where improvements can be made.

**Mr. Werner Schmidt (Okanagan Centre, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I commend both previous speakers for recognizing the word accountability. It is really what this is all about.

That there is a function of auditor general suggests there is a need to occasionally review what has happened. I think we need to know how the money is spent, was it spent in the manner indicated in the budget and did people get value for their money. These are exactly the kinds of questions an auditor general is supposed to address.

The auditor general's report identifies areas where changes should be made, and the departments so affected are expected to respond. That in effect is the thrust of this motion.

However, it goes beyond the auditor general. Both previous speakers indicated the auditor general would be saddled with all of the responsibility. I draw the attention of the House to the last part of the motion: "Such reports should be referred to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and any other relevant standing committees". That becomes very critical in this regard.

There are standing committees on industry, agriculture and health, et cetera. These are the committees that really have a working knowledge of what happens in the department and what the auditor general is referring to when the auditor says something out to be changed.

Each of those department should respond in three major areas: yes, the recommendations are useful; no, the recommendations are impractical, do not work and therefore will not be implemented; or the recommendations will be implemented in part and state the timeframe in which it will take place and provide a detailed plan of exactly what is to be done.

I will address this from two perspectives. I will use the science and technology experience and I will refer briefly to the regional economic development programs.

• (1750)

First is science and technology. In this area the auditor general made some rather interesting observations. He suggests there was a lot of money spent. We agree. It was some \$6 billion in 1995. Who is spending that money? It is the granting councils like NSERC, SSHRC and several others and scientific departments and agencies.

How are they spending it? They are spending it to some degree through government labs. There are 150 of these. I will not take time to read them all.

There are the Agri-food Diversification Research Centre in Borden, Manitoba; the Air Traffic Services Research and Experimentation in Gloucester, Ontario; the Canadian Centre for Geomatics in Sherbrooke; the Centre for Information Technology Innovation in Laval; Chalk River Laboratories in Chalk River; the Defence Research Establishment; the Lacombe Research Centre in Lacombe; the Lethbridge Research Centre in Lethbridge; the NRC Centre for Surface Transportation Technology in Ottawa; the Pacific Geoscience Centre in Sydney, British Columbia; the Sum-



merland Research Centre in Summerland, British Columbia; the West Coast Vancouver Laboratory in West Vancouver, British Columbia; the Winnipeg Research Centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

There are 150 of those labs. They are not the ones involved in NSERC situation. What we recognize is there is great variance on the kinds of labs just going through the labs I have given.

We need to look at some of the categories of labs. It is a little easier to do if we follow by provinces. In Newfoundland there is the St. John's Research Centre. I do not have a clue what that centre is all about but on the left hand side of my document it suggests it is in agriculture. That is fine.

There are natural resources, for example the Canadian Forestry Services in Newfoundland and Labrador. There are a number in agriculture.

It is interesting that a lot of the agricultural labs would not be recognized as agricultural labs because they are identified by the name of the place where they are centred. It goes on through the various centres. These are the labs that do the various work and in which the research is done.

Ontario has 13 different labs that deal with environment. There are the Canadian Wildlife Service, the water and wetlands branch; Atmospheric Environment Service, Ontario region; Environmental Conservation Service; the National Water Research Institute; the National Laboratory for Environmental Testing; the Waste Water Technology Centre; Dry Deposition Research Centre; King Radar Research Facility; the Centre for Atmospheric Research Experiments; Atmospheric Environment Service, Downsview; the Environmental Technology Centre, and so on. The list goes on.

The purpose of reading these lists is to show the auditor's observation of the subject of science and technology in Canada and how research dollars were being spent is accurate or at least not surprising when we go through that list.

He said science and technology go beyond contributing to economic growth; they contribute to our quality of life. I think we all agree this is so. He shows that the government has demonstrated that it obviously believes science is a major contributor to our economic well-being and to our standard of living. It spends 11 per cent of its annual budget in this area.

However, when it comes to answering the question about value for money spent or whether the money is being spent in those areas that are strategic to advancing Canada's international competitiveness, he concludes: "The present allocation of funds among various fields of science and technology is more incidental than the result of a well formulated strategy". That is not much of a commendation for spending \$6 billion.

