

Supply

[English]

—is divisive and too expensive.

[Translation]

Well, we in Quebec do not feel that this act is particularly divisive or that it creates dissent. It is too bad the hon. member for the Reform Party seems to think there is a measure of dissent and divisiveness, and I suppose that later on he could perhaps explain how he arrived at this perception. He also said the Official Languages Act was too expensive.

According to the Commissioner of Official Languages, this legislation costs 0.3 per cent of total federal spending. If less than one-third of 1 per cent is too expensive, how low must we go to meet the criteria of the hon. member for the Reform Party?

At this point, I would also like to set the record straight on something that was said by the previous speaker. He referred to the "asymmetrical bilingualism advocated by the Bloc Québécois". The position of the Bloc Québécois is clear: bilingualism must be the rule in all federal institutions. There are also a number of obligations in this respect that must be met at the provincial level. However, neither the Bloc Québécois nor any other party can influence the will of the provinces.

Incidentally, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that today, New Brunswick is celebrating 25 years as a bilingual province.

An hon. member: That's right!

Mr. de Savoye: Thank you.

• (1305)

For all this bilingualism enjoyed in this country since 1969 and all the goodwill in that respect, we must nevertheless realize—as the Commissioner of Official Languages indicated—that access to federal services in French has not always been satisfactory. Francophones outside Quebec should be able to receive services in their language not only from federal agencies but also from provincial ones. And that is where the shoe pinches.

Let me quote Mr. Jean Dufresne who said, in an article published in *Le Journal de Montréal*: "Mr. Goldbloom, who speaks his mind but at the same time shows a moderation fitting a man whose mastery of French I can only envy, acknowledges that federal services in French have deteriorated so much that, in certain regions, francophones do not even bother to complain any more. In British Columbia and the Prairies, for example, the number of complaints dropped by half last year. Mr. Goldbloom attributes this drop to the clients' frustration with the little progress made by various institutions." And he concluded by saying: "Overall, not a very positive report."

I might add that problems exist not only in British Columbia and the Prairies. Last Sunday, in my riding, I met with Mr. Duval, from Cap-Santé, who showed me a number of things, including UI cheque stubs. On these stubs, you can read:

[English]

—UI benefit statement, date 3003, 1994 from federal tax, Quebec tax, et cetera. It is all in English. This is in Cap-Santé for Mr. Duval.

[Translation]

Something is seriously wrong. The figures relating to bilingualism in the Public Service certainly make you wonder. Take the number of bilingual positions in Quebec for example. Excluding the National Capital Region, there are 15,500 bilingual positions in the province, as compared to 39,500 in the National Capital Region and 8,800 in the rest of Canada. You will tell me that this is in line with the relative numbers of francophones and anglophones across Canada. That fact of the matter is that it is not.

You see, with 900,000 anglophones in Quebec and, excluding the National Capital, there are 15,500 bilingual positions in the province. On the other hand, 968,000 francophones are living outside Quebec, that is to say 68,000 more than anglophones living in Quebec, and to serve all of them, there are only 8,800 bilingual positions, that is a bit more than half the number found in Quebec. In other words, this means that francophones outside Quebec are entitled to only 57 per cent of the level of service provided to anglophones in Quebec. And I am not making this up. I am just quoting figures from the Commissioner of Official Languages' annual report.

I would also like to mention this other finding by the commissioner. In Foreign Affairs, 44 per cent of francophones report using English as their written language of work and, according to 85 per cent of the sample of employees interviewed by the commissioner, meetings are held only or mostly in English. Bilingualism is not very well, Mr. Speaker.

• (1310)

In fact, given the figures I just gave you, we can see that the government's efforts to conceive and carry out bilingualism programs only work in Quebec. Simply put, we can see that a vast majority of bilingual positions in Canada are located in Quebec and the National Capital Region. Quebec and the National Capital Region account for 55,000 bilingual positions, compared with 8,800 in the rest of the country. Quebec is where bilingualism can be found.

I would now like to move on to education.

Education, as everyone knows, is a provincial jurisdiction and, although the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms provides for certain obligations with respect to minority language rights, we must realize that some provinces still lag behind.