

Adjournment Motion

(Mr. Desjardins), for doing such marvelous work on that committee and, particularly, Madam Speaker, for following in the footsteps of the Hon. Member for Charlevoix (Mr. Hamelin) who performed an exceptional and gigantic task in that area.

I have a comment to make and a small question to put to my colleague, the Hon. Member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Desjardins). I quote what Mr. Michel Roy wrote in *La Presse* of June 30, 1987: "Thanks to that new legislation, Canadians will finally be able to communicate more easily with federal institutions and get services in the official language they prefer. The new legislation also gives government employees better opportunities to work in their own language in federal institutions, something which many of them could not do until now. In the area of justice, access to federal courts of law will be assured to Canadians in either official language. Everywhere, and no longer in a few provinces, they will be able to use French or English in oral or written proceedings. From now on the Official Language Commissioner will be able to initiate investigations, offer his mediation and present reports on compliance with the spirit and the letter of the law. In cases where complaints are not resolved, a judicial appeal will also be provided."

Madam Speaker, that being said, I will be very brief. Does the Hon. Member for Témiscamingue think the people who appeared in committee and the Canadian people in general are more interested in the passing and implementation of that Bill than seeing a number of Liberal Members rise one after the other to say in their speeches that is really a good Bill? What is more important for the Canadian people, Madam Speaker? I would like the Hon. Member for Témiscamingue to explain it to us. Is it the enactment of the legislation or listening to Members in the House?

Mr. Desjardins: Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Chambly (Mr. Grisé) for his comments. It is true that if you ask French-speaking Canadians outside Quebec and all minority language groups in the country, they will tell you quite frankly and honestly, I think, that they want the Bill passed. They are not concerned about the way it will be passed, they have no use for the mechanics of the thing. We want the Government to pass the Bill as quickly as possible. I recall what the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) was saying this morning. He wanted a quick debate to take place very shortly. We have offered that opportunity, but it was refused. Now the opposition would like us to bring that legislation up for debate, but they should have made up their mind earlier.

We had made a proposition which was refused for various reasons, but eventually, as I said earlier, we will come back to this Bill, because it is tremendously important for Canada, for the identity of the country, for both cultures, to give Canadians a new pride in their country and the chance to live in the language of their ancestors.

PROCEEDINGS ON AJOURNMENT MOTION

[Translation]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 66, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mrs. McLaughlin)—Regional Industrial Expansion—Northern development—Government Policy/Consultation Process; the Hon. Member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Gottselig)—Agriculture—Special Canadian Grains Program—Coverage of irrigation farmers; the Hon. Member for Vancouver East (Mrs. Mitchell)—Visible minorities—Citizens of Chinese origin—Past injustices.

● (1620)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S. O. 82—THE STATUS AND USE OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Gauthier:

That this House condemns the government for its inaction, its lack of political will and its hesitation to accept debate in the House of Commons, at the second reading stage, on Bill C-72 respecting the status and use of the official languages, thus causing a clear setback in the application of the Act by federal departments and agencies, in addition to having detrimental effects on national unity.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Madam Speaker, I am pleased this afternoon to take part in this debate concerning the official languages. First of all, I should like to congratulate the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier for the excellent motion he has moved today. Madam Speaker, it is clear that the Members of this House—most of them, if not all of them—support this bill, but we are all aware that a number of Tory Members do not. But when the majority supports a legislation, two things are needed: first, a little more courage on the part of Government to go ahead with the second reading. That is exactly why the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier called the attention of the House on this debate. It is to make the Government realize that the Official Languages Act is an issue in which Canadians are very much interested and that most Members of the House, with the exception of course of a few Tory Members, want to adopt this bill.

Madam Speaker, I do not intend to deal with this issue in an overly partisan manner. Because you know me better than that, you realize that I should like first of all to deal with the issue of official languages. But this morning, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Hnatyshyn) and a number of other Government