

*Adjournment Debate*

expand commercial enterprises and to obtain long-term employment.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired.

Pursuant to Standing Order 93, the order is dropped to the bottom of the list of the order of precedence on the Order Paper.

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## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*Translation*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 is deemed to have been moved.

### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to have more than seven minutes, but I realize we are subject to certain constraints.

On June 25, 1987, the government tabled in the House of Commons a new Official Languages Act, to replace the 1969 legislation that had become obsolete. The new Act was passed by this House on July 7, 1988 and by the Senate on July 27 the same year. It received royal assent on July 28, 1988, 13 months after it was tabled.

• (1800)

To be effective, Mr. Speaker, legislation must be accompanied by clear and precise regulations with respect to the language of service, language of work and equitable participation. Those are the three major points this legislation was supposed to clarify, and it was to provide clear and precise guidelines on language of service, language of work and equitable participation.

As the responsible department, Treasury Board was to conduct preliminary consultations with minority groups, which was done in the spring of 1989, when I met Treasury Board's Deputy Secretary, Official Languages Branch, who told me that preliminary consultations had taken place with the Fédération des francophones hors Québec, Alliance Quebec and six or seven provincial associations across Canada.

At the time, preliminary consultations were scheduled with the SANB, the Société des Acadiens du Nouveau-Brunswick, in Moncton that week and with the Yukon shortly afterwards. I am talking about March 1989, exactly one year ago. So, consultations with minority groups as required under section 84 of the legislation; approval of draft regulations by cabinet, I suppose, and probably, tabling in the House according to the usual procedure so that members can become acquainted with the regulations, as required under section 85 of the Act.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation comes into force after a long and complex process. However, as the government keeps putting off tabling its regulations, it will become increasingly difficult for Canadians to find out how the legislation will affect them.

I asked the President of the Treasury Board on April 11, 1989 when we would have the regulations under Bill C-72, the Official Languages Act. He assured me they would be tabled by December 1989. Well, Mr. Speaker, April 1990 is here and we still do not have anything.

The lack of action of the government in promoting a new law and informing Canadians on its application is such that Canada is now facing a situation which is getting worse every day. Instead of implementing regulations and launching an information campaign on the actual application of the new law, the government is behaving like a silent witness and doing nothing to counter the misinformation spread throughout the country by certain extremist groups.

Official language minority groups are trying to defend as best they can the language policies the Conservative government is afraid to uphold.

Mr. Speaker, in his annual report tabled in the House two days ago, the Commissioner of Official Languages rightly criticizes the government's lack of action in putting forward regulations that have been too long in coming. He said, and I quote: "We must have the courage to carry through without fear of negative reaction. After all, we are not launching a revolution!"

The Commissioner even compared the lack of leadership shown by the Conservative government and the Prime Minister to a bad conductor. I refer those interested to the annual report which is quite interesting and, I think, fair.