### *Private Members' Business*

• (1755)

The auditor general then goes on to suggest there ought to be a framework. He suggests four questions: what are the greatest needs and opportunities; where must the government be involved and why; where should and could the government be involved and why; what should and could the government's involvements be.

The Department of Industry began to answer these questions. It produced a booklet earlier this year "Science and Technology for the New Century". It was promised to the House 12 months earlier. It was delayed one year and then another year. Following that document came another document "Highlights of Department S & T Action Plans in Response to Science and Technology for the New Century". The motivation for that came from the auditor's statement saying the allocation of funds was more incidental than the result of strategy.

What are these action plans? The action plans resulted in a further booklet "A Framework for the Human Resources Management of the Federal Science and Technology Community Science and Technology for the New Century". There are five projects in that framework: training and development, rewards and recognition, workforce and mobility, classification compression, and recruitment and rejuvenation.

Not a single one of those task forces in those five areas has anything whatsoever to do with science and technology but with personnel, its reclassification and how to look after the people who are to be involved in the research department.

Where is the science strategy for Canada in all of this? There is not one. That was the thrust of the auditor general's concern. If we do not come to grips with these kinds of things we will lose the competitive advantage we want.

I have had time to deal with one illustration of how significant the auditor general's observations are and how they can direct a whole department to what it ought to do so that the people can get the places identified where the money ought to be spent and then spent in an efficient manner so they can say that money was well spent.

**Mr. Murray Calder (Wellington—Grey—Dufferin—Simcoe, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is an honour to speak to the motion put forward by the hon. member for St. Albert and to continue the debate on this issue.

By now, in this third hour of debate, we all know the essence of the motion which calls for an amendment to the Financial Administration Act. The pursuit of good governance and accountability is crucial for government reform. We all agree.

Where we disagree is on how this will be carried out. In light of this I will take a few minutes to remind the House of certain

*Private Members' Business*

elements of our current system, specifically the accountability loop and program review, and to re-emphasize their importance.

The accountability loop is strong and should not be tinkered with. Let me explain why I think voting yea to this motion would result essentially in a duplication of services already provided. As I remind the House how the accountability system works, I am sure members will agree that the level of reporting and follow-up on the auditor general's report is quite extensive.

The auditor general's main purpose is to cast a watchful eye on how money is collected from Canadians and how it is spent. In carrying out this role the auditor general submits reports several times a year tabled in the House. The accountability system begins with these reports.

Even before the reports are tabled in the House departments and agencies are provided with the opportunity within the reports to state publicly their response and intended follow-up actions to the auditor general's recommendations.

Since 1994, in addition to his main report the auditor general has the authorization to publish up to three more reports each year. For example, in 1995 the auditor general tabled three reports in the House of Commons. Most likely he will present as many this year.

• (1800)

The second key element in the accountability loop is question period. This provides the opportunity for members to question ministers about what they intend to do about concerns raised by the auditor general and about the operations of government. Question period often proves to be an important forum for challenging the government on points raised in the auditor general's report.

Third, the auditor general follows up on the actions of the affected departments and agencies every two years. I am positive, as all members of the House must be, that the auditor general and his office are extremely diligent in carrying out their duties. It is obvious from the last two hours of debate on this motion that we all agree the auditor general provides an invaluable service that is highly respected and legitimate.

Although the auditor general is not a civil servant, he does report to this House. This independence from the bureaucracy gives him the freedom to criticize and to form independent assessments of how things are working. Thus, his follow-up recommendations are key to the accountability process.

The government is highly motivated to respond to the concerns raised in each of the reports; we can be sure of that. For the most part, departments and agencies will address, and quickly, the issues raised by the auditor general in his report.

The fourth element of the accountability chain is the Standing Committee on Public Accounts. The hon. member for St. Albert can attest to the fact that this is an influential and involved body. This committee contains each and every department and agency mentioned in each report tabled by the auditor general. That is rigorously followed up. The committee asks them to report on their progress and on the recommendations mentioned in the report. The public accounts committee has been known to ask for detailed work plans on the status of various activities in addition to project updates provided every six months.

