

*Adjournment Debate*

**Mr. Michel Champagne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear my colleague for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) speak in such a demanding tone. One would think there was an election on. We are reminded of his usual speeches, except that, first, Mr. Speaker, I rise at the request of the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. de Cotret). I will not speak in English, whatever the Member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) might think in that respect.

One thing is sure, Mr. Speaker. With the experience gained by the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier over these last few years in this House, he should know that regulations have to go before the Treasury Board. The decision is made by the President of the Treasury Board. We receive a great many reports.

The Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier stated earlier that there were internal reports saying this or that. We know very well that a great many reports are received by the Department every day, whether under the Liberals or the Conservatives. Mr. Speaker, I wish the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier would stop looking at this issue through his political glasses; he ought to face facts and focus on the way the law is being applied.

The law states that, with respect to the official languages, it is up to the President of the Treasury Board to decide what is good and what is not good. When the President of the Treasury Board rose in the House to respond to the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier he made it quite clear that he did not agree with the document which had been submitted by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. If he does not agree, Mr. Speaker, it means that the RCMP document is not good enough for him. I think respect ought to be shown for minimum standards. We respect the Constitution, and we respect the very principle of bilingualism in Canada. As a long-standing and strong proponent of bilingualism, the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier should rise and thank the President of the Treasury Board for doing the utmost to support and promote bilingualism.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, we cannot do everything overnight. We simply could not have tackled every single issue after only two years in office. So when I listen to my colleagues across the aisle, they were there for 20 years, I have serious reservations about their integrity with respect to responsibilities. They had 20 years to raise standards and strengthen policies, but today we can see that they did not accomplish anything over 20 years and it is now up to us as a responsible Government to do something about improving French, and promoting bilingualism throughout Canada.

• (1805)

[*English*]

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT—DISTRIBUTION OF EXPENDITURES.  
(B) REGIONAL DISPARITIES—REQUEST FOR NEW POLICY

**Mr. Dave Dingwall (Cape Breton—East Richmond):** Mr. Speaker, on Monday of this week I directed a question to the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion (Mr. Côté) regarding comments made by Canada's chief negotiator in the bilateral trade negotiations with the United States. Mr. Reisman said that Canada could no longer expect to continue its practice of subsidizing industry if it wanted to escape the effects of American trade laws.

I posed that question to the Minister because I believe the answer to it is germane in terms of national policies which must be instituted to provide economic viability and opportunities to some regions of the country. Unfortunately—and I say so sincerely—the Minister chose not to answer the question. In fact, my disappointment was even greater because on subsequent days I had hoped to question the Minister for International Trade (Miss Carney). However, due to previous commitments she was not in the House to receive my question.

It is fundamental that Canadians know and understand the effects of what the chief negotiator for Canada is talking about. He is not talking about a review of regional economic development policies. He is talking about major concessions with regard to subsidy to industry in Canada.

We do not know whether or not there will be major concessions with regard to maritime freight assistance. We do not know whether the Government of the day is preparing to make major concessions with regard to western grain transportation. We do not know whether the Government is intending to terminate assistance to small business or to terminate assistance to our primary producers. The Minister and the Government should avail themselves of every opportunity to explain to Canadians what the statements mean in their totality. This could have an extremely negative effect on Canada's economy.

• (1810)

In particular, I draw your attention, Mr. Speaker, to some of the musings that were in the Throne Speech of some months ago. There in a paragraph or two it talked about regional disparities. We read that the Government was going to try new solutions for Atlantic and Western Canada.

It is imperative for policy makers at the national level to let us know exactly what is in the mix that is being given away, if you will, to the United States as part of the concessions that we will have to make as a result of these bilateral negotiations. I think Canadians, being the reasonable group of individuals we are, collectively would respond in a reasoned and objective way if the Government saw fit to elaborate with some degree of specificity as to what Simon Reisman is talking about.