

S.O. 21

that they would be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. They were badly mistaken.

Mr. Speaker, I hope the Forget Commission will take a clear position so that, as soon as possible, we Government Members will be in a position to make a decision in the best interest of early retirees.

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OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

LANGUAGE TRAINING—NECESSITY TO PUT PROGRESSIVE
POLICIES FORWARD

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, last week, the Language Training and Development Branch had a meeting with all employees to explain the new language training policies adopted by Treasury Board on October 23, 1986. The new guidelines will eliminate 25 per cent of the language training received up to now by public servants during normal working hours. If demand continues to exist, training will have to be provided by private instructors outside normal working hours.

This proposal means a cut of around 48 per cent in person-years set aside for language training. The proposal reflects the Government's position that the Public Service of Canada has a sufficiently large pool of bilingual resources. Mr. Speaker, this is a false assumption, and the Commissioner of Official Languages has said so every year. Official languages instruction depends on the attitude of the managers responsible for implementing the policy, and they certainly are not all enthusiastic proponents of bilinguism. When is this Government going to stop saying one thing and doing the exact opposite? When will this Government get up enough courage to introduce progressive policies regarding our official language programs?

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[English]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

COVERAGE FOR PERFORMING ARTISTS URGED

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview—Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, for years now Government has been studying the plight of artists. Numerous recommendations have been made to improve the financial situation particularly of performing artists.

Two task forces and a parliamentary committee have recommended including performing artists under unemployment insurance. These are people in Canada who experience considerable periods of unemployment between engagements, and they are not very well paid when they work.

The Government has delayed enacting any improvement in the situation on the grounds that the Forget Commission was studying the matter. Now that we have the Forget Commission report, which does not even address the issue, it is time for action.

I call upon the Government to perform now, to stop delaying, and to enact the necessary changes before the Conservative Government's theatre run is over. Performing artists are the Government's spectators now. They will be among the players in the next election.

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● (1410)

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

LIBERAL PARTY POLICY RESOLUTION

Mr. Bob Hicks (Scarborough East): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend's Liberal Party gathering highlighted the divisions which are increasingly becoming more and more evident to a growing number of Canadians. It is a Party heading in all directions. The divisions within the Liberal Party escalate as Liberal Members of Parliament insist that the Leader accept policy resolutions as policies of the Party. The Leader, who says he has returned the Party to the grassroots, tells these same people that certain policy resolutions do not count.

At the convention, Mr. Speaker, the grassroots voted to make Canada a nuclear free zone. The Leader says: "Let's really think about this one". Our NATO allies do not have to think about it. They know that such a detrimental policy would be in conflict with our NATO obligations. Where does the Liberal Party stand on this important issue? Canadians and our allies do not want, need, or deserve uncertainty in our NATO policies.

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ACCESS TO INFORMATION

RELEASE OF RECORDS—CONSULTATIONS WITH PRIME
MINISTER'S OFFICE

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I want to share with you a letter sent by Mr. Paul M. Tellier, Clerk of the Privy Council and Secretary to the Cabinet, to Mr. James H. Taylor, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs. It says, in part:

The Prime Minister has asked me to communicate with you with respect to the processing by your Department of requests for access to departmental records under the Access to Information Act.

It is important that you and your responsible officials ensure that your Minister is fully informed and that he personally signs off on the proposed release of any information that is potentially embarrassing either to your Department or to the Government.