The last key element of the accountability system again falls under the public accounts committee. It also issues frequent reports on government activity to which the government must respond.

I want to emphasize that the public accounts committee is actually contributing actively. It is doing something. It is not just reporting. It is quite a different approach from what is proposed in this motion which focuses more on reporting and controlling and less on doing.

It seems that these five key elements of the accountability system combine together to provide a careful chain with explicit steps in keeping our government accountable and we all want our government to be kept accountable. Not only is there a formal external review process led by the auditor general and the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, but there also exists an internal review process which is alive and effective.

Moreover the internal review process for the government is continually being improved. This internal review function consists of internal audits, program evaluations and manager led reviews. This strengthened internal review process has led to the improvements in programs and policies that are based not only on recommendations from program managers but also from clients and other internal review groups.

Members may recall a progress report entitled "Getting Government Right", tabled in the House of Commons on March 7 of this year. It discussed another form of program review. The program review exercise is an ongoing initiative of this government to examine all federal programs and activities. It is seen as the most important review work since the early 1950s. It differs from previous review exercises in that each department and agency conducted a review of all its programs and activities based on a set of guidelines. It was by no means a small effort. These guidelines took the form of a series of questions or tests which were led by experts in each area. There were six tests in all.

• (1805)

The first test, the public interest test, asked: Does the program area or activity continue to serve a public interest? The second test, the role of government test, asked: Is there a legitimate and necessary role for government in this program area or activity? The third test, the federalism test, asked: Is the current role of the federal government appropriate, or is the program a candidate for realignment with the provinces? The fourth test, the partnership

test, asked: What activities or programs should or could be transferred in whole or in part to the private or voluntary sector? The fifth test, the efficiency test, asked: If the program or activity continues, could this efficiency be improved? Finally the sixth test, the affordability test, asked: Is the resultant package of programs and activities affordable within the fiscal constraint? If not, what program or activities should be abandoned?

These are crucial questions. They are being asked internally within departments. Getting the right programs and services delivered the right way for the right cost is the basis of this initiative. So far the program review has resulted in an end to some programs, the transfer of others to a different service delivery method and a greater efficiency in those that remain within the federal responsibility.

This is a continuous process that is being carried out in phases. As a result of the program review in 1996-97, there is expected to be a drop in costs of close to \$5 billion compared with the last fiscal year. I think it shows just how much the government cares about taxpayers' dollars.

Madam Speaker, my time is almost gone and you can see I have a full speech here to keep on going. It is important to remember who we are and what our role is. As representatives for Canadians, we must weigh the costs against perceived benefits and consequences on all issues, especially during this time of fiscal restraint.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate has passed Bill S-8, an Act respecting Queen's University at Kingston, to which the concurrence of this House is desired.

This bill is deemed to have been read the first time and will be read the second time at the next sitting of the House.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION ACT

The House resumed consideration of the motion.

#### Private Members' Business

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** There are three minutes left for debate.

**Ms. Margaret Bridgman (Surrey North, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, in three minutes I would like to address some of the comments made by the previous speakers.

Reference was made that this motion actually may create more work for the auditor general. I do not read that into the motion. I am reading from that motion that the committee is saying it cannot address all the issues the auditor general is raising and therefore some of these issues are getting lost.

Mention was made in relation to accountability. We are talking about one of the basic management principles which is that in any management program there is an evaluation of what is done. A plan is put together and implemented and the results are evaluated. It is my understanding that the evaluation of those results is the role of the auditor general.

To get to the outcome part of it, one needs to have the mandate, the responsibility and also the authority to carry it out, to make the plans and implement them. The accountability component has a big play in the evaluation of that. To say that the auditor general is now reporting three times versus one time is not necessarily a method of establishing accountability. It is certainly enhancing the process to achieve accountability because the reports are more frequent, but we still have to address those reports and try to improve what the management process has been, if improvement is necessary.

● (1810)

Reference was made that there are alternative resources for information to the auditor general. My reading of this motion does not find that a problem. What it is asking for is that the department or program which is being evaluated by the auditor general make a response and if they are taking action based on alternative resources that would be a response that would come forward. That in itself could be looked at or be evaluated for accountability purposes.

