

*Official Languages*

• (1610)

[*English*]

An emotional speech? I do not agree. It was an intense speech, but perfectly logical.

[*Translation*]

The hon. member for Scarborough West, added during this television broadcast, and I quote:

[*English*]

I think it is a good thing that such speeches are made in a place like the House of Commons, where they belong.

[*Translation*]

In this internal conflict, I am against such a dissension within the New Democratic Party and on the side of the hon. member for Scarborough West.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, if the House has the patience to listen to me for another three or four minutes, I would like to say why I cannot accept the Social Credit Party proposal. I am referring to the proposal in general and not to the subamendments which were rejected. I think the Standing Orders allow me to comment on some remarks which were made and the idea which was voiced.

I think that the Social Credit Party proposal corresponds exactly to the definition which that party tried to attach to the government's resolution during a debate held on an allotted day, a few weeks ago. It was said at that time that the resolution was neither positive, nor factual nor practical.

I could repeat exactly the same thing.

Sure enough, the hon. member for Champlain and this afternoon the hon. member for Compton (Mr. Latulippe) put forward those two parallel administrations as being worthy, first, from the economic point of view. I took time since last night to ask people who are more knowledgeable than I am about the administrative problems. They told me that compared with what the bilingualism program of this government may cost, the implementation of those parallel structures put forward by members of the Social Credit Party would probably reach in the billions of dollars. Even if it were economical I would like to try and prove that it is not practical. When to promote national unity or solidarity you split the public service from top to bottom I think that you go against those same purposes you are pursuing.

I think that even with parallel structures—because I cannot deny that French Languages Units are to a certain extent parallel structures—the program put forward in the resolution presently before the House should nevertheless be implemented because why should a number of public servants have to become bilingual? The President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury) explained it this morning: if public servants are to be able to work in the official language of their choice we necessarily need to have people in supervisory positions able to communicate in both French and English, that is to say that the same person in that case must know both French and English. This also means that more members of both linguistic communities in Canada will have to become bilingual as the application of that policy is gradually increased.

I would like to point out to the hon. member for Champlain that even Belgium, which faces a linguistic problem

[Mr. Pelletier (Hochelega).]

similar to ours, has established those parallel structures only in a minimum of departments. And why? Because it is a unitary state. We understand, for instance, that in Belgium they have a Department of Dutch Education and a Department of French Education. We understand also that they have a Department of Dutch Cultural Affairs and a Department of French Cultural Affairs and that they have two ministers for the two departments. But, precisely, we are not in a unitary country and the federal system has been established in our country to find a solution to such problems and tensions.

We have provincial departments of education and within those departments in provinces where there are large minorities using another official language, they have developed different structures.

Yesterday, the hon. member for Champlain had a slip of the tongue and that sometimes reflects unconsciousness. He said: Who could blame me for having nursed my mother! All of us have these slips of the tongue and I do not laugh at the hon. member for Champlain when I recall this one but his system seems as impossible to realize as it is surely impossible for the member for Champlain to have nursed his own mother.

To conclude, I would like to say two things. First, that we are about to conclude one phase. I already told the hon. member for Champlain and I say it again, as the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner) noted himself: being French-speaking it is impossible for us not to feel very impatient.

The Leader of the Official Opposition talked yesterday about the scars he gained in his efforts for the French language. But what is threatening us as French-speaking Canadians in this country, is not some scars; but we should fear being flayed alive if we do not have the necessary optimism.

But I think that realism and common sense consist in telling ourselves, about this century of guilty negligence and of injustice as the member for Saint-Hyacinthe called it, that this year we cannot make up for the consequences all of a sudden, that there must be gradual stages. I am also impatient, I have already said it and I will repeat it.

Only if this whole House becomes impatient will we really end up with a fair system. But we must control our legitimate impatience and tell ourselves that in any political matter such objectives are always reached gradually.

Mr. Speaker, I also submit that the step taken with this resolution is an extremely important one. Personally, this is the realistic objective to seek and this is why I think that all members of this House will wish to vote for the resolution, some with minor reservations, and I cannot blame them, I have some myself, others perhaps with serious reservations, and I cannot blame them either because maybe they perceive difficulties to which I am not sensitive myself but I feel that a climate, not of understanding which is an abused word, but of realism and healthy optimism, should preside over the whole remainder of this debate and also the final vote and that this vote should be unanimous to enable us to start working in a climate of trust and, I repeat, unanimity.