

*Official Languages Act*

1984 to 70 per cent today. The Federal Court went from 53 per cent to 57 per cent. The Law Reform Commission went from 65 per cent to 71 per cent, while the offices of the Chief Electoral Officer went from 84 per cent to 88 per cent. The staff at the Veterans Allowance Board went from 33 per cent Francophone to 87 per cent Francophone. Francophone employees at the office of the Commissioner of Official Languages went from 82 per cent to 85 per cent.

Is this fairness? Would this Bill have repercussions the way it is written on these statistics and more? I ask Hon. Members to think about that. This is what has occurred without the dictatorial powers that we would give the Commissioner of Official Languages above the Government and above the law.

The Official Languages Act states "bilingualism where numbers warrant". This wording is to be changed to a "significant demand". What does this mean? Does it mean that 20 Francophones from outside Quebec can complain once a month to the Official Languages Commissioner, that an airline, an officer, a company is not toeing the mark as the Bill is written and interpreted by the Commissioner? Will it be a case of, "Give me the service or I will take you to court"? There would be no recourse to take a person back to court, none in the least.

I have a letter in my hand which I received from the Commissioner of Official Languages some time ago. In this letter he brings to my attention a complaint which he received to the effect that my office provided unilingual telephone reception during the morning of March 14. Although the Official Languages Act applies only to the institutions of the Government of Canada and not to Members of Parliament he takes it for granted that I would wish to be made aware of complaints received by his office and to concern myself with my staff.

From 1979 until to date I have not received one letter written in French from a constituent of Simcoe South. In 1981 I received 10 letters written in French from inmates of Laval Prison in Quebec in answer to a questionnaire dealing with capital punishment which I issued. In February of 1988 I received a letter from Jacques Marchand, of the French-Canadian Association of Ontario. Not one constituent has ever phoned me and spoken in the French language. Yet this Bill will change the face of these things. I ask everyone to read it carefully.

I now refer to an article written by Frank Howard which appeared in his column "Bureaucrats" on February 2, 1988. He writes about the former director of Chancellery of Canadian Orders and Decorations at Government House. He was reported to have caused a commotion because he drafted a letter to the Queen, so to speak, from Her Excellency, so to speak, with respect to some matter of heraldry. The Governor General, a disciple and an appointed head of state, refused to send the letter in English. The Director found himself to be *persona non grata* and he now finds himself in the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

I recently sent my householder out in a bilingual format. I noted in it that the average cost of an English only householder is \$4,011.23. The bilingual householder cost \$7,468.78. I included a questionnaire in the householder to which I received 1,973 replies. I asked the following question:

Do you favour bilingual service for all federal government departments and crown corporations?

(a) For communities of 5,000 (eg. Toronto, etc.) or more whose mother tongue is French.

Thirty-three per cent replied yes; 59 per cent replied no; and 8 per cent were undecided.

The second part of the question states:

(b) For communities with 50 or more who request bilingual service for 12 consecutive months?

Sixteen per cent replied yes; 71 per cent replied no; and 4 per cent were undecided.

The next question I asked in the questionnaire was:

Do you wish to receive my Householder as bilingual in future?

Fourteen per cent replied yes; 82 per cent replied no; and 4 per cent were undecided.

The next question I asked was:

Do you favour compulsory bilingualism for the Province of Ontario?

Eleven per cent replied yes; 85 per cent replied no; and 4 per cent were undecided.

I have in my hand an article which appeared in *The Ottawa Citizen* on January 27, 1988, written by Keith Spicer, the former Commissioner of Official Languages. He stated:

The new law's more legalistic and coercive approach may put at risk the old gentle, persuasive ombudsman approach to language rights—

That is something which we all accept and champion. He went on to state:

—Quebeckers are linguistically secure with Bill 101 and broadly convinced that the old Official Languages Act has worked; only French-speakers outside Quebec and Ottawa's language administrators really seem eager for a stronger law;

Amen, Madam Speaker.

In 1981 we received the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. As has been pointed out time and again by the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Assiniboine (Mr. McKenzie) and by myself, is there anywhere in the Charter which protects you, Madam Speaker, or me from discrimination by reason of language? I will tell Hon. Members that there is not. There is no provision for property rights. There are notwithstanding clauses. We have problems before the House with respect to abortion because of this imperfect document. I am proud to say that I voted against it.

In 1987 we had the Meech Lake Accord. Bill 101 was already in place in the Province of Quebec as a result of our good friend René Lévesque. For all intents and purposes that made Quebec unilingually French. There are no English signs. When Premier Bourassa said that he would relax that law,