

*Designation of Nova Scotia*

I would therefore reserve any final decision on that to see whether there is a wide scope of endorsement of the private Member's Bill. If the province itself wants this to come forward, hopefully it will endorse this. Perhaps it will pass a provincial Act and petition the federal Government. It would be interesting to see all the provincial Members sign a petition and send it to the House of Commons to be presented as a petition in the House of Commons. If some Act of that magnitude did come forward, the House of Commons would have to consider very seriously the representations being made.

As I indicated earlier, until something of that nature happens, I think we must derogate from the bilingual nature of this country, albeit improper nouns, with reticence. I would hope this matter will receive more consideration before it comes back to the House of Commons.

I do appreciate and am thankful, as I believe all Canadians are, that there is freedom of speech and of ideas in the House of Commons. Members can present their ideas in the form of a Bill which may get accepted on the first, second or third attempt, or may never get accepted. It is a right which private Members have. I hope that in the foreseeable future many private Members will take advantage of the opportunity to raise possible controversial matters. I think it is good for us.

• (1740)

**Mr. Boudria:** This is supposed to be relevant.

**Mr. Dick:** I think it is good for the House of Commons. Bill C-201 is a clear example of a Member introducing a Bill about which he undoubtedly feels strongly. It is obviously very controversial as evidenced by some of the comments from the two speakers from the Official Opposition.

**Ms. Copps:** It is embarrassing.

**Mr. Dick:** I do not find it embarrassing.

**Ms. Copps:** Let us vote on it, then.

**Mr. Dick:** If the Member is able to stick around here long enough, she might even find out how the rules work in this place. They are quite different from those in Ontario.

**Mr. Parry:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would ask and entreat you to bring the Hon. Member for Lanark-Renfrew-Carleton (Mr. Dick) to order. His speech has deteriorated entirely into vague generalities.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member obviously does not know the ruling in *Beauchesne* which indicates that one does not have to be anything less than vague to be relevant.

**Mr. Hovdebo:** We are even helping you out.

**Mr. Dick:** I appreciate that. I was rather hoping that the Hon. Member would make a longer intervention. However, seeing that he did not wish to make a longer intervention, I will have to continue with some vague generalities about the Bill, which is very interesting for our first private Members' Bill.

Since this is not a long Bill, I cannot spend much time going into its numerous clauses.

However, our country has increased its use of the two official languages so much in the last 20 years, that I believe there would have to be a wider consensus before we could proceed with something which I believe derogates from our most recent past. Perhaps this issue could be considered more fully together with the province involved. If it wishes to change its name, perhaps it could bring some evidence to the attention of the federal Government to show that it is taken very seriously by the entire population of Nova Scotia.

Although I have some time remaining, I am sure other Members would like to participate in this debate on this intriguing private Members' Bill. Therefore, I would like to give them that opportunity.

**Mr. Al Girard (Restigouche):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member proposes that the name of Nova Scotia be the official designation of that Province in both official languages. No doubt, there are practical reasons for such a proposal, the most obvious being the administrative simplicity of a single name which does not need to be translated from one language to the other.

There is also the appearance that one of our official languages, that is, French, is being slighted by the removal of the French name "Nouvelle Écosse" which is a name that has been officially used since France ceded Acadia to the British Crown in the 18th century.

The Government, through the Official Languages Program of the Secretary of State, is making a great effort to promote the equality of the two official languages.

[*Translation*]

People are what really matters to us in the Secretary of State. To foster a legitimate national pride, we are seeking to help Canadians gain a better understanding and appreciation of Canada, its history, cultures and traditions. In fact, our activities affect almost all Canadians.

Canada is an officially bilingual country, French and English having an equal status enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms which was promulgated in 1982.

The Charter, however, does not limit the power of Parliament and the legislatures to further the progression toward equality of status or use of French and English.

The fundamental objective of the Canadian government's policy is to reinforce the equal status of French and English and to contribute to the development of the two linguistic groups in Canada. In other words, the government wishes to see the right to use either of both official languages extend to all sectors of our society and serve as a factor of identity, understanding and unity.

The implementation of this policy has been entrusted to the Department of Secretary of State which has redirected its programs and activities with a view to helping Canadians fully