

*Adjournment Debate**[Translation]*

The situation is not the same for francophone students. In French schools in the Province of Quebec and throughout the country, the situation is not the same. Textbooks are written by French Canadians for Canadian students, in French.

*[English]*

We can trace that development back to the time when the late Right Hon. Lester Pearson was Prime Minister of this country. The absence of suitable learning material for French language classrooms was recognized by that Prime Minister and the Government of the day, and there was a concerted effort, largely marshalled through the Office of the Secretary of State, to correct a bad situation.

French-speaking students in this country today, from kindergarten through to university, have instructional materials prepared by French-speaking Canadians for their use. They are not dependent upon Paris or other French-speaking sources for most of their educational material. We have not concentrated our efforts on behalf of English-speaking students in this country, however. All any Member of Parliament has to do is phone the local school board and ask what proportion of the education material currently being used in the classroom today has been written and/or published by Canadians for the use of Canadians, whether the subject be mathematics, physics, social studies, English or whatever.

It is my contention that if we in this Parliament really care about the issue of Canadian unity and the issue of Canadian identity, then it is long past time for us to take that concern seriously and support a Government that is willing to take that concern seriously and to provide programs—not simply programs on paper—with dollars attached. We must ensure that students in the future, wherever they are in this country, will be able to benefit from educational material prepared by Canadians for Canadians. I would ask the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State (Mr. Bossy), in his response to this petition, to perhaps stand up and give us one small indication of the Government's commitment to that endeavour.

● (1820)

Canadian publishers some two months ago asked for Government assistance to simply create and provide to school boards throughout Canada a directory of available educational material which is written and published by Canadians. All that is, Mr. Speaker, is a list of available material so that when school boards face ordering decisions for educational materials they have one place to go to get a list of available Canadian material.

If the Government of Canada were to provide the small amount of funding required to provide such a list, then those local school boards in the smaller centres of this country, such as Moosomin, Saskatchewan, or small places in Newfoundland and throughout this land, could immediately increase the proportion of Canadian material which is used in those schools. The longer term goal would be more expensive and

more time-consuming, the creation of more Canadian educational material in the English language.

Could the Parliamentary Secretary stand in this House this evening and make the commitment to at least put forward that small amount of money which would be required to create that kind of a directory?

**Mr. Maurice Bossy (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State):** Mr. Speaker, before dealing explicitly with the questions posed by the Hon. Member, I think it is important to point out that we are in agreement with the general principles enunciated in the Association of Canadian Publishers' study, namely, that young people must be presented with opportunities and materials which will enable them to learn in depth about their country, culture and heritage as a necessary first step to becoming fully functioning citizens of Canada. This sentiment echoes that of an earlier landmark examination of the state of teaching, research and publication about Canada, the report of the Commission on Canadian Studies. That study, the first two volumes of which were published in 1967, found that the neglect of Canadian studies in our schools, colleges and universities was a lamentable, even deplorable, feature of Canadian education.

The recommendations of that Commission have resulted in a number of responses by various agencies and Departments of the federal Government, some of which bear directly on the areas of concern addressed by the Hon. Member.

The Hon. Member's first question was based on the findings of the Association of Canadian Publishers' study which indicated that only 50 per cent of the school boards surveyed—766 in all—have a policy on the use of Canadian studies learning materials and that only 20 per cent of the local school boards have a policy on the local development of learning materials. The Hon. Member notes that the study was based on a sample of boards in English Canada and he asks if the same situation applies in French Canada. To our knowledge there has not been a similar study of school boards serving the French speaking population of Canada. The Association of Canadian Publishers' document explicitly states that only the English language school boards of Quebec were included in that study.

With respect to another question posed by the Hon. Member in his earlier remarks to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), the Department of the Secretary of State has no knowledge of any specific program funded by the Government of Canada which operated in the late 1960s for the creation of materials for textbook purposes in the French language in Canada.

However, there have been some steps taken by this Government to increase opportunities for Canadians to learn about their country, in both official languages, and to encourage greater attention to Canadian issues and concerns. For example, the Department of the Secretary of State established a