

*Official Languages*

legislation. Therefore it seems to me it is simple and elementary logic, if one is to take that position with regard to those in the public service, and inasmuch as clause 36(3) of the bill says that the institutions of Canada include in addition to the federal public service, the R.C.M.P. and the armed forces, that protection for these other groups ought to be included in clause 40(4). If the saving clause is necessary at all—there is some doubt about it but I rather think it is necessary—I suggest it ought to be applied to all three groups that have been mentioned in clause 36(3).

Another argument the minister has against the motion of the hon. member for Cardigan is that in his view it would make new law rather than simply write in a saving provision. I find it difficult to follow that argument because all the hon. member for Cardigan asks is that these other personnel, those in the R.C.M.P. and the armed forces, be given the protection of the merit principle as required by the Public Service Employment Act or any other act of the parliament of Canada respectively applicable to the Canadian forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and so on. Surely that is clear. The hon. member for Cardigan is not writing new law. He is not writing a new merit principle. He is not saying there shall be for the R.C.M.P. or the armed forces a merit principle they do not now have. He is saying that in so far as they have the protection of the merit principle under some of the sections of the Public Service Employment Act or any other act of the parliament of Canada that is on the books, that protection shall be guaranteed to them under the provisions of this bill.

As I say, in this case we are not arguing with the minister over something that he is dead against. As a matter of fact, as he himself said it was he on behalf of the government who brought in the amendment to the bill which resulted in new subclause 4. If my colleague the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) had not had to leave, I am sure he would be standing on his feet saying he had something to say about urging it to be brought in.

**Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton):** No, Mr. Speaker. I had considerable co-operation from the hon. member for York South, for which I am grateful, but this amendment was introduced by me and my colleagues as a result of the representations I received while I was in western Canada.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** I will let the hon. member for York South

speak for himself when he returns. It may be with regard to some related clause that he was active, as I am sure he was. At any rate, this is a principle which the minister has accepted. He is the father of the amendment which put subclause 4 into clause 40. Since he was prepared to agree that it should be there for the sake of those in the public service generally, I believe the same protection ought to be provided to those other two groups that are referred to as being included in the institutions of the parliament or government of Canada in clause 36(3).

As I say, we are not arguing with the minister over something to which he is violently opposed. We are discussing a matter of detail in an area where there is a wide measure of agreement. We know what we are seeking. I think the minister ought to consider this matter and should be willing to accept the amendment now before us in the name of the hon. member for Cardigan.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. René Matte (Champlain):** Mr. Speaker, as far as this motion is concerned, I should like first to clear up a few things which, I think, are tremendously important.

In my opinion the amendment contains certain assumptions which we precisely want to get rid of, in this country, because they seem to convey the feeling that French Canadians are unable to assume certain functions, particularly in the Canadian Armed Forces and in the R.C.M.P. In fact, one would believe that within these two organizations, French-speaking Canadians should not be granted too generous a share.

If we analyze the reasons which brought about the introduction of a bill on official languages, we notice that it is precisely because it has never been agreed that French-speaking Canadians should have their fair share in the country's administration.

And when we seriously consider what this bill stands for, we feel that it is quite useless.

● (4:30 p.m.)

Occasionally, competence in a given field makes an individual bilingual. I should like to illustrate this by giving a few examples.

In a bilingual district, in an area where the great majority is either French-speaking or English-speaking, if the head of the R.C.M.P. cannot understand the other language he is an incompetent. This amendment, just as the original clause of the bill, seems to minimize the importance of this. Is there anything more