

*Adjournment Debate*

Mr. Speaker, this why on April 3, after waiting 21 months for regulations which have yet to be released, I asked the Prime Minister to show some firm leadership and instruct his ministers to stand in their places. The President of the Treasury Board told me he had not yet consulted with minority groups.

Mr. Speaker, I phoned every single minority association in Canada and was told that consultations are over. It is true that after my question Treasury Board officials called the FFHQ and asked for a meeting. But no proceedings nor any meeting with the associations had been arranged before I raised the question.

Obviously the Conservative government is either afraid of extremist group reactions or inefficient in its negotiations—and today I said as much to the President of the Treasury Board. I am sorry but things are moving so slowly that one has to wonder whether he has become an expert at all-time delaying tactics stalling or whether he is simply a bad negotiator. I know he is a good negotiator, so something is wrong somewhere. Something seems to be difficult to settle in this case. The commissioner's threatened resignation yesterday came as a shock, and I strongly suggest the government should not exacerbate the situation and let it deteriorate to the point where the commissioner, the official languages ombudsman, points a critical finger at the government in his annual report and goes as far as saying he might resign, an officer of the Parliament of Canada!

• (1805)

Mr. Speaker, The Commissioner of Official Languages said: Very little has been done in terms of the official languages over the past ten years. I quote: During the first ten years of the Trudeau administration there were people who did look after the official languages issue and much progress was accomplished. Again I quote: Since the Conservatives are in office, he said, the ratio of federal employees who meet the linguistic requirements of their duties has decreased.

Mr. Speaker, we do have linguistic problems in this country. I ask the government to do something, to give us right away the regulations of Bill C-72 so that we know just what the government plans to do in this matter.

**Mr. Howard Crosby (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board):** Mr. Speaker, allow me to respond to the concerns of the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier, on behalf of the President of the Treasury Board.

[*English*]

The member has expressed in the House on many occasions his deep concern for the official language policy of the Government of Canada. His concern is no deeper than that of the President of the Treasury Board and members on this side of the House of Commons. That was expressed very effectively in the Official Languages Act which was enacted by the House of Commons in 1987. No greater faith in the policy of duality of languages in Canada could be expressed than was by the enactment of a statute in the House of Commons.

What remains to be done is the full implementation of that statute and I want to assure the hon. member of the good faith of the President of the Treasury Board and the Government of Canada in that implementation process.

May I draw a personal analogy, Mr. Speaker? The hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier is a life-long resident and native of the national capital region, as is the President of the Treasury Board. Those people understand very well the two solitudes in Canada coming together and being one. They are leaders, as indeed they should be, in this evolutionary process. But they must realize that it is an evolutionary process and that moderation is required. Moderation will win the day, not pre-emptory action that will not accomplish the desired end.

There is evolution and development every day. We have heard in the House and other places that the Greater Vancouver Regional District just recently passed a resolution supporting the linguistic duality of our nation. It urged all Canadians from coast to coast to display the tolerance and understanding necessary to the building of Canada as a unified nation and constructive member of both the English-speaking and French-speaking parts of the world community. I think that is what we all want to accomplish.

The question is how do we accomplish it? Do we accomplish it by simply pushing forward regulations and forcing them on Canadians, or do we go through a consultation process to ensure that everyone is in agreement on how the official language policy should be implemented. As the hon. member well knows, that is