

*Financial Administration Act*

travellers' cheques and other instruments issued by a department of Her Majesty's government. This is no revolutionary change that could endanger the nation's balance or the government's stability.

This is merely an administrative arrangement designed on the one hand to do justice to all Canadians and, on the other hand, to ensure recognition of certain conditions, the existence of which has long been admitted by our people.

Before concluding my remarks, I also take this opportunity to ask that the government try to remedy a situation which has always existed, especially under the former administration, and to ensure that all signs and markings appearing on public buildings in Canada and abroad are bilingual.

I ask the house to adopt this bill.

(Text):

**Mr. John Pratt (Jacques Cartier-Lasalle):** This perennial question of bilingualism has arisen again this year and I rise again to speak in support of it. I spoke in favour of it last year at which time I supported the principle of bilingualism on cheques and other documents. My point is this. If it may make many people happy to have such bilingualism and if it makes very few if any unhappy to have it, then why not have it?

As an English speaking member I see no reason to object to the use of bilingual cheques and other documents in this country. We already have bilingual stamps. We also already have bilingual currency. In this house we have installed a bilingual system of simultaneous translation. Apparently no one has suffered from these innovations. Why be afraid of bilingual cheques and other documents? I believe sincerely that the existing friendly relations between the French speaking citizens and the English speaking citizens of this country would be improved even more if we granted this simple request.

Most Canadians across this country by now are quite accustomed to seeing bilingual stamps and bilingual currency. After the first stage of novelty wore off a few days after the introduction of such documents I am sure they would be almost subconsciously accepted as a matter of course.

Our French speaking fellow citizens, however, would be highly gratified and highly pleased at this recognition of the essential basic facts of the agreement of confederation. Unfortunately there still exists in some quarters, both French and English, a groundless fear of granting any increased recognition to each other's native tongue. I am sure there would be much less objection from either side if a secondary language on public stamps and currency happened to be, for instance, Latin

or Greek. At the present stage of progress in this country this secondary language would probably be accepted quietly as cultural or intellectual gentility.

In my own riding of Jacques Cartier-Lasalle I am happy and proud to say that everything is bilingual. We now have in that riding a population which is about 70 per cent English speaking and 30 per cent French speaking, as far as I can say until the next census is taken. Our newspapers, street signs and so on are all bilingual. The children playing together in the street or in the parks or playgrounds are bilingual. We accept these things in Jacques Cartier-Lasalle without second thought, as a matter of course, as a matter of plain, ordinary, everyday living.

There is one point which I have mentioned previously and which I should like to stress once again. When documents are bilingual I fully believe they should be written in good French and in good English and not just in a poor literal translation of either. To my mind a poor translation is even more of an insult than one could consider any innocent omission of either language to be. Any English speaking person who may feel strange when he is first faced with the preponderance of the French language in Quebec should try to put himself or herself in the place of our French speaking fellow citizens who never see their native language in other parts of this country.

I most sincerely hope that some day everyone in Canada will understand and speak both languages so that we may better understand each other and each other's aspirations. I therefore fully support the principle of this bill.

(Translation):

**Mr. Dupuis:** Mr. Speaker, as regards the printing of cheques in both English and French, I can say that the majority of the people are in favour of it—

(Text):

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

(Translation):

**Mr. Heward Graffey (Brome-Missisquoi):** Mr. Speaker, as member for Brome-Missisquoi, my opinion is that we must support this important bill. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I am asking myself a question. Since we are discussing a bill, why do we not simply proceed by way of an administrative measure?

Here in Canada we have two official languages. Our paper money is bilingual. Why then should not our cheques also be bilingual?

Under the circumstances, would it not be simpler to make use of the administrative machinery?