

that is quite long. First off, I would like to thank those who wrote it. The government is currently preparing its response to the many recommendations, a good number of which are very broad in scope, and we should be able to publish that response within 90 days.

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[English]

IMMIGRATION

Mrs. Daphne Jennings (Mission—Coquitlam, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, on September 24 of last year in my constituency, Catherine Evenson, a beautiful young lady who was confined to a wheelchair, was raped in her home. The man facing rape charges is a refugee and is now trying to cement his stay in Canada by applying for permanent resident status.

Will the minister of immigration intervene in this case and ensure that no permanent status in Canada is considered until the case is heard and the verdict is handed down?

Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have no specific details of the case. I appreciate the hon. member raising it. I will give her my word that certainly I will have officials look into the case.

It is also a good reason, rather than simply dealing with individual cases, to have had Bill C-44 approved at third reading. It attempts to make the system better so that we minimize any such horrible cases we hear about.

I was somewhat distraught that the Reform Party, which relishes bringing case after case to the floor of the House of Commons, did not see fit to support Bill C-44.

Mrs. Daphne Jennings (Mission—Coquitlam, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I assure the minister that I have been in constant contact with his office on the matter as well as with the Solicitor General's office. I also stress that I am assured Bill C-44 will do nothing to help this case at all.

I thank the minister for his response. I assure him that today this young woman and her family are listening to and watching these proceedings. Would the minister please notify me as soon as a decision is made?

Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, as I said in my first answer, I would be happy to look into the file. I can appreciate that the hon. member has been in touch with officials of my department, but as any member can appreciate no minister can be on top of the thousands of cases across the country.

The hon. member, with all due respect, is absolutely wrong if she and her colleagues believe that Bill C-44 will not improve the system's capacity to keep those individuals from getting protection and allowing those legitimate cases to be accepted in our system. I ask her and her colleagues to change their minds

about Bill C-44 because it would help Canadians and the system.

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[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board. The Official Languages Commissioner published a study this morning on services in the minority official language offered to the public in designated federal offices. Among other things, the study found that in Quebec, service in English is available 98.8 per cent of the time, while in the rest of Canada, 28 per cent of all designated offices still do not provide service in French.

How can the President of the Treasury Board justify that, more than two years after a regulation was passed on the issue, over one in four francophones outside of Quebec are unable to obtain federal services in their language?

[English]

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, even while the official languages commissioner was undertaking his survey the Treasury Board was consulting with managers in offices across the country to help ensure that they were carrying out their obligations under the Official Languages Act.

Furthermore, we have assembled information that we have provided to Canadians through minority language newspapers across the country so that they know where to find the offices and who to contact to be able to get services in the language of their choice.

● (1445)

Finally, let me say that this government is solidly committed to quality services in the official language of choice by Canadians and in meeting its obligations under the Official Languages Act.

[Translation]

Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf, BQ): Mr. Speaker, given the alarming increase in the assimilation rate of francophone and Acadian communities in Canada, how can the minister justify the slow pace with which the government has made its services available to francophones in the language of their choice? Is bilingualism a sham?

[English]

Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, the official languages commissioner said that in 79 per cent of cases across the country the service was available and that 92 per cent of the time it was good quality service that was being provided.