

*Official Languages*

exercised in one way or another over a great many years. In my opinion, clause 2 meets the pith and substance of section 133 of the British North America Act and fits within the scope and pattern of that section.

In my view, and in the view of this party, one cannot find that there is a conflict on this issue, and consequently that clause 2 of the bill and other aspects of the bill are unconstitutional, thus requiring a reference to the Supreme Court of Canada as outlined in the amendment. Therefore we are unable to support the amendment.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is the house ready for the question?

**Some hon. Members:** Question.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the amendment? All those in favour will please say yea?

**Some hon. Members:** Yea.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I declare the amendment lost.

Amendment (Mr. McIntosh) negatived.

**Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming):** Mr. Speaker, as I was saying before the interjections concerning the amendment, I have been very concerned about how this bill has been received throughout the country. I had referred to the fact that the hon. member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Caouette) and myself represented the same sort of riding, his with a predominance of French speaking constituents and an English minority and mine with a French speaking minority and an English majority. Yet both ridings have met the same problem in similar fashion. It is also of interest to note that at least 25 per cent of our constituents are members of other ethnic groups, yet little difficulty has arisen in either riding. I would hope that this would be true in similar situations elsewhere in Canada.

Since I sometimes differ with the views of my colleagues I am often asked, and I was asked as recently as last weekend, whether or not I find it difficult to justify the stand I take on this issue in relation to the people I represent in my riding. When I was asked this question the other night I replied that this was one instance where I was not sure

what my constituents would like the result to be. In fact, I am not really too sure what my own position is.

In my opinion the Canadian people should have faced a long time ago the question whether or not bilingualism is desirable for Canada as a nation, though there are many other problems we should have faced as well. It surprises me that after all this time this issue has become so important. I have heard hon. members who have taken part in this debate declare that this bill will encourage bilingualism; I believe the Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier) espoused that view. In my opinion this bill will not encourage bilingualism; indeed, the very opposite may result.

This bill raises a much more fundamental problem, that of education. It seems to me that if we are to have a nation with a distinct culture, one tempered by the many nationalities that have chosen Canada as their home, one factor that will make our culture distinct from that of the United States will be our ability to speak the two languages. If that is a desirable state of affairs, and I am of the opinion that it is, then those who are interested in the subject must decide what are the educational requirements to bring this about. If this bill is used to promote a bilingual civil service, which in effect will mean that jobs will be allocated in the main on linguistic ability rather than on merit, it will be the most divisive piece of legislation the Canadian people have ever had to face. On the other hand, if we are tolerant and make it possible for all areas of Canada to benefit from bilingual education, this bill will have been worth while. I know that the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) is interested in this subject. If all our school children are to become fully bilingual the federal government may have to step into the field of education.

• (5:00 p.m.)

At present the regulations with respect to bilingualism seem somewhat discriminatory and senseless. I have seen some public service employment application forms, and I was interested the other day to see that a dietitian working for the government has to be bilingual. I do not know much about dietitians, my experience of them having been confined to the armed services. I and my friends always look upon dietitians as people who make up bland diets. Why a dietitian needs to be bilingual I do not know. About the only benefit in having a bilingual dietitian is that