

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Is the hon. member confirming the authenticity of the document to which he has referred?

Mr. Penner: Mr. Speaker, in answer to that question may I say I would be a very proud man if I could say I had access to cabinet secrets and could guarantee their authenticity. My sources are the same as those of the hon. member, that is, the morning newspapers. But I am delighted with this news. I take it to be authentic. Perhaps that is wishful thinking. I want it to be authentic because we must get on in this country with the job of experimenting, spending money and doing much more, so that Canada can be something other than a few pockets of population with vast areas in between which are underdeveloped and which are not getting their fair share of the opportunities which should be available to every citizen of this country.

The hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Symes) pointed out that there has not been a great amount of growth in northern Ontario. It is quite true that we have only been able to hold our own. The fact that we have only been able to hold our own is to a large extent the responsibility of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion, in co-operation with certain provincial agencies also concerned with regional development. It came out at the hearings of the committee yesterday that much more must be done and that the Department of Regional Economic Expansion could do much more in this area.

I should like to mention one point that was raised. In case you are concerned about relevancy, Mr. Speaker, it is about information. Some of the witnesses who appeared before our committee in Sudbury yesterday pointed out that industrial commissioners, Reeves, mayors and people involved in regional development find it extraordinarily difficult to obtain information which would be useful to them. It is expensive to gather it themselves. These people made the plea that much of the information which is available in the department should be released so that they could use it. Indeed, the committee unanimously passed a motion, which is part of the second report submitted earlier this afternoon, urging the government to give consideration to making some of this information available in the areas where it could be used. Rather than having it locked up here in Ottawa, it should be available to the regions and given to the people who can use it.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hour appointed for the consideration of private members' business having expired, I do now leave the chair until 8 p.m.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

Official Languages

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

DECLARATION OF CERTAIN PRINCIPLES RESPECTING EMPLOYMENT IN PUBLIC SERVICE OF CANADA

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Trudeau:

That this house,

(i) aware that, as provided in the Official Languages Act, the English and French languages possess and enjoy equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all the institutions of the Parliament and Government of Canada;

cognizant that it is the duty of departments and agencies of the Government of Canada to ensure, in accordance with that Act, that members of the public can obtain available services from and communicate with them in both official languages; while recognizing that public servants should, as a general proposition and subject to the requirements of the Official Languages Act respecting the provision of services to the public, be able to carry out their duties in the public service of Canada in the official language of their choice;

do hereby recognize and approve the following principles for achieving the foregoing:

(1) that positions which are seen, under present circumstances, as requiring the knowledge and use of both the French and English languages will be first identified, and then designated, as bilingual in the course of the period ending December 31, 1978;

(2) that positions will also be identified where English is an essential requirement of the job, where French is essential, or whether either French or English may be used;

(3) that a knowledge of English and French is one of the elements of merit in the selection of candidates for bilingual positions;

(4) that competitions for bilingual positions will be open both to bilingual candidates and unilingual candidates who have formally indicated their willingness to become bilingual;

(5) that competitions for unilingual positions will continue to be open to unilingual or bilingual candidates who meet the language requirements of the job;

(6) that unilingual incumbents of bilingual positions may elect to become bilingual and undertake language training, or transfer to another job having the same salary maximum, or, if they were to decline such a transfer, to remain in their positions even though the posts have been designated as bilingual;

(7) that employees who, as of April 6, 1966, had at least ten years of continuous service and who, since that date, have been employed continuously in the federal public service, will be entitled to apply for any job that has been identified for future designation as bilingual without having to indicate their willingness to become bilingual;

(8) that unilingual French-speaking and English-speaking persons from outside the public service who are willing to become bilingual may apply for bilingual positions open to public competition;

(9) that language training, at public expense, will be provided to unilingual public servants as well as to persons who are appointed to the public service to bilingual positions;

do further approve the Government of Canada, and, in particular, the Treasury Board and the Public Service Commission, taking the measures required to give effect to the aforementioned principles; and

(ii) do further approve the taking of measures, after consultation with employee representatives, designed to produce a greater use of the French language at all levels in the public service, through increasing, where practical, the number of French language units, through further recruitment efforts by the Public