The first is an amendment which would propose that the operations of this Bill become active and take effect, and that the operations of the new Canadian Heritage Languages Institute be considered not at the fourth anniversary but at the third anniversary of its operation.

Clearly, from what I have said about our inability to have proper parliamentary consideration of how effectively this institute is begun, it becomes all the more imperative to have an early review of that institute. We all know that Parliaments tend to run in about four-year cycles. We all know that if this Bill actually takes effect, it is all too likely that the fourth anniversary review would coincide very closely with the next federal general election. That makes it all the more imperative that the review to be carried out be undertaken after three years rather than four.

I think government Members could recognize the value, for the good government of Canada, of having the operations of this Canadian Heritage Languages Institute reviewed after three years, so that there might be a possibility in the next Parliament for reconsidering what we are doing in such a hurried, hasty, and unconsidered way in the late days of this particular Parliament.

As far as Motion No. 6 is concerned, we have a proposal for the report of the institute to be presented, not simply to Parliament but to the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism for consideration. That seems to be a very useful amendment to the Bill.

We have not seen in the first three and three-quarter years of this Government very much of value in the area of multiculturalism. We had wasted days and wasted opportunities time after time. Practically the only useful thing this Government did in the first three and three-quarter years of its mandate in the area of multiculturalism was to move in this House for the establishment of the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, which was done at the end of June, 1985.

The standing committee has begun to do useful work. I suppose all Members would agree. Obviously I have a certain self-interest in asserting that as one of the ongoing Members, the New Democratic representative on it. I leave to others agreement on the value of the committee, but I would point Members to the report issued by the committee last year, at the end of June, 1987, as one indication of the hard work members of the committee have done. More of our recommendations have been taken up in the last weeks, really, than we had expected in the spring when the multiculturalism Bill came before the House without any provision for institutional changes. Suddenly the Government has decided in these last weeks to establish a full-fledged Minister and Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship, as it happens. That shows that the Government has far more acceptance of the work of the standing committee than we had been led earlier to expect the committee would have the satisfaction of seeing.

Given this evidence of the work of one more standing committee of this House, in this particular instance, I think the case for a review by the standing committee of the work of the Canadian Heritage Languages Institute on an annual basis is a good one. It does not really take very much argument to say that they are in the standing committee where so much of the detailed work in practically every area of this House is done by Members who develop expertise, have a real concern, and work together across partisan lines. Certainly that was true in our committee.

Although the Hon. Member for Grey—Simcoe (Mr. Mitges) with whom I spoke earlier this day is not in his seat at the moment, he deserves commendation for the generally non-partisan way in which the committee operated, pressing multiculturalism and the achievement of the practices of government to ensure that the old policy statement and our Canadian commitment to it became a reality. That work in the committee is the best basis for making the argument for committee consideration of the annual reports which the Canadian Heritage Languages Institute would provide.

I speak very firmly in support of these two amendments in a positive sense, after my strong and very critical and really bitter attack on the treatment given members of the legislative committee. Opposition members particularly received bad treatment from those government members who chose to abuse the liberties of Parliament, who chose to violate the conventions of the House and ride roughshod not just over parliamentarians but over everyone in the country involved with heritage languages who deserve the right to comment on and to criticize the Bill in order to ensure that what we do here this day, this week, next week, or whenever it is concluded, is properly done.

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, we can certainly feel in the air that things are running down, but I would like to take the opportunity to make a few comments about the proposed amendments, specifically perhaps a little about the Bill in general.

It is time for the Government of Canada to support a Canadian Heritage Languages Institute. One of the hidden strengths of the country is the capacity of Canadians as a global group to speak almost every language spoken in the world today. Our immigration policies over time have brought to Canada, as landed immigrants and citizens, people from all four corners of this globe and from every nation of the world.

• (1240)

If we do not act and put public resources into the retention of those languages, we will lose the advantages that we have in terms of world trade, our influence on world peace, and our influence for a better environment on a global basis. We get some of that influence because of our heritage, our heritage languages, and the capacity of Canadians to speak with everybody on the globe. It is in the context of a better environment, a better future for people around the world, our capacity to help reduce poverty around the world, and of our capacity as a nation to contribute to the peace process around the world