

Official Languages

Although this is a good citation and one which certainly ought to be kept in mind at all times, I doubt that it applies to the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Swift Current-Maple Creek. It seems to me that the hon. member is not suggesting that the bill be set aside on the basis of a proposition which the bill omits. He only proposes that certain action should be taken by the government before the bill is accepted by parliament. In other words, his amendment, to my way of thinking, is essentially a reasoned amendment. He indicates his view, in the terms of a reasoned amendment, why the proposed bill should not be proceeded with further.

There may be a slight difficulty in connection with the wording of the amendment itself. We have accepted in recent months a series of reasoned amendments, either on second or third reading, following closely enough the wording of the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Swift Current-Maple Creek but which had four additional words, and these would make this amendment read as follows:

That the said bill be not now read a third time but that it be resolved that the government of Canada take such steps—

In order to facilitate future procedure I wonder whether the hon. member might be allowed to include these four words which would make this proposed amendment conform with the procedure which has been followed in the past, so that the amendment would read:

That the said bill be not now read a third time but that it be resolved that the Government of Canada take such steps as may be necessary to have the Supreme Court of Canada provide a decision with respect to the constitutionality of the provisions of the said bill.

I assume that hon. members would have no objection to having the amendment amended in this regard so that this would be the way in which it would formally be put to the house.

I have to add that I had also considered the point of view raised by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre. Certainly some of the citations which appear now in May, Beauchesne or in some of our other authorities, Canadian, British or other, are not entirely relevant to our rules which have been changed fundamentally. The relative importance and significance of second reading and third reading have changed materially, and in this way I would think that citations which previously might have been relevant when

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dealing with amendments on third reading are no longer valid. Taking all this into account I would think that the amendment moved by the hon. member for Swift Current-Maple Creek should be accepted as a reasoned amendment and should be put to the house at the present time. Mr. McIntosh, seconded by Mr. Gundlock moves:

That the said bill be not now read a third time but that it be resolved that the Government of Canada take such steps as may be necessary to have the Supreme Court of Canada provide a decision with respect to the constitutionality of the provisions of the said bill.

Mr. Peters: Mr. Speaker, I assumed that the amendment was going to be accepted but I had not realized it would be in exactly this form. However, I am still of the opinion that we have gone so far through this linguistic mess in Canada that we should not go backward now that we have reached this stage.

I have always been interested in hearing the hon. member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Caouette) when he speaks on this and other national subjects, and have been surprised at the similarity of view expressed by the two areas, the riding of Timiskaming in Ontario and the riding of Témiscamingue in Quebec. There is a great similarity between these ridings, and the hon. member for Témiscamingue represents about the same percentage of English speaking people as I represent of French speaking people. Further, over the years there has been a great similarity in the way the minorities in both ridings have been treated.

When I was a child going to school a number of French Canadians attended the same school, and no English was spoken in their homes at all. They learned their second language at the public school. Similarly, I know of many people in the province of Quebec, particularly in the Noranda area, who did not know French until they learned it at school, and then grew up to become totally bilingual. There has not been any particular difficulty in either of these areas, with the French minority in Timiskaming, Ontario, or the English minority in Témiscamingue, Quebec.

It is of interest to note the methods through which these people have been given a great deal of equality and, for a period of years, a great degree of assistance in developing their ability in their own language and in a second language.

• (4:10 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the hon. member would allow me to interrupt