

working in the public service, and on completion of her training intended to resign with a working knowledge of French and money in the bank. This is no way to run the public service, and the President of the Treasury Board is not living up to his responsibilities. He is always asking for instances, Mr. Speaker, so I can give him instances.

The people who are called there know their careers are at stake. Failure means the end of the road for them. This is a tragic thing to impose upon a man four, five or six years before retirement who has performed his duties. When he joined the public service his contract did not contain any of this, and now he finds his career is jeopardized if he does not succeed.

● (1730)

The other thing—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member's time having expired, he may only continue to complete his remarks if he has the unanimous consent of the House. Has the hon. member consent to complete his remarks?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, I thank the House for its indulgence. I shall not be long.

The public servant of whom I am speaking is most detailed in his remarks. He says, "When the language bureau instruct one to report, one must do so." There is none of this business of telephoning and saying, "I have an appointment." Why, the service is worse than the Whips around here, although when the Whip says, "You must be in the House," you make sure you are in the House.

Then he writes, "Can nobody see what these officious incompetents are doing to the morale of public servants?" He says that he was given two days' notice to report, and alleged that this action showed gross insensitivity to his position, function, and responsibilities, thereby unnerving his management team and those with whom he worked. He said that this mindless, officious act was equivalent to hauling a man out of his bed in the middle of the night, to be taken from his family, still dressed in night attire. He went on to write, "Can nobody see what these officious incompetents are doing to the morale of public servants?" I hope the President of the Treasury Board is now aware of the situation. The public servant went on to say, "What is more important, cannot the cabinet see the damage it is doing to management in all government departments?"

A few lines later he said that one could not ask for a better public service unit; it is a great service, but is being demoralized. He mentions what happened to an administrative officer, and why, because at a crucial time he was sent off on a certain course, he was unable to attain certain management objectives. Mr. Speaker, it is sheer nonsense to send a man off to a management course and then, as soon as he returns, to send him on another course.

The writer of the letter said:

In the meantime the indecent haste with which the language blitzkrieg is being waged on a demoralized public service indicates that our political masters clearly place 'instant' bilingualism far above more efficient use of public funds . . .

Ministerial Responsibility

Although I value bilingualism in the public service, I do not value the way it is being imposed.

The writer of the letter was true to his own character; he said:

I believe in the coexistence of the two founding cultures . . . It requires fostering and funding. We need better and more translation services. We need to train good language graduates as highly competent specialists; we need Francophones and Anglophones side by side across Canada.

He then asked:

Are you aware that when one is interviewed for language training the interrogator attempts to assess one's beliefs related to bilingualism?

Such an interrogation concerning one's bilingual ability is reprehensible. According to what I hear, people are being interrogated in the manner described. As the writer of the letter says:

It is insidious interrogation, calculated to look into and manipulate private thoughts, and depending upon the outcome a Canadian's career will be affected . . .

. . . Criticism from within has been scarce and muted. Many are not in a position to do so for they fear for their future. Management by fear has become uppermost in the minds of all public servants. Many Canadians fought and died to prevent such tactics becoming entrenched in the western hemisphere. It is tragic to consider that some of the survivors of that struggle should find themselves at a rather late age as victims of oppression, based on irrationality and . . . political posturings . . .

He believes that we should improve our translation and interpretation services.

He ends his letter with a forthright statement: as a result of this treatment he resigned from the public service and accepted a post in the United States. We have lost a valuable public servant who during his career made a name internationally and who, but for the treatment meted out to him, would have enhanced the reputation of the Canadian public service.

I hope the minister to whom my remarks are directed, a minister prominent for having failed to shoulder the responsibilities he assumed when taking the ministerial oath, will correct the abuses mentioned in order that we may have a good, bilingual public service, able to serve the Canadian people in the official language of their choice.

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious, judging by the thrust of the debate begun by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker), that he has in mind the by-election coming up in October in Ottawa-Carleton. The constituency is populated mainly by public servants. The hon. member is trying to convince them that somehow the government is anti-public service and that the opposition has a monopoly on concern for those who work day in and day out for the people of Canada. Such a position is not abnormal. I presume that if I were a member of the perpetual opposition—

Mr. Benjamin: You wouldn't know how to handle the job.

Mr. Mackasey: —I would try to change my status. The point is, the hon. member talked almost exclusively about public servants. He forgot that the present government has done more for Canada's public servants than any other government in Canada's history.