

I say to him at the same time that if that is not a reality today he had better have another thought about supporting provisions in Bill C-72 which would purport to do the same sort of thing for other Canadians.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Robichaud: Madam Speaker, I really do not see what the Hon. Member's problem is. Even in cases outside New Brunswick, whether an Anglophone can be heard in English or a Francophone can be heard in French has no bearing on this Bill, and I fail to see why we should not go ahead with this Bill. It does not affect the Bill at all. I think we have now reached the point where we have to do something. We must draft certain laws. We must give rights to English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians. Whatever the situation in New Brunswick happens to be, it does not release us from our obligation to proceed. And I believe it is high time we did. We must go ahead, no matter what the situation is elsewhere.

[*English*]

Mr. Ron Stewart (Simcoe South): Madam Speaker, on December 11, 1987 I stood in my place and resigned as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Supply and Services. At that time I said, and I repeat it, that I am a Conservative, a strong Conservative, and a strong supporter of my Party, my colleagues, my Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), and in general my Government; that I am also unilingual; that I represent a riding which is overwhelmingly unilingual Anglophone; and that I fear my constituents' rights are jeopardized by Bill C-72 as it is now written.

Why did I resign? It was certainly not because I do not recognize and respect the duality of Canada and the two official languages. I resigned because of the wording and the way Bill C-72 was written and because it is not fair. If Canadians do not believe that it will change the face of Canada judicially, as has been pointed out, the supervisory capacities in the Public Service, the private sector, and by a dictatorial language tsar who is above the law, then they do not believe that Wayne Gretzky plays hockey or that the NDP Leader from Oshawa is or was Vice-President of Socialists International.

I resigned in the vain hope that the Prime Minister would come forth and withdraw this unfair piece of reverse discrimination from the House, or substantially amend it. The Bill was stopped for a little while. We were to have discussions on it, and we had a couple of meetings in which I and most of us who were there were led to believe that there would be no changes in the Bill.

I was more than appreciative of the Minister, the Hon. Member for Simcoe North (Mr. Lewis), when he rose a short time ago and said that perhaps now this is not the case. I certainly hope so.

Prior to this, the Bill had been discussed at meetings of the caucuses of B.C., Saskatchewan, and Ontario, and there were severe reservations about its contents. Hon. Ministers and

some people in the House would have you believe, Madam Speaker, that this Bill is about fairness. They would have you believe that it is for unity, and this is untrue. All of us in the House want a united Canada. All of us believe in two official languages, but this Bill is patently unfair. It is not about unity. It is about division. Bilingualism is no longer an emotional issue. It is an accepted fact, but this is a matter of fairness and language should not be a power struggle.

Who really wants this Bill? I would like people to tell me. I am sure it is not the majority of Canadians, not my constituents.

My daughter, who has a Masters in Science, applied just a short time ago to Air Canada for a position. When she filled out the forms she was told that because she was not bilingual there would be no need to have an interview—"You can have the interview if you want it, but our policy is no hiring". I wonder what would happen if Bill C-72 went through in these circumstances.

Bill C-72 is about reverse discrimination. It places linguistics above merit regardless of the claim in Section 38(3) which is totally ambiguous. It makes second-class citizens of Anglophones, the majority of Canadians, the 76 per cent of Canadians who operate in an English milieu. This is Draconian legislation, fitting of Machiavelli himself.

Let me now ask who speaks for English Canada? Well, I do and I entreat my other English-speaking colleagues, who I know sit silently opposing the Bill, who have spoken out in committee and in private, to rise to their feet and voice their opposition and not allow constituents to be treated as second-class citizens.

I particularly challenge the press. I want to see the press take apart this Bill clause by clause, understand every part of it, and explain to their readers and viewers, the Canadian public, the true significance contained therein.

● (1240)

Let us look at the facts. Since the Official Languages Act makes us equal and gives equal access and opportunities, supposedly, to both linguistic groups, what has happened in the Public Service since the Act came into force under a Liberal Government and, in particular, Pierre Elliott Trudeau? Administrations became overstaffed with Francophones by 1984. This is what happened in 1986. I have in my hand statistics with respect to 26 departments. Statistics do not lie. I will not read them all out, but I will tell Hon. Members what happened with respect to the percentage of Francophones in these departments from 1984 until now.

In 1984, 50 percent of the staff of the Canadian Human Rights Commission was Francophone. That figure has risen to 59 per cent today. At the offices of the Canadian Intergovernmental Affairs the figure went from 83 per cent to 91 per cent. At the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission office the figure went from 65 per cent in