

by the election of a French-speaking Prime Minister and which was marked by a series of debates on linguistic issues. It should be noted as well that major steps were taken under several Canadian Liberal Prime Ministers.

I should like to pay special tribute to Lester B. Pearson who, during the 1960s, acknowledged the significance of the linguistic issue in this country by appointing the Laurendeau-Dunton Commission and introducing a number of legislative measures which were the clear and specific expression of the desire of the Liberal Party and of the Government then headed by Mr. Pearson to promote fairness in this country towards one of the important minorities, the French minority which was one of our two founding peoples.

In subsequent years, Madam Speaker, the Trudeau Government did a lot to make the system more equitable, to bring more justice between Canada's two main linguistic communities.

I was listening earlier to the Hon. Member for Simcoe South (Mr. Stewart) talking about injustice and individual cases of people who couldn't get a promotion in the Public Service because they weren't bilingual. I am not going to start this lengthy debate again and make emotional pleas. I simply want to point out that for generations that was the plight of Francophones in this country. However, they didn't complain about promotions. They couldn't get jobs, not because they weren't bilingual but because they didn't speak English. This happened not only in the Public Service but also in the private sector. And today, I hear people saying: Let time take its course. Let our secondary schools teach French, and eventually, people across Canada will be bilingual.

Madam Speaker, that's fine. But meanwhile, what is going to happen to the Francophone communities across this country who will have to wait years and years before they get services in their own language? And what is the Public Service's *raison d'être*? It is to provide services to the public! People do not have a God-given right to work in the Public Service. They have the possibility of doing so, but the purpose of the Public Service is to provide services to a *clientèle*. And if according to this country's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, that *clientèle* is entitled to receive services in the language of its choice, in English or French, our two official languages, will that right be paramount or will it be outweighed by the promotion of an employee who, all things considered, does not have to work in the Public Service and could find a job elsewhere?

The arguments put forward by the Hon. Member for Simcoe South would seem to be totally unacceptable, at least to someone who belongs to my particular group, and I refer here to the community of French-speaking Canadians.

Madam Speaker, as I was saying, Bill C-72 is the result of a lengthy process that was mostly initiated by the Bill introduced by the Liberal Government under Mr. Trudeau in 1969, and which the Leader of our Party had the privilege of helping to defend in the House and across the country.

Official Languages Act

So this Bill followed naturally upon that Act, which was implemented and put to the test, but Bill C-72 was made necessary especially by the patriation of the Canadian Constitution and the entrenchment in it of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, in particular sections 16 to 20 inclusive of that Charter, which recognize the fundamental character of the linguistic rights of both the Francophone and the Anglophone communities.

The main section, section 16, states that: English and French are the official languages of Canada and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the Parliament and government of Canada.

Thus the Official Languages Act had to be adapted to reflect these rights that were entrenched into the Constitution of our country and were approved by Parliament in 1982, after a very lengthy debate.

Bill C-72 constitutes an important additional step that we should take to integrate new realities into our legislation, particularly those which derive from the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and from sections 16 to 20 inclusive.

I would like to point out that if we could amend the Bill according to the proposal made by my colleague the Member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier), we would get even closer to achieving the stated objective. The objective pursued was to give Canadians in practice the rights, and the exercise of the rights, recognized by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

How can these rights be applied? Through legislation that will have to be interpreted by the courts, and we believe that the motion of my colleague from Ottawa—Vanier would give the Official Languages Act, Bill C-72, the scope that it really should have.

I do not believe that it is by cutting corners to please so-and-so that we will have greater justice and as I see it, the Government's original intention with this Bill was to fully enforce this law. I deplore the removal of this introduction to clause 2, which could have been very useful to the courts in interpreting this legislation in future, both for English-language and French-language minority communities. Because English- and French-speaking minorities must be treated equally.

Madam Speaker, I would have liked to have much more time to answer the arguments of the Hon. Member for Simcoe South (Mr. Stewart) regarding comparisons between the rights of anglophones in Quebec and francophones elsewhere in the country.

Madam Speaker, one must have never really lived in Quebec to make the comparison the Hon. Member for Simcoe South made. We see a province where the schools at all levels, elementary, secondary and university, are publicly funded. A province with 800,000 or 600,000 English-speakers has three English-language universities totally financed by the Government as are the French-language universities in the same province. We see that the Government, not out of generosity,