

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Who is your joke writer, Pierre?

Mr. Trudeau: The Secretary of State has been setting up a group, within his jurisdiction and within his authority, of ten people borrowed from other departments whose sole purpose would be to distribute material on the subject of Canadian unity. It has nothing to do with the much broader functions of the previous Information Canada.

In answer to the precise question as to what has happened in the past year, there was an election in the province of Quebec of a government dedicated to the separation of that province from the country. There have been approximately 10 or 15 offices set up by that government across the province to convey information favourable to separatism. The hon. member should join me in approving the setting up, at the federal government level, of an information centre which would counteract that subversive propaganda.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lawrence: Mr. Speaker, I am glad the Prime Minister has now taken us into his confidence. He has now let us know one of the purposes, and perhaps the only purpose, of this task force. If he expects to get our endorsement, our support and our co-operation, surely he would not mind telling the House or tabling some time soon the terms of reference so that we may be assured that they do not exceed what the Prime Minister has just told us. We should like to know who are on it, what it is going to cost and what the eventual object, procedure and form of this new propaganda machine may be.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the general concern of the hon. member is legitimate. It seems to me we already anticipated it by ensuring that the so-called Tellier group in the Privy Council office would consult with the various opposition parties as to the work they were doing. I should be very surprised if Mr. Tellier has not already indicated to the Leader of the Opposition the intention of having him work with Mr. Tellier and the intention of setting up a group which would be concerned with making available to Canadians information and facts favourable to Canada rather than to separatism.

Mr. Lawrence: Mr. Speaker, apart from any general consultations that the members of the opposition may have had with the Letellier group, I return to my question once again. Would the Prime Minister mind taking us into his confidence and telling us exactly who is on the task force? We should also like to know what their terms of reference are or might be, if those terms of reference have been laid down.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I just answered that this particular group is under the authority of the Secretary of State for reasons of financial administration, but it is to work with the Tellier group. The Tellier group has already met with the opposition parties. If they forgot to ask them the right questions, perhaps they can think of them the next time.

Oral Questions

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Alexander: We are asking you.

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● (1420)

BILINGUALISM

PROPOSAL FOR COST-SHARING MINORITY LANGUAGE PROGRAMS—SUGGESTED DISCUSSION BY PROVINCES

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister said in the House on Friday that minority language rights of the country are not matters for bargaining. I agree with the Prime Minister, as I am sure most thinking Canadians do.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: The serious question is this: How can we achieve the most speedy implementation of this ideal? For this reason I ask the Prime Minister if he or the Secretary of State requested the provinces to discuss at their meeting next month proposals the Secretary of State put forward in this House on June 21 which include proposals for federal cost-sharing in the implementation of minority language programs?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, as the leader of the New Democratic Party knows the federal government has no *locus standi* to suggest items for the agenda of the meeting of provincial premiers. But I could say that I discussed informally these matters with some of the premiers at a meeting I had with Liberal leaders of the ten provinces which was held in this capital one week ago. I hope the premiers will do some of the things the hon. member is suggesting but of course I cannot ask the chairman of that conference to inscribe anything in particular on the agenda. I believe the leader of the New Democratic Party has some connection with some premiers. Perhaps he would put a suggestion to them.

Mr. Broadbent: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Strange as it may seem, I understand the Prime Minister as well has some connection with some premiers. I ask him my question in a most serious and non-partisan way. Given the importance of minority language rights, an importance which the Prime Minister correctly told the House transcends provincial jurisdictional authority since it has national implications at this point in our history, and considering that almost all the provinces agreed in Victoria in 1971 that something should be done about this important matter, would the Prime Minister now follow the course his own logic dictates, get in touch with Premier Hatfield and request that at the meeting which is to take place in one month the provincial premiers put on the agenda of the meeting proposals the federal government made in the House of Commons last month.

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if the hon. member grasped my previous answer. He made some quip