

Government Organization

can I accept his assertion, Mr. Chairman, which I find more serious, that the situation has existed for a 100 years.

If, in a 100 years, people had not obtained justice, they would have risen and then bilingualism—

[*English*]

The Chairman: Order, please. The hon. member for Trois-Rivières.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Mongrain: Mr. Chairman, I notice that the hon. member for Lotbinière is thin-skinned today because I tried to tell him that in as friendly a fashion as possible, by teasing him. I should like to point out to him that it is possible that in this house some hon. members are not bilingual, but unlike those of whom I am now speaking, they are not clamouring for bilingualism, accusing those who are not bilingual of discrimination. That is the difference. Now, I continue my remarks.

Mr. Chairman, in the last 5, 6, 7, 8 or 10 years, the federal government has made a marked effort, especially in the last three or four years, to promote bilingualism. I feel that when bilingualism is being discussed and it is demanded that a clause be added to all the bills specifying that a certain percentage of bilingual employees is a must, that is where there is discrimination, and dishonesty, because of the circumstances.

The government has set up language schools.

It grants bonuses to bilingual public servants and has appointed superintendents whose responsibility it is to supervise the way this principle of bilingualism is followed in all departments.

I repeat that the implementation of that policy takes time. I assume the hon. member for Lotbinière would not call for the dismissal by the government of all non-bilingual employees, for it would certainly be inhuman. The change will probably take place over a certain number of years.

I could moreover tell the hon. member for Lotbinière why we do not find in the higher spheres of the public service the number of bilingual or French-speaking public servants we would like to have there.

He knows as well as I do—since he is a learned man—that for a 100 years, our institutions of secondary education trained their pupils for the priesthood, or to become notaries or lawyers and neglected to turn out economists, sociologists, engineers, in brief, experts, while during that same century, the

[*Mr. Fortin.*]

Anglo-Saxons in this country, either through immigration or otherwise, increased in their midst the number of such experts who simply monopolized the positions. And all of a sudden, we realized that they made up the great majority.

Cursing them or accusing them of discrimination will not solve the problem but we should rather qualify ourselves properly and apply for such coveted employment. The hon. member for Lotbinière knows that Quebec needs specialized technicians and therefore wants to keep them at home.

Moreover, the Anglo-Saxons are perhaps not by nature too anxious to emigrate, but the fact remains that more and more of them are coming over every year as the hon. member for Lotbinière knows.

He knows, for instance, that the general manager of the C.B.C. is a French Canadian. He knows that Air Canada has a French-speaking president and that all the other employees are bilingual. He knows, also, that the Chief of Staff of the Canadian Forces as well as a number of deputy ministers are French-speaking.

The hon. member is concerned about the problem of the library at the Printing Bureau. Maybe bilingualism is not the only problem in this connection.

Since I am not permitted to elaborate any further on the subject, I shall let the minister do so in due time. However, to say this problem is merely a matter of bilingualism is tantamount to fanaticism, Mr. Chairman.

May I suggest to the hon. member for Lotbinière—since we both agree on the principle that there are not enough French-speaking Canadians in key positions and since we want to settle the matter—that we should put an end to idle talk and to charges of discrimination where others are concerned. Let us simply do as I am doing in my own riding.

When, for instance, there happens to be a top position vacant in the public service, I let my riding know, I advertise it by radio, I mention it in my lectures and I contact personally those in my riding or area who seem to me qualified and ask them to apply and sit for the examinations. Quite often, I can take pride in the fact that people answer, apply and succeed.

The next few years will see more improvement in this field than we have witnessed in the past 100 years. I must admit there is some kind of discrimination, today. We find it