

*The Address—Mr. M. A. Dionne*

However, I should like to ask members of the House to go back to the debates on bilingualism in 1968. At that time the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner), the Prime Minister, my leader, all leaders and most members who spoke on the Official Languages Bill adopted the very necessary principle in that bill, but the understanding was that there would be institutional bilingualism and not necessarily individual bilingualism. That is not merely a semantic difference. I believe in and I voted for the right of any person, whose tongue is either English or French, to be able to communicate or correspond with any bureau of the federal government in either native tongue.

The shift, however, has gone from institutional bilingualism as such. For instance, we might take the example of the unemployment insurance office in the Annapolis Valley where there were bilingual districts when I was the member for Digby-Annapolis-Kings. Let us suppose the language composition was 80-10. Obviously a federal institution to serve that area should be staffed roughly in the same ratio. This does not mean that every person in that office should be bilingual, because that would be an impossibility, just as it would be very difficult in any area outside the central part of this land. I say this same situation is applicable across the country.

In the west where there are other language groups, such as German or Ukrainian, a quota system is being established so that there are people available to service different language groups at federal offices, whatever those offices might be. I notice that the former President of the Treasury Board is present today. I think he has a dual ministry now. I heard him say first that there would be red circling of 25,000 positions. Then later he said that there might be 50,000. Then again he admitted he was not sure how many.

Then, having said that, the minister said the easy thing. He said that after all since there were 50,000 positions in the public service one should not really complain about 4,000 or 5,000 of them. But when the designations and red circling involved bilingual positions, complaints were heard. I think the shift should be reversed.

In conclusion may I say that in my opinion Bill 22 is substantively bad. We may unfortunately see the benchmark of real linguistic development in this land because Bill 22, as it presently stands, puts the lie to the Prime Minister's campaign in 1968 when he refused to accept that there were two nations, and misrepresented our deux nation position.

**Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi):** Madam Speaker, since this is the first time I have risen in my place to address this chamber I wish to take this opportunity to offer my congratulations to the Speaker on his elevation to that position. I want to assure the Chair that at all times it will have my co-operation in its performance of the arduous duties that lie ahead. I should like to ask the forbearance of this House until I have become familiar with its rules and procedures.

I wish also to congratulate the mover and the seconder of the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne for the masterful job they did in their maiden speeches in this House. Through you, Madam Speaker, on behalf of myself and my constituents, I should like to express my pleasure

[Mr. Nowlan.]

at the progress His Excellency the Governor General is making in his convalescence. We wish him a speedy and full recovery.

One of the best known public figures in our nation is the dean of this House, the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker). I want to tell him how pleased I am to be here to hear him and watch him perform in this House. While I do not often find myself in agreement with his opinions I know he holds and expresses them with conviction. For that attribute, and for his dedication and service to our country and its well being, he has my respect and admiration. May I express to him and to his loyal and gracious wife my wishes for many more years of health and happiness.

I should also like to express my admiration for one other member of this House before I get to the main part of my maiden speech. I refer to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles). He is known across the land as the embodiment of what a parliamentarian is supposed to be. He has made himself the formal expert on the House itself. I shall not hesitate to call on him for advice in trying to understand how the House functions because I must confess that at the present time it is rather puzzling to me.

● (1650)

I also want to express my great joy at becoming a member of the House, which I consider to be the noblest of Canadian institutions. It is an honour for which I must express gratitude to our party and its leader, the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). But, most of all, I must express my gratitude to the electors of Northumberland-Miramichi for their expression of confidence in me to represent them in parliament. The people of my constituency are well known for their friendliness and hardiness, and it is indeed my privilege to be their representative here.

The constituency which I represent occupies much of the watershed of the Miramichi river and its tributaries, as well as the parishes of Carleton and Acadieville in Kent County, New Brunswick. The Miramichi river is famous the world over for its abundance of fishing opportunity, particularly for Atlantic salmon. Because of the importance of the fishery to the economic wellbeing of my constituents I am very pleased that the Prime Minister has, in fulfillment of an election promise, appointed a Minister of State responsible for Fisheries (Mr. Leblanc), and I am particularly gratified that the position is occupied by a fellow New Brunswicker.

The hon. member for Westmorland-Kent is well known for his ability, forthrightness and integrity. He has a difficult task to perform in devising policies that will answer the increasing demands of our population and those of the rest of the world for consumption of fish and fish products, and at the same time conserve fish stocks for future generations. In my judgment, that is an essential part of his mandate, but it is no easy task. I wish to congratulate my colleague and assure him of my support and co-operation.

I am also gratified that the federal government has undertaken a hydraulic study of the Miramichi river and bay to determine the engineering and economic feasibility