

Measures to increase the use of French in the Public Service

Jean Chrétien, President of the Treasury Board, announced August 6 the introduction of measures to include a language-of-work policy for Public Service employees for areas outside Ottawa and Hull, the regional capital region, and for increasing the use of French inside the region.

The steps being taken are designed "...to produce a greater use of the French language at all levels in the Public Service, through increasing, where practical, the number of French-language units, through further recruitment efforts by the Public Service Commission, through training programs offered in the French language,...thus helping to realize the objectives of achieving, within the merit principle, full participation in the Public Service by members of both the anglophone and the francophone communities".

Mr. Chrétien pointed to the success in recruiting a greater number of francophones into the Public Service. According to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, persons who claimed French as their mother tongue held only 13 per cent of Public Service jobs in 1945. This figure is now 26.8 per cent. At the most senior level, 20.4 per cent claim French as their mother tongue, as opposed to 14.4 per cent in 1971.

In language of work, in general, 12 per cent of public servants claim to work primarily in French and 8.6 per cent in both official languages. From data on the use of both official languages in the national capital re-

gion and other data showing that 28 per cent of francophones in the national capital region work primarily in English, it is clear that the objectives set out in the Official Languages Resolution adopted by Parliament in 1973 still have to be realized.

"It is important that immediate action be taken to ensure the equality of status, and equal rights and privileges of both English and French as set out in the Official Languages Act and reaffirmed through Parliament's adoption of the Official Languages Resolution," said Mr. Chrétien.

Language-of-work policy

The language-of-work policy for public servants inside the national capital region and outside Canada, established in 1973, provides that employees can, as a general rule, work in either French or English at their choice, except in certain units where the official language of work is French. Internal administrative and personnel services provided to employees will continue to be available in the official language of the employee's choice. Services to the general public in the official language of their choice must be provided in accordance with the Official Languages Act.

Outside Ottawa/Hull, subject to the requirements of the Official Languages Act, the language of work of federal public servants will, as a general rule, be French in Quebec and English in the other nine provinces.

By 1978, federal employees in the national capital region will normally communicate in French with federal employees in the Province of Quebec – or in both official languages when internal administrative and personnel services are being provided to those in bilingual areas of Quebec. Similarly, employees in the national capital region will normally communicate in English with employees in provinces other than Quebec – or in both official languages when internal services are being provided in bilingual areas.

Units working in French

Mr. Chrétien also announced that, as a particular means of increasing the use of French in the national capital region, the number of units whose internal language of work is French will be progressively increased to include units at senior levels and in major responsibility areas of all departments and agencies. This will increase the number of employees working in such units from some 3,500 to more than 8,000.

It is expected that this program will result in at least 20 per cent of occupied officer positions in the Department of Finance, the Privy Council Office, the Public Service Commission and the Treasury Board Secretariat, and at least 10 per cent of officer positions in other departments, being located in these units. Creation of these units will ensure that francophones will be able to work in French as well as providing anglophones the opportunity to work in their second official language.

National gas – domestic supply restrained, exports to be curbed

Energy, Mines and Resources Minister Donald S. Macdonald, commented recently on the National Energy Board's Report on natural gas supplies. The report was prepared following extensive public hearings held across Canada in late 1974 and early 1975. Some 62 submissions were received by the Board during this period.

Curtailement of exports

Mr. Macdonald noted that the Board's report confirmed earlier concerns that natural gas supplies would not be adequate in the near future to meet both

projected increases in domestic demand and existing export commitments. It is clear from the information presented that there will have to be some curtailment of Canada's export contracts and that growth of demand in Canada will have to be restrained until frontier supplies of gas are available.

The Minister noted that the last major commitment of natural gas to the export market was in 1970. At that time the Board concluded that additional volumes of gas could be committed for export after making due allowance for "reasonably foreseeable requirements for use in Canada". The Board's report

acknowledges that the series of events which has transpired since 1970 was not envisaged when the surplus was calculated. New discoveries have not taken place at the rate expected and deliverability characteristics of existing and new reserves have been less favourable than expected. There have been other significant changes in the situation, including the impairment of production in gas fields in northern British Columbia, the rapid rise in the OPEC oil price causing natural gas to be underpriced in relation to other fuels, and the opening up of new markets in Quebec and for petrochemical and ammonia production. In the Board's opinion all these factors, coupled with