

Hon. Serge Joyal (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, the program that the Secretary of State administers in relation to the official languages of Canada is essentially based on Sections of either the British North America Act, that is, the Constitution Act, 182, or on some relevant Sections of the provincial Act of the Province concerned. In the case of the Province of Ontario, there is neither a similar proposal in the Ontario Act nor in the Constitution Act of Canada which could give rise to legal proceedings. It is a different situation in Quebec, for instance, where there is already a case in the Supreme Court of Canada which has been supported by the Secretary of State, and in the Province of Manitoba where there has already been some money provided to a litigant.

After consultation with the Department of Justice, the amount of \$25,000 was a fair assessment of the average cost of an action launched at the Supreme Court or Superior Court level, depending on the Province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Waterloo.

Mr. McDermid: Oh, come on.

Mr. Lalonde: Don't be such a bigot and listen to the facts.

Some Hon. Members: What's going on?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members will bear in mind that the Chair is trying to accommodate as many Members as possible.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: A supplementary, the Hon. Member for Brampton-Georgetown.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McDermid: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The answer to the question is no, he will not support me on that particular thing.

MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown): Mr. Speaker, does the Minister not understand that his strident and unfair, one-sided support of bilingualism is not promoting bilingualism in Canada but is setting it back 20 years?

Hon. Serge Joyal (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, with all respect to the Hon. Member, when a citizen wants to go to court and launch an action against the federal or a provincial Government, claiming that he or she has the right, either under the Constitution of Canada or under the constitution of his or her Province, there is a legal question which has to be established. If there is a legal motive or a legal basis on which to launch the action, there is a program to support the initiative. If there is no legal motive, there is no program and no money to support such an initiative. That is the only answer I could give to the Hon. Member.

Point of Order—Mr. Lumley

● (1500)

In Quebec, there is a legal basis of action, Section 133. There is no such Section in Ontario. There is a similar proposal in the Manitoba Act. That is why this House has voted on this. That is essentially—

Mr. McDermid: It was given to me in Quebec, in the National Capital Region.

Mr. Joyal: The Hon. Member mentioned the Capital Region. If it is in the Hull section of the National Capital, then he has a legal ground of action. There has already been a case in the Supreme Court of Canada, the McDonald case, which will be heard in the next session of the Court. There is no doubt that, if there is a legal ground for action, the Hon. Member will have access to the financial support of the Secretary of State.

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PETITIONS

TABLING OF REPORTS OF CLERK OF PETITIONS

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the petitions, with the exception of seven, presented by Hon. Members on Friday, October 28, 1983, meet the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form. Three of the petitions presented by the Hon. Member for Regina East (Mr. de Jong) and four presented by the Hon. Member for Comox-Powell River (Mr. Skelly) do not meet the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.

Three Hon. Members have given me notice of points of order. All Hon. Members will be recognized. The Chair recognizes the Minister of State for Economic Development.

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POINTS OF ORDER

MR. LUMLEY—APOLOGY FOR REPLY GIVEN DURING QUESTION PERIOD

Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, during Question Period the Hon. Member for Erie (Mr. Fretz) asked me a very legitimate question. I want to apologize to him for my attitude. The negotiations are at a very critical stage. He asked a legitimate question. I did not answer it in a manner that is appropriate in this House.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Simcoe North (Mr. Lewis) has given notice of a point of order and the Hon. Member for Brampton-Georgetown (Mr. McDermid) will be recognized on a question of privilege.