

### Supply

When it is a matter of such issues as transportation in which any Canadian may be involved at any time, of course they have to be entitled to the services of their government in the official language of their choice.

I want to conclude very briefly by saying that we could have taken a different approach and as some would have it, we could have applied a simple rule that is based purely on mathematics. We chose not to do that. We chose to do it based on need and importance of the service.

We have decided to remain true to the principle of fairness, to rules that make it possible to meet the needs I mentioned earlier and the legislation was intended to meet. That is simply for Canadians to have access to the services provided by their country's institutions.

We want Canadians to be able to work together in the official language of their choice in the same institutions within bilingual regions as provided for in the act. The government has made a commitment to the equitable participation of Canadians of both linguistic communities in federal institutions. It is committed to ensuring that federal institutions reflect the presence of English speaking and French speaking Canadians, taking into account their mandate and their locations.

The Canadian approach whether it deals with service to the public, language of work, or equitable participation reflects the choices made since the beginning of the history of this country. I remember a time in this city when if one was a francophone one was unlikely to get hired by one's own government and if one did get hired one certainly did not get promoted. As one who believes in equity in employment, I would not tolerate that situation again in my community or in my country.

I also want to refer to the phrase territorial bilingualism. In my view we have had far too much of territoriality in this country in recent years. We have had far too much of pitting one person against another, of looking at every public policy issue from a selfish point of view. It is time to start realizing that our different communities have to work together toward common goals and common purposes. That is what makes Canada unique, a country respectful of our differences and proud of what we have in common.

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciated hearing the hon. member's comments. I have a couple of questions for her.

First, I would like a response to the fact that in a community in my constituency, Kindersley, members who receive cable television are not able to understand much of the proceedings because they do not get services in the language that they all understand but in the language of the floor.

If one is bilingual that is well and good. However the members in my riding who receive this do not even know what the Official Opposition is saying. In fact, we are not even getting service in our part of the country that we can understand.

The other thing is that for environmental consideration I have suggested and I expect others have as well that considerable savings could be made if we provided publications in language of choice rather than having every publication bilingual where one receives both languages. This uses twice the paper and it is twice the cost to put these documents together.

I know most Canadians would prefer these documents in one language or the other because they only use one. I would like to have the hon. member's response in the way of environmental and fiscal responsibility as to providing services in the language that is required, not in both languages.

• (1615)

**Ms. Catterall:** Mr. Speaker, my first comment is that we could save an awful lot of money if we simply closed down the Government of Canada and ceased completely to provide services to Canadians.

We could save an awful lot of money if we ceased having a national postal service, if we ceased having a national transportation system. However, certain prices go with the very nature of the country, its diversity and its size, and as a famous Canadian said before me, I for one pay those prices gladly.

Naturally we are always interested in ways of reducing the cost of implementing any government program or policy. In fact the cost of providing official languages has dropped significantly in the last couple of years. I would be pleased to give consideration to the comments of the hon. member and to discuss them with the minister.

[Translation]

**Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester):** Mr. Speaker, it may be difficult for Reform Party members who can function in English every day to imagine how French Canadians who do not always have the opportunity to do so in French feel.

In Canada, it is hard to imagine that our children, whether they are French or English-speaking, cannot receive an education in their mother tongue, or have no choice but to participate in socio-cultural activities, or rely on essential services and vocational training, in a language which is not their own. Yet, for more than 1.6 million Canadians, which includes francophones outside Quebec as well as English-speaking Quebecers, being able to use their mother tongue is something they cannot always take for granted.

The French and English languages are integral parts of the Canadian identity. Language is a vital component of what it means to be a Canadian, and has been since the very beginning. The fact is that close to 99 per cent of Canada's residents speak either French or English. However, close to two million Canadians live in provinces and territories where their mother tongue is the minority language. This linguistic duality is therefore a basic social reality in our country, and Canadians are proud of