

Official Languages

one of the founding peoples and we want to be treated, throughout the country, throughout the ten provinces, like other Canadians and, in particular, like the English-speaking Canadians whose equals we want to be.

We have been tolerant, but at this time the young people of my province and even the middle-aged and the older people protest against that kind of prejudice which excluded from the civil service our French-speaking people because they had an inadequate knowledge of the English language, and prevented them from being promoted. Now those times are gone by. We have taken the trouble to learn English and we want to have access to those promotions. We demand that all the others do as we did. Let them learn the second language if they want to be paid with the money collected from our taxes. We have been thinking about it for a hundred years.

We have been persecuted and not more than 25 years ago we were still scornfully urged to "Speak White"! We have borne that for 200 years, Mr. Speaker.

When our number was sufficient in some provinces, when, after Canada was ceded to England, we were promised that our sacred rights would be respected, we had to finance our schools with our own money after paying taxes for the English schools which were closed to us.

For 200 years, we were kept outside the public service which was financed with the taxes we were paying. We were forced to learn English and we did learn it.

None the less we have dealt well by the English Canadians. We have served in the wars fought by Canada in which many of our sons gave their life.

If at the present time separatism is prevailing in Quebec, the fault lies with some fanatics who oppose this bill, as they opposed the adoption of the Canadian flag, who object to French Canadians being put on an equal footing with all other citizens. They are the agitators and the fomenters of separatism in this country. We are trying to get across to them that the young people will not be treated as colonists, slaves or second class citizens. And those who refuse to understand it might bear the responsibility of seeing the fabric of confederation being torn apart and this country divided into several factions.

When I see them rise and protest against the excesses of our separatists, against the

excesses of those who, in our country, are showing prejudice—there are some everywhere—and who demand integral unilingualism, or who do not want equal treatment for English-speaking and French-speaking students in the Quebec schools, I feel that they should be the last ones to denounce such a situation, because they are responsible for it or because they are the sons of those who are responsible.

We, in the province of Quebec, who are federalists, who are not afraid to show our convictions and our principles anywhere in Canada, who have for many generations respected all the Canadians living in our country but who did not speak our language, we, in Quebec, who forced ourselves to learn English, even in areas where we did not need to, have the right today to ask the remainder of the country to respect us and to follow the example which we have given for 200 years.

This is why, Mr. Speaker, I object to all those amendments which are mere window-dressing to try to prevent the passage of that bill which is quite relevant but perhaps somewhat late, as stated by the hon. member for Champlain.

And when I hear the hon. member laughing and lightly discussing the matter, say that it is because of such narrow-mindedness that we will continue to see those divisions in Canada.

If Quebec ever separated from the rest of the country, the hon. member and all those who are like him would be held responsible and would have to account for their actions to the rest of the country.

[*English*]

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I rise to say a few words at this time partly as a result of the interjection made a few moments ago by the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner). The hon. member suggested that because I was not here when the vote on second reading of the bill took place I was afraid to put my position on the record. For the information of the hon. member may I tell him I was not here because the premier of the Conservative government of Manitoba saw fit to call an election, and as a citizen of Manitoba I thought I ought to play a small part in that election.

I spoke on this bill on May 26, and at that time I made my position very clear. I want to quote one paragraph—

Mr. Horner: You are supposed to be speaking to the amendment.