

very young man who had been a Canadian for only eight years I thought this was a great country of two founding races. In our very first caucus held out in that lobby opposite—and this was after 22 years of Liberal government under a distinguished French Canadian prime minister—we decided to bring in bilingual cheques. Cheques were going to be sent to French Canadians in the French language, and so it has been going ever since.

There was no simultaneous translation in this House until the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker), as a first act of his new administration, brought simultaneous translation into this House.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McGrath:** Up to that time a member of parliament coming from a French speaking constituency had to speak in English, or not at all, because he could not be understood in French. That was the kind of linguistic policy we inherited from the Liberal government in 1957. Oh, no, the Liberal government has not cornered the market on language rights, not by a long shot.

**Mr. Jamieson:** Nobody said we had.

**Mr. McGrath:** I will tell the House what the government has cornered the market on—and I listened very carefully to the hon. gentleman. This government has cornered the market on the curse of regional disparity, which has flourished under this administration. It has certainly cornered the market on unemployment, which is at an all-time high in this country. The hon. gentleman quoted statistics indicating that Newfoundland is receiving 60 cents to 65 cents out of every dollar spent from the federal treasury. What a sad reflection that is for a province which is blessed with an abundance of natural resources.

We do not have a government which will introduce policies so that Newfoundland can develop those resources to the fullest and to its own benefit. We have in my province the ongoing curse of regional disparity, from which our people still suffer. The minister nods his head because when he was minister of regional economic expansion he tried very hard, but you cannot make a bad policy work.

DREE was brought in by this government in 1969 after a solemn promise by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) when he went to the Atlantic provinces in 1968 to introduce Marshall Plan type aid to end, once and for all, the curse of regional disparity. Notwithstanding the expenditure of hundreds of millions of dollars not only in Newfoundland but throughout the Atlantic provinces and Quebec, the DREE program has only created record high unemployment. The hon. gentleman, with his characteristic eloquence, can describe a drive through Newfoundland where you can look at magnificent DREE financed schools—and they are good schools—DREE financed fish plants, or drive over DREE financed roads, but if you go a little further you can find the hopelessness of a 25 per cent unemployed work force; you can look into the hopelessness that is represented in the faces of those who have no job

opportunities. That is just as much a threat to the continuing unity of this country as any other issue which can come before this House.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McGrath:** Unemployment is not particularly characteristic to Newfoundland, although we seem to have considerably more than anybody else. We have more than we can take, more than any province can afford to have. We cannot afford that loss in productivity. We cannot afford the social problems which are created by a system which seems to perpetuate unemployment. All you have to do is go into the home of an unemployed family and look at the second generation on unemployment insurance and welfare. That is what concerns me about the future of Canada. However, that is not peculiar to my province. What has happened to the DREE program in the eastern portion of Quebec? Oh, we can probably find DREE financed schools, DREE financed fish plants, and drive over DREE financed roads, but we can also find the second or third highest rate of unemployment in this country.

My leader and members of my party have said in this House that language policy is important, and nobody, but nobody, can doubt for a moment where this party stands on language policy.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McGrath:** There will come a day in this country when these problems are but an unhappy memory, and I hope that day will come soon. When that day comes, people will realize the outstanding contribution to the continuing unity and growth of this country of the hon. member for Halifax (Mr. Stanfield).

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McGrath:** Perhaps it would be well for me to quote from a speech made by the hon. member for Halifax, the former leader of the opposition, on May 16, 1969, when he said, as reported at page 8790 of *Hansard*:

I believe the existence of the two official languages of the two founding peoples of this country has made Canada distinctive and has created a tradition and respect for diversity which also show our appreciation of the nature of the people who have come to Canada from many other lands. Our task is to strengthen their union and our country as it exists. Canada, of course, is not a melting pot but a country which respects diversity.

That was said at a time when the hon. gentleman was taking two hours out from a busy schedule every day to learn, and eventually master, the French language.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McGrath:** One day the country will recognize the outstanding contribution of the hon. member for Halifax.

Nobody can doubt the position of this party. If hon. members sat and listened objectively to what my leader had to say in what I consider to be the outstanding speech of this debate—indeed, the outstanding speech of this session—

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!