

talking about any type of compulsion to force Canadians to speak the other official language, to speak other than the language that is his mother tongue or his choice. We are talking about what we have called earlier institutional bilingualism. My colleague, the President of the Treasury Board, called it functional bilingualism or the availability of a federal government service to Canadians in either of the two official languages of this country, French or English. In a reciprocal fashion it is the right of every Canadian to work in the public service in either French or English. In other words, it is an institutional fabric by which we hope that the national unity of this country can be cemented—namely the right of any Canadian from any part of Canada to deal with his or her federal government or agencies of the federal government in the language of his or her choice and to allow any Canadian to be involved and to work in the public service in either French or English. As my colleague put it, in a very detailed speech to this House on Friday, it thereby preserves the right of any Canadian to remain unilingual if he wants in his dealings with the Public Service of Canada and unilingual in his service to his country.

What is the purpose of the bilingualism policy? I think every member of the House is highly cognizant of it. Certainly, I was impressed by the speeches of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) and their appraisal of the situation. National unity is consecrated by the ability of all Canadians to deal with the federal government or work for the federal government in either French or English. National unity in the sense of cultivating a feeling of consecrating the reality, particularly, and let us admit it, among French speaking Canadians, that they have an equal opportunity in this country and that they can be made to feel at home in this country and to feel at home at work or at play in the national capital. It is only in this way that I believe this parliament can undercut one of the arguments of the separatists, namely that only within his own nation state can the French speaking Canadian find his true home, fulfil his true personality, find his complete acceptance.

I believe that if this resolution, which has the support of the House, is applied by the Public Service Commission and by the Treasury Board in co-operation with the staff associations with understanding and humanity and recognition of the human careers that are involved, then the temptation of French speaking Canadians to opt for their own state will not be nearly as attractive. If French speaking Canadians are made to feel at home in reality, in appearance and in psychology within the bosom of a country we call Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1530)

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I think in terms of fundamental human rights one could say, too, that the use of language is essential to the exercise of a full personality.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, as regards language as psychological extension of character, I am entitled to describe my own experience in the province of Quebec. I belong to the Bar of the province of Quebec, one of the most bilingual

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institutions of the country, as the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner) knows, and every lawyer and every witness had the right to speak in the language of his choice.

During my first years of practice, of course I had to plead before judges and to cross-examine witnesses in French all day long. It was physically and mentally tiresome for me, especially when inquiries lasted for two, three or four days. I was absolutely exhausted—

Mr. Wagner: Worn out.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Yes, worn out, Mr. Speaker.

Therefore, thanks to my experience I can understand how difficult it is for a French Canadian to live in English in North America, in Canada, where he must do the same thing as I, speak my language and make efforts in a language which is not his mother tongue.

I suggest that a country cannot survive unless every citizen is able to express himself in the official language of his choice, otherwise he cannot feel well and at home in his own country. And this is even more important when considering the atmosphere of the national capital.

This is a psychological matter; this is a matter of basic rights, of human rights. The problem of languages is a psychological matter; therefore, it is a key issue because most important and basic matters in the life of nations are those associated to unity, which is a matter of subjectivity.

Therefore, how does one feel in a given country? This is why I think that the problem of languages becomes a subjective matter, and if so, it is even more important for the unity of our country.

[English]

I listened to the Leader of the Opposition and to the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis), who leads the New Democratic Party, criticizing the government for the delay in bringing forth these particular principles. I can say to them and to the House that no one has been more anxious than the government, and certainly, the members sitting on the Liberal side of the House, to have these principles clarified. A good many of us have lived with the problem, and with the problems of our constituents. I can only say in answer to those hon. members and to you, Your Honour, that the application of a policy of bilingualism is an incredibly difficult and delicate procedure. Why? Because human careers are involved, that is why. As I said before, we had no prior experience upon which to call. Our particular situation in Canada is distinctly different from that of other countries with a bilingual nature, because of the makeup of our own country. There were no charts, no guidelines, and no well trodden paths for us to follow, as I said before. No one, Sir, should underestimate the difficulty of moving forward with speed and determination, and yet with a sense of equity and justice with respect to the human problems involved.

Let me say a word about the analysis of the nine principles and the supplementary resolution. These were developed in consultation with the staff associations. I want to take the opportunity to say to the House how much the government has appreciated and how much I, personally,