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AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA

Bilingual Proficiency Requirements

Question by:

The Honourable Claudette Tardif

Thursday, October 27, 2011

THE SENATE

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[*Translation*]

AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA

BILINGUAL PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS

Hon. Claudette Tardif (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, the appointment of a unilingual anglophone auditor general calls into question this government's commitment to the linguistic duality of our country and the application of the Official Languages Act.

Not only will the nominated Auditor General not be able to communicate with the members of the public he meets, but his appointment also calls into question the application of Part V of the Official Languages Act, concerning the language of work. Federal employees and officials who wish to communicate with the Auditor General during working meetings will not be able to do so in French.

How can the minister justify the violation of parts of the Official Languages Act and the lack of respect for the French-speaking citizens of Canada?

[*English*]

Senator LeBreton: Honourable senators, that is an outrageous statement and the actions of this government have proven otherwise. The honourable senator is doing a great disservice to Mr. Ferguson to suggest that he will not be able to perform his functions with regard to both official languages. He did work in New Brunswick. He worked in an officially bilingual province. He was the Auditor General of that province. He was the deputy minister of finance of that province. It is quite a leap to suggest, sight unseen, that he would not be able to deal with his position in both official languages.