

inaction is caused by the fact that the government is afraid explain to Canadians how the new legislation will be implemented. Is the Government really afraid to explain to Canadians how the Official Languages Act will be enforced in Canada?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, as I told the hon. member during our last two question periods, we simply want to observe the letter and the intent of Bill C-72, which requires consultation with all language groups in this country, and that is why we need this period of time before the regulations are tabled. A few consultations have yet to take place, and subsequently, the government will table the regulations and follow the procedure provided under Bill C-72.

[English]

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Canada's major official language groups told us that the consultation process had been finished last Christmas. The Commissioner of Official Languages also expected that process to have terminated last Christmas. I am following the promise made by the minister last year that we would, indeed, have these regulations by Christmas.

After close to two years of negotiations, either the President of the Treasury Board is the all-time expert in delaying tactics or simply a bad negotiator, which I do not believe he is.

Will he now admit that his round of consultation is a sham set up to kill time? Indeed, why is the government taking all this time? The consultations are over. Why are we not given the regulations as agreed?

Hon. Robert de Cotret (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, first the hon. member should note that consultations began early fall, last September as a matter of fact, following the period that was required to draw up a draft set of regulations. We went through the consultations with minority groups throughout the country from coast to coast. Those were completed in late fall.

Obviously, if we are going to consult, it presumes that we are going to listen. If we listen, it presumes that we make some changes. Following that, some of the groups asked for a second round. Not all of the groups, but some

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of the groups asked that we consult with them when the new draft regulations were completed. That is what we are prepared to do. As soon as that is completed, we will table the regulations in this House and follow the process set out by Bill C-72. We are following the wishes of this House.

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HOUSING

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of State for Housing. A Winnipeg contractor has been on a hunger strike for eight days. The contractor, Helmut Klug, is locked in a dispute with the federal government stemming from a housing project on a northern Manitoba Indian reserve. In short, Mr. Klug built some 40 houses and he has not been fully paid. Given the gravity of the situation, I want to ask the minister whether he is now prepared to settle this issue once and for all.

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, the contractor, Mr. Klug, referred to by the hon. member, has contracted with an Indian band. The federal government is involved in a peripheral way through the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and through Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The contracts involve not only housing, but also include contracts for projects for a sewing factory, medical centre, a band office and other things. The matter is currently under discussion with federal government officials, discussing the matter with Mr. Klug.

I might say as well that the matter is presently before the courts.

Mr. John Harvard (Winnipeg St. James): Mr. Speaker, the situation has dragged on far too long. I cannot imagine what the government is concerned about. Now we have a situation where a man's health is at risk, and perhaps his life.

Is the minister prepared to ask for a review of this matter and to find a solution that is fair to all parties involved?

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, the matter has been under review for a considerable length of time. The matter is before the courts