

Office of Education

let us look elsewhere. In England, for instance a study done over ten years showed that children who were exposed to 20 minutes of language training each day did not do as well as children exposed to two-hour sessions from the age of 14. The theory was that if you give enough of it, it will get into their heads; but it does not work that way.

The primary obligation of any school is to teach the maternal language first and then the second language. A lot of research has been done in Ottawa, and two years ago a program was funded by the federal government, to the tune of \$2 million, to help local boards of education to experiment. The research showed that total immersion was possibly a good measure.

● (1752)

In England, as I have said, they made a study which showed that for children of 14 years and over it was just as good if they received two hours a week of language training as if they received 20 minutes every day. That is what my hon. friend from Vaudreuil was talking about. That is why I think his proposition is good. There should be a federal co-ordinator. Call it a bureau, call it a co-ordinator, call it what you like—somebody must take the initiative to show that in this country there there is a will and a consensus to make a concerted effort to gather from each other's experience, be it in New Brunswick, where they have bilingual education, be it in Alberta, where they have some form of it, or be it in British Columbia, where it does not exist.

Let all of us get together, and when the ministers of education report to their governments following the St. Andrew's conference in six months' time about the status of the minority groups in their provinces, let them sit down and say; "Let's put our heads together. We have a problem. Let's try and solve it on the basis of understanding, justice and equity."

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I would not want to speak too long because I know this motion can be subject to a long debate. We have heard about official languages, about the federal government's power to intervene in official languages. During the last decade, I believe the federal government made payments to the provinces in support of their second language teaching programs. In Ontario, we received about \$20 million a year. I believe the total for the whole country is about \$100 million a year, supposedly to help provinces teach the second language. However we must admit that this assistance has not always been spent the way it should have been. It is being admitted today that often alleged bilingual parking lots and bilingual gyms were built instead of using that money in support of second language courses.

The federal government has often asked the provinces for a report of expenditures, how and where the money is spent, and according to what formula. There is a federal formula which says that for each school boy or girl taking a second language, the federal grant will be 5 per cent and 1½ per cent for

[Mr. Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier).]

administration purposes. For minorities, the grant is 9 per cent and 1½ per cent for administration purposes.

I would be surprised if such formula was applied by the provinces for the benefit of the people to which it could be useful. We have had to discuss how the provinces have used that money. I think that the Secretary of State (Mr. Roberts) must negotiate or renegotiate those federal-provincial agreements on the second language. He will have to tell the House how the provinces spent those rather substantial sums. After that answer is provided, we will see if the funds were well spent or if they were adequate.

The hon. member for Vaudreuil dealt with a motion which I felt acceptable since it suggests coordinating provincial and interprovincial resources. I think, Mr. Speaker, that the motion should be passed, that we should proceed through existing organizations, either through the Minister of Education or the Council of the Ministers of Education in Toronto whose secretariat has performed excellent work. By introducing this motion today the member for Vaudreuil has shown a new aspect of the language issue, by asking that agency, either an office or a cooperating agent, to consider seriously the possibility of coordinating, studying more carefully and applying more thoroughly that experience.

[*English*]

Mr. Robert Daudlin (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, very briefly, in the short time remaining to me I would like to thank the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert) for bringing this matter once again before the House and affording to us the opportunity of putting forward the various points of view which exist among members.

I compliment the member for having done that. I agree with him to some extent in terms of the question as it relates to national unity, and I associate myself with the arguments which were put forward by the hon. member for York East (Mr. Collenette) when he pointed out that this was, in fact, a national unity question. I do not believe it is the only question, and perhaps it is only symptomatic of a larger question. I think it was unfortunate that the hon. member for Egmont (Mr. MacDonald) should take the position that this was an old party line and it was something which was not true. As speakers have indicated today, we started from a position where the federal government had little or no jurisdiction over education, and today we still work from documents which seem to show that the provinces have total jurisdiction in this matter. But when we look at the question historically, we find that the federal government has acted, not by way of interference, not by way of imposing itself upon the provinces but, rather, in terms of filling vacuums where the provincial jurisdictions have, for one reason or another, be it economic, as the hon. member for Roberval (Mr. Gauthier) said, or be it purely from lack of motivation, failed to take measures within their jurisdiction.

A cry has been raised by the people of this country that they want something done. That cry has been heard by the federal jurisdiction and responded to. We need not go far to find that such a response was made when we started training war