Another comment—

[Translation]

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** It being 6.11 p.m., the period allowed for the debate has expired. Pursuant to the order made earlier, the motion is deemed to have been put to the House and the recorded division on the motion is deemed to have been deferred to Tuesday, June 18, 1996, at 5.30 p.m.

Is the House ready for the question?

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

*Adjournment Debate*

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** All those in favour will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** In my opinion the nays have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** The division on the motions stands deferred until Tuesday, June 18, 1996, at 5.30 p.m.

Is there unanimous consent to proceed to the adjournment debate?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

---

## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

[*Translation*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

### EMPLOYMENT CENTRES

**Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford, BQ):** Madam Speaker, during question period, Friday May 31, I asked a question of the Minister of Human Resources Development concerning the difference between the decisions to restructure the services of the Granby Employment Centre and the Cowansville centre.

Unfortunately, when I reread the transcript of the debates to check on his answer, I was struck by something: he never gave a clear and precise answer to my question. Instead, the Minister of Human Resources Development settled for making vague allusions to the difficulty of restructuring his department, while at the same time indicating that he and his employees were always prepared to provide me with the information requested.

As far as the Granby centre is concerned, no one, not the minister nor his staff, have deigned to provide me with the justification of

the decision on the Granby Employment Centre as compared to the Cowansville one. No valid explanation, no specific criterion, has ever been provided to me to justify such a decision between these two neighbouring centres, apart from political affiliation.

In my opinion, the Granby employment centre has undergone an unjustified cutback in services and in staff, compared to the cuts made at the Cowansville employment centre, because from now on the Granby centre will have the same number of employees as Cowansville, although it serves twice the population.

I will repeat my question, then, because the minister has stated on several occasions that the purpose of restructuring is to improve services, and to do so on an equitable basis.

Can the minister indicate to us clearly the logic on which his decision is based to allocate the same number of employees to the two centres, whereas the Granby centre serves twice as large a population as Cowansville does?

I would like the minister to answer my question, because despite all the correspondence between him, his department and myself, including a dozen official letters, two meetings with senior officials, a petition bearing over 6,300 names, many press releases, newspaper articles, resolutions by municipalities in my riding and telephone calls, I see no reason for an unfair decision to be made in the case of the people of Shefford and the Granby employment centre.

I will repeat my question a third time so the minister may grasp its meaning. What is the reason for the decision to assign the same number of employees to the employment centres in Granby and in Cowansville, when the former serves twice as many people as the latter?

I am not the only one wanting a response from the minister, because the case of the employment centre in Granby is a matter of consensus.

This centre is vital to the development of the Granby region. The Granby chamber of commerce, the Société de développement économique régional de Granby-Bromont, the Haute-Yamaska RCM, the City of Granby, the unions and more than 80 organizations all agree that this decision is unjustified and unfair.

Decisions can be changed. This would not be the first time. The people of Shefford want an answer.

[*English*]

**Mr. Robert D. Nault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Human Resources Development, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the member has been told a number of times what is going on. It is

*Adjournment Debate*

obvious to all of us that Human Resources Canada is consolidating and centralizing the administration and processing functions.

When that is done, it stands to reason that service in certain areas will be reduced and employees will be moved from one place to another. That is how the administrative savings being sought will be achieved.

It is no different in this member's riding than it is in mine. In my riding of Kenora—Rainy River we went through the same thing, but we seem to understand it a lot better.

The key is that when the numbers of employees are reduced, we must make sure that their function in the administrative process continues to have front line service. We continue to say that the intent of improving the system is to maintain the front line service for communities so that service will adequately respond to the needs of individuals.

This is a two year process. Once it is in place, the hon. member will see that the front line employees will still be available to look after the needs of individuals. With the kiosks and mail service centres restructured, he will see that it will work as well in his riding as it does in mine. It is fortunate for us that our ridings are similar. Once he gets a chance to see the service in action, he will know that the minister's answer to him in the House of Commons was correct. This is an administrative improvement, not a chance to reduce service.

