

Official Languages

as I have before at other stages, but the administration of the bill is a matter of concern to me and to many Canadians. I have heard this from many people in my own part of the country. In my view far too much latitude is given under this bill with regard to the administration of the regulations by the commissioner. The commissioner is given powers such as were wielded by men like Torquemada and Robespierre. The hon. member for York-Scarborough (Mr. Stanbury) may shake his head all he wants, but this is my view of it, and I am also entitled to my view.

The editorial in today's *Globe and Mail*, a newspaper which is usually uncritical of the government to say the least, is critical of the government in this respect. However, I will not elaborate on that because I am sure that everyone either has read the editorial or is able to do so. The power given under this bill to the commissioner is very great. In my view some of the terms of this bill may well violate the Bill of Rights. The fears that many people have regarding how the provisions in this bill will be implemented will certainly not be alleviated in any way by the government's refusal to accept any substantial amendments from the opposition. A few minutes ago the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) pointed out that the purpose of most of the amendments put forward by members of the opposition was to try to improve the bill and to get it to work. However, the amendments were met with an adamant rejection by the government. Despite the eloquent, smooth and slick explanations given by the Minister of Justice many of us were not entirely convinced that these amendments should not be accepted, especially the right to appeal.

● (6:00 p.m.)

Additional worry in this regard has been caused by conflicting statements and remarks made by members of the government. As the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) has pointed out, the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Côté) makes one statement, and other ministers make statements of a different kind. The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) paraphrasing, as it were, a former Queen of France who lost her head, said: If they are not bilingual let them run elevators. Or something to that effect. Then, one of the heads of the public service division said that by the

early 'seventies everyone must be fluent in both languages to obtain employment or promotion. No amount of explanation afterwards will allay suspicion caused by remarks of this kind. I am reminded of the famous speech of Lady MacBeth during her sleep-walking scene in which she said: "All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand."

An hon. Member: Six o'clock.

Mr. Nesbitt: I heard someone say "six o'clock". I need about one minute more.

An hon. Member: Carry on.

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member have unanimous consent to continue beyond six o'clock?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Nesbitt: Another thing which has caused concern to many of us is the unfortunate attitude of the Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier) during the conduct of this debate. It has not done much to alleviate our anxieties. Nor has his peculiar use of mathematics in a C.B.C. interview the other Thursday evening. He said that if you were French speaking alone you would be eligible for 25 per cent of the jobs available, but if you were English speaking alone you would be eligible for 75 per cent of the jobs available. This makes 100 per cent. But what happens to all the others who have to be bilingual? I do not know where they come in. This kind of odd explanation does not reassure people at all.

In conclusion, I will simply say this: I hope the bill works. I think most hon. members wish it to work. But there is certainly a great deal of apprehension in the country at large as to the manner in which it may be made to work. I, for one, hope my fears and suspicions with regard to the administration of this bill and those who will be chosen to administer it, are unfounded. I certainly wish to enter one caveat in connection with my vote when I vote in favour of the measure. I hope the suspicions which are rampant in most parts of the country today are unfounded and that the government will administer the bill in good faith as has been promised.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

At six o'clock the house took recess.