

the domicile of the petitioner is Montreal and that therefore it was in order for the case to be dealt with by the parliament of Canada. However, I did feel that we should be aware of this rather strange case that we here are being called upon to deal with, and hon. members know what I think is the logical conclusion to which parliament should come.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time, and referred to the standing committee on miscellaneous private bills.

CONSIDERED IN COMMITTEE—THIRD READING

Bill No. 192, for the relief of Mary Valerie Dorothy Johnston Bromwich.—Mr. Henderson.

ISLAY ISOBEL CAMPBELL JONES

The house resumed, from Friday, May 4, consideration of the motion of Mr. Henderson for the second reading of Bill No. 257, for the relief of Islay Isobel Campbell Jones.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Applewhaite): Is the house ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Applewhaite): Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the motion?

Mr. Knowles: On division.

Motion agreed to on division, bill read the second time and referred to the standing committee on miscellaneous private bills.

CIVIL SERVICE ACT

AMENDMENT TO GIVE PREFERENCE TO BILINGUAL CANDIDATES

Mr. Fernand Girard (Lapointe) moved the second reading of Bill No. 159, to amend the Civil Service Act.

He said: It is a recognized fact that bilingualism is the chief factor which ensures understanding and protects true national unity between the two great peoples who share the noble task of developing our country and making it prosperous.

To have a true appreciation of the great cultural and social contribution made to Canada by our English-speaking compatriots, one must understand their mentality, one must be familiar with their literature and one must have exchanged ideas with them. The best way in which French Canadians may achieve these ends is to learn their language.

The same rule applies in the case of our English-speaking compatriots. If they wish to understand us and appreciate the value of our mentality and of our French culture, they

Civil Service Act

must recognize that they too must practise bilingualism. True bilingualism is the straightest road to understanding, and it cannot be a one-way road.

Bilingualism in Canada is not a conciliatory gesture to ensure understanding; it is not even a question open to discussion. It is our historical vocation; it is a constitutional fact, the principle at the base of confederation. It is not a matter of choice but a constitutional duty to fulfil.

The bill which I am now submitting for the approval of the house does not require that all Canadians be bilingual; it only tends to grant a preference to bilingual applicants in civil service examinations. It would, moreover, fill a need, that bilingual qualifications would henceforth be established by means of examinations. This bill is an invitation to those who enter the Canadian civil service to better adapt themselves to the bicultural character of our Canadian mentality. Such a preference would in no way interfere with the veterans preference now granted by the act but would take second place to it and add a national unity factor to our civil service which is the lifeblood of the nation.

To vote against this bill would be to deny the existence of the two official languages of Canada. To vote against this bill would be to give official approval to the unfortunate slogan: Be bilingual in Quebec and unilingual in the rest of Canada. To vote against this bill would be to strike a hard blow against national unity and force Quebec into isolationism. To vote against this bill would be tantamount to saying to French Canadians that they have made a mistake in learning English and that their group is merely tolerated within confederation.

The growth of true bilingualism among the two main racial groups of Canada has been impeded by the habit of considering these groups on a provincial basis and of wrongly repeating that there are nine English provinces and one French province. This has all too often prevented many of our English speaking compatriots who are well disposed from admitting the necessity of learning French. Such an idea is contradicted by the facts. French-speaking Canadians are distributed in all provinces and in the country as a whole in almost equal number to English speaking Canadians.

According to the most recent government statistics, racial groups in Canada are distributed thus: Canadians of English origin, 47.9 per cent, Canadians of French origin, 30.8 per cent, and Canadians of various other races having emigrated to Canada account for the rest. Canadian unity will be a fact when there are no longer French