[*Translation*]

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais):** The motion to adjourn the House is deemed to have been adopted. The House stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

(The House adjourned at 6.18 p.m.)

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# CONTENTS

Thursday, June 13, 1996

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### Report of Information Commissioner

The Speaker ..... 3779

### Government Response to Petitions

Mr. Zed ..... 3779

### Inter-Parliamentary Delegations

Mr. Bonin ..... 3779

### Canada Elections Act

Bill C-307. Motions for introduction and first reading  
agreed to. .... 3779

Mrs. Terrana ..... 3779

### Canada Elections Act

Bill C-308. Motions for introduction and first reading  
deemed adopted ..... 3779

Mrs. Terrana ..... 3779

### Food and Drugs Act

Bill C-309. Motions for introduction and first reading  
deemed adopted ..... 3780

Ms. Torsney ..... 3780

Mr. Schmidt ..... 3780

### Parliament of Canada Act

Bill C-310. Motions for introduction and first reading  
deemed adopted ..... 3780

Mr. Solomon ..... 3780

### Patent Act

Bill C-311. Motions for introduction and first reading  
deemed adopted ..... 3780

Mr. Solomon ..... 3780

### Members of Parliament Retiring Allowances Act

Bill C-312. Motions for introduction and first reading  
deemed adopted ..... 3781

Mr. Solomon ..... 3781

### Parliament of Canada Act

Bill C-313. Motions for introduction and first reading  
deemed adopted ..... 3781

Mr. Solomon ..... 3781

### Petitions

#### The Constitution

Mr. Schmidt ..... 3781

#### Proceeds from Crime

Mr. Milliken ..... 3781

### Questions on the Order Paper

Mr. Zed ..... 3781

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### Supply

#### Allotted Day—Francophones in Minority Situations

Mr. Marchand ..... 3782

Motion ..... 3782

Mr. Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine) .... 3785

Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca) ..... 3786

Mrs. Robillard ..... 3786

Mr. Marchand ..... 3789

Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca) ..... 3790

Mr. Silye ..... 3790

Mr. Marchand ..... 3794

Mr. Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine) .... 3795

Mr. Leroux (Shefford) ..... 3795

Mrs. Terrana ..... 3798

Mr. Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine) .... 3799

Mr. Duhamel ..... 3800

Mr. Dumas ..... 3803

Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca) ..... 3803

Mr. Sauvageau ..... 3804

Mr. Sauvageau ..... 3805

Mr. Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine) .... 3806

Mr. Pomerleau ..... 3807

Mr. Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine) .... 3809

Mr. Bélanger ..... 3810

Mr. Marchand ..... 3812

Mr. Sauvageau ..... 3812

Mr. Boudria ..... 3813

Mr. Tremblay (Rosemont) ..... 3813

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

### Agnes Boros

Mrs. Sheridan ..... 3813

### Immigration

Mr. Sauvageau ..... 3814

### Talwinder Singh Parmar

Ms. Meredith ..... 3814

### Freshwater Institute

Mr. Blaikie ..... 3814

### Sir Wilfrid Laurier

Mr. Paradis ..... 3814

### Dragon Boat Festival

Mrs. Terrana ..... 3815

### Hungary

Mr. Wappel ..... 3815

### The Environment

Mrs. Guay ..... 3815

### Sports Fishery

Mr. Duncan ..... 3815

### March against Poverty

Mr. Malhi ..... 3815

### Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

Mr. Szabo ..... 3816

### Quebec Premier

Mr. Patry ..... 3816

### Child Labour

Mr. Dumas ..... 3816

### Fisheries

Mr. Gilmour ..... 3816

### Klondike Gold Rush

Mr. Pagtakhan ..... 3817

<b>CAE</b>	
Mrs. Finestone .....	3817

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

#### Airbus Aircraft

Mr. Duceppe .....	3817
Mr. Rock .....	3817
Mr. Duceppe .....	3818
Mr. Rock .....	3818
Mr. Duceppe .....	3818
Mr. Rock .....	3818
Mrs. Venne .....	3818
Mr. Rock .....	3819
Mrs. Venne .....	3819
Mr. Rock .....	3819
Mr. Strahl .....	3819
Mr. Rock .....	3819
Mr. Strahl .....	3819
Mr. Rock .....	3819
Mr. Strahl .....	3819
Mr. Rock .....	3819

