

Reflecting some time later on what he had learned, he put down on paper what he himself described as a piece of doggerel:

It is not in devising a system that the fearful dangers lurk:

It is not in devising a system but in making the system work;

For the working out of the system is not in the hands of the great,

But rests on the shoulders of little clerks like Mary and Jane and Kate.

Forty years later, at the writing of his memoirs, he added this comment:

There is a lesson that contemporary politicians can learn from that.

Is that not extremely valid still? It is not the ministers, nor the mandarins within two miles of this building, who will make any of the many systems they devise work. It is not they who will even make Canada work, but it is Bill and Marcel and Edith and Georgette who will make them work.

Let any government, Grit or Tory, this year or next, keep that in mind.

[Translation]

Senator Hicks, who comes from the east, and myself from the centre, see with much satisfaction the new overtures offered by the government to the citizens of the west. I find bewildering that any federal government would have neglected to afford the occidental region of our country all the attention and care it can rightly expect. But perhaps that attention was sufficiently sustained and explicit. For us from central Canada, or for the people of the east, it is sometimes very difficult to understand this feeling of isolation, or remoteness, experienced by the people west of us. I am much relieved therefore in seeing these new efforts to try to remedy this.

I find satisfaction also in the paragraphs of the Speech from the Throne which deal with the agricultural sector announcing the firm intention of the government to remedy without delay the two major ills which plague the agricultural industry since our sales of grain abroad have reached the peak of 1970-1971.

First, there is the problem of transport, storing and handling of grains, an area where some uneasiness developed in 1972; last weekend there was even the resurfacing threat of a strike in Vancouver harbour.

Secondly, the cost of distributing feed grain for cattle producers. Heaven knows how farm associations, provincial governments and federal members of Parliament of all political affiliations, of the province of Quebec and the Atlantic provinces have made representations on the subject in the past two years.

I am clearly under the impression that these questions could have been dealt with sooner and I hope there will be no further delay. I also anticipate the appropriate role that our Standing Committee on Agriculture will play in this regard.

The Speech from the Throne also said:

Parliament will be asked to confirm the basic principles of the Government's program for bilingualism in the Public Service.

And in the next paragraph:

The Government will continue to work in furtherance of the objectives of the Official Languages Act.

Then come details about those measures.

As is so well indicated by the use of two separate paragraphs in the text of the speech, bilingualism in the Public Service is not the whole thing but only a component of cultural bilingualism and the language policy in this country and a component which is not of universal application geographically or otherwise as it would seem some trouble-making newspapermen and headline writers of the English-speaking press have successfully led people to believe.

This program conceived and unveiled fifty years too late was unfortunately, one must admit, announced, put forward and implemented up to now with disheartening clumsiness.

Since the outset and up to last December 14 the main concern was, sometimes in the midst of panic to allay the fears, warranted or not, rather than to make an honest effort to dispel them.

[English]

May I digress here a moment to join our colleagues who have already paid tribute to the memory of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, a great Canadian, a great Prime Minister, and a great "doer" during his short tenure as Prime Minister. I was fortunate in having ready access to him, particularly in the last twelve months preceding his retirement, and I had the utmost respect for him. History may well single him out mostly for having initiated and pushed relentlessly, and with the deepest sincerity, policies recognizing the bilingual and multicultural nature of our country. But Mr. Pearson, like many of us, was perhaps prone to turn a phrase which did not always circumscribe precisely his full intention. Such to my mind was the expression: "No one will suffer . . ."

[Translation]

"Suffering" is a completely subjective expression. What was bound to happen did happen as every one interpreted it his own way whether they were involved or not.

I have always believed and I still do that any policy of this kind had disadvantages and problems which might well be called "suffering" if we are not prepared to show the required good faith and good will. This is a subject which I am familiar with since I have been a bilingual federal public servant myself, immediately before and after World War II.

It is expensive to become bilingual and to remain so at any age. It is costly in terms of money, time, effort and frustration. My compatriots know something about this because they have been paying for it for more than a century.

Essentially, what is aimed at by the bilingual policy in the Public Service, besides providing services in both languages and creating opportunities for unilingual franco-phone public servants, is that the anglophone element