

Official Languages
AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at 8 p.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that a message has been received from the Senate informing this House that the Senate have passed Bill C-202, an act to provide incentives for the development of productive employment opportunities in regions of Canada determined to require special measures to facilitate economic expansion and social adjustment, without any amendment.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

PROVISION RESPECTING STATUS AND USE—
APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSIONER, ETC.

The house resumed consideration of Bill C-120, respecting the status of the official languages of Canada, as reported (with amendments) from the Special Committee on the Official Languages Bill, and motion No. 8 (Mr. Horner).

[*Translation*]

Mr. C.-A. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, I was saying just before recess that the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) was not acceptable to this house because it goes against the principles of the bill, and renders void the purpose of clause 40. In fact, it says that the languages bill should be amended by adding subclause 5 to clause 40.

Clause 40, which already has four subclauses, proves that the minister and the government are very tolerant, because first there is the power to postpone, or to defer in some cases, the implementation of the act. This is what the bill says:

40. (1) Where upon the submission of any Minister it is established to the satisfaction of the Governor in Council that the immediate application of any provision of this Act to any department or other institution of the Parliament or Government of Canada (hereinafter in this section called an "authority") or in respect of any service provided or made available by it

(a) would unduly prejudice the interests of the public served by the authority, or

(b) would be seriously detrimental to the good government of the authority, employer and employee relations or the effective management of its affairs, the Governor in Council may by order defer or suspend the application of any such

[The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard).]

provision to the authority or in respect of any such service for such period, not exceeding sixty months from the coming into force of this Act, as the Governor in Council deems necessary or expedient.

I think that if the hon. member had very carefully read clause 40 of the bill, he would not have even thought of moving this amendment.

And, in the following paragraph, we can read the following under the terms of order and directions to ensure an early application.

(2) Any order made under this section may contain such directions and be subject to such terms and conditions as the Governor in Council deems appropriate to ensure the earliest possible application of any deferred or suspended provision provided for in the order, and in addition may prescribe different periods, not exceeding in any case the maximum period provided for under subsection (1), for different operations carried on or services performed or made available by the authority, to or in respect of which the application of any such provision is deferred or suspended.

Mr. Speaker, I think that in all regions throughout Canada, the legislator has provided for all the exceptional cases which might arise to afford that advantage, for instance, to a constituency without a single French Canadian, in the same way as we might do in the province of Quebec, in parishes and in ridings where not a single English Canadian is to be found. Nevertheless, we publish all court judgments in French and in English, even if the English provinces have never done so and have never adjusted to that full bilingualism.

We find the law very permissive because—as I said this afternoon—it establishes once and for all that bilingualism must be respected all across Canada.

The hon. member says in his amendment that on grounds alone of inadequate acquaintance with either of the official languages, an applicant for employment in the Public Service cannot be denied employment provided that he has declared his intention and willingness to learn the other language.

Those are the very intentions we want to exclude from the legislation. We are living in the century of realities and the period of good intentions has gone by. We have endured the good intentions of the other group for two hundred years, and I think that now is the time, more than ever, to come back to today's realities in Canada, that is to bilingualism as is now required by conditions prevailing in Canada.

I now want to congratulate all the groups in this house who have made progress in that direction these last years, because the vote on