#### Federal-Provincial Relations

Mr. Bellehumeur .....	3819
Mr. Dion .....	3820
Mr. Bellehumeur .....	3820
Mr. Dion .....	3820

#### First Ministers Conference

Mr. Harper (Calgary West) .....	3820
Mr. Dion .....	3820
Mr. Harper (Calgary West) .....	3820
Mr. Dion .....	3820

#### Federal-Provincial Relations

Mrs. Lalonde .....	3820
Mr. Dion .....	3821
Mrs. Lalonde .....	3821
Mr. Dion .....	3821

#### Justice

Mr. Ramsay .....	3821
Mr. Rock .....	3821
Mr. Ramsay .....	3821
Mr. Rock .....	3821

#### Student Loans and Scholarships

Mr. Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean) .....	3821
Mr. Young .....	3822
Mr. Tremblay (Lac-Saint-Jean) .....	3822
Mr. Young .....	3822

#### Refugees

Mrs. Bakopanos .....	3822
Mrs. Robillard .....	3822

#### Foreign Affairs

Mr. Mills (Red Deer) .....	3822
Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre) .....	3822
Mr. Mills (Red Deer) .....	3823
Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre) .....	3823

#### Cultural Organizations

Mrs. Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata) .....	3823
Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre) .....	3823

Mrs. Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata) .....	3823
Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre) .....	3823

#### Aboriginal Affairs

Mr. Duncan .....	3823
Mr. Irwin .....	3823
Mr. Duncan .....	3824
Mr. Irwin .....	3824

#### Taxation

Mr. Shepherd .....	3824
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) .....	3824

#### Tran Trieu Quan

Mr. Paré .....	3824
Mr. Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre) .....	3825

#### Notional Input Credit

Mr. Solberg .....	3825
Mr. Martin (LaSalle—Émard) .....	3825

#### The Environment

Mr. Blaikie .....	3825
Mr. Marchi .....	3825

#### Pages

The Speaker .....	3825
-------------------	------

#### Business of the House

Mr. Duceppe .....	3826
Mr. Gagliano .....	3826

#### The Late Stephen Neary

Mr. Mifflin .....	3826
Mr. Laurin .....	3827
Mr. Speaker (Lethbridge) .....	3827
Mr. Simmons .....	3827
Mrs. Hickey .....	3828
Mr. Hopkins .....	3828

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

#### Supply

<b>Allotted Day—Francophones in minority situations</b>	
Consideration resumed of motion .....	3829
Mr. Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca) .....	3829
Mr. Leblanc (Longueuil) .....	3831
Mr. Lebel .....	3833
Mr. Boudria .....	3833
Mr. Leblanc (Longueuil) .....	3835

#### Business of the House

Mr. Boudria .....	3837
Motion .....	3837
(Motion agreed to.) .....	3837

#### Supply

<b>Allotted Day—Francophones in minority situations</b>	
Consideration resumed of motion .....	3837
Mr. Lebel .....	3837
Mr. McWhinney .....	3839
Mrs. Lalonde .....	3839
Mr. McTeague .....	3841
Mr. Arseneault .....	3841
Mr. Gagnon (Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine) .....	3842
Mr. Dumas .....	3843
Mr. McTeague .....	3844

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

#### Financial Administration Act

Motion M-166. Consideration resumed of motion .....	3845
---	------



Mr. Guimond .....	3845
Mr. McTeague .....	3846
Mr. Schmidt .....	3848
Mr. Calder .....	3849
<b>Message from the Senate</b>	
The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Ringuette-Maltais) .....	3851
<b>Financial Administration Act</b>	
Consideration resumed of motion .....	3851

Ms. Bridgman .....	3851
Division on motion deferred .....	3852

#### **ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS**

<b>Employment Centres</b>	
Mr. Leroux (Shefford) .....	3852
Mr. Nault .....	3852

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