

*Official Languages*

tions will be occupied by bilingual people from outside their community.

I should like to say a word or two about the difficulties faced by the census takers in deciding what is the mother tongue of the various people in the area. I can think of one particular family in my riding in which the father is French speaking. He married an English girl and their children speak English, so that the whole family now speaks English except when the father visits his parents. What will the language of this family be considered to be under the census? It is quite obvious that there is no rule about it and much will depend on the opinion and interpretation of the census taker.

I envisage also great difficulties in drawing up these bilingual districts. I am sure that a person appointed from each province will help in doing this. There is also the matter of provincial rights and provincial acquiescence. After all, there is no point in drawing up a bilingual district unless the province is willing to back up the area with a massive program of education to help out the minority group in retaining its language. During the course of the last ten years it has been my pleasure to interview, every day in the course of my work, two or three families among the French minority community in my riding. I have always been interested in the language problem so I asked them to tell me what their reaction is to living in a largely English environment. I heard many interesting comments. Some of them wish to retain their French culture, others feel it is not worth their effort. One very interesting person, a woman with six children, said that she felt only English should be spoken as a main language.

● (7:10 p.m.)

When I suggested to her that to be bilingual was valuable and that one should not give up the possibility of knowing two languages, her answer was: We must live in an English world and my children must learn English in order to get jobs. So unless the provinces are willing to back up bilingual districts by massive programs of education there is a risk of creating intellectual ghettos. It is often said that the problems faced by rural people arise largely because of the lack of education. We shall be faced in the rural areas with the task of upgrading the educational qualifications of minority groups so that they may be equal to the challenge of the practical world of economics and of technology outside. If this amendment were passed, considerably more co-operation would be likely on the part of the provinces concerned.

Clause 14 states that five or more persons will be appointed to the board representative of the several provinces or the principal regions of Canada. The definition of a region is so vague as scarcely to be worth considering. Five people could be appointed from somewhere north of the Arctic circle and still represent various regions of Canada. They could be appointed from five suburbs of Toronto or Montreal, or from Winnipeg or Newfoundland. The phrase is so vague as to be of little value; it means that almost anyone could be appointed. The government could appoint five people from one particular region, despite the fact that this would nullify the idea behind the clause which, I suppose, is to give representation to people familiar with the problems which the institution of bilingual districts is likely to raise. If we are to have a board, let us at least have one whose members are familiar with the difficulties likely to be encountered in each of our provinces; let us not have one on which members from eastern Canada are called upon to determine whether and in what circumstances bilingual districts should be set up in western Canada.

It has been said that the government will use its discretion well, and appoint a representative group. The minister may very well do this. The minister will not always be in his present position. Some other minister, some other government, will be in power, and they may think upon different lines. It seems to me, therefore, that the present muddy definition embodied in the words "principal regions of Canada" should be spelled out in much clearer terms.

In some ways, this is an interesting experiment, a most unusual case of a minority forcing its culture, to some extent, on the majority. This may be disputed. French Canadians may say it is time their culture was recognized, and that in the past severe discrimination has been shown against them. They may honestly feel this to be so. But regardless of whether they do or not, many people will not accept their contention. This attitude is creating the risk of division in our national life, and the situation is likely to become worse as time goes on. When families find that their sons and daughters are not able to enter the civil service or the armed forces as easily as once was the case, passion and unreason take over. Sometimes the antagonism is unreasonable, but it is genuinely felt.

The attempt to force a minority point of view on to the majority will be resisted