

*Official Languages*

no possibility, in a practically unilingual area, English or French, for a unilingual civil servant to be deprived of his office on the ground that he is not bilingual. This will not happen in a unilingual area; this will happen in the bilingual districts.

And to come back to an argument that was put forward a while ago, if in a bilingual district there is a rather important linguistic minority and if a civil servant has been living for 10 or 15 years among people that speak a language other than his own, which language he never cared to learn, I say it is time to abolish such an anomaly. I cannot even understand that such a situation can be tolerated, even to save some civil servants, and I do not think there are any, Mr. Speaker. But, if there happened to be in the city of Quebec a person who speaks English only, who has been living in a French-speaking surrounding for 10 or 15 years, this anomaly should not be tolerated on the ground that he has 10 or 15 years' service.

Mr. Speaker, as I said when the other amendment was being discussed, it is time to deal with such situations and I think that those who oppose, who wish to restrict too much the scope of the bill have not understood its purpose.

Our Conservative friends are "toryfied" by this bill. This fright, this unjustified fear, reminded me of the fable by La Fontaine: "The Wolf and the Lamb", in which the wolf is afraid and complains, although it always had a great advantage over the lamb. However, it is afraid of being swallowed by the lamb.

The great majority of the country is English-speaking. Everybody knows it. However, they fear, Mr. Speaker, that the small minority will take over the country. Those are simply absurd considerations. It is to believe in myths: the French domination. It is especially to take every possible means to divide this country which however we would like to see better united than it is now.

Therefore, I believe that the time has come to speak frankly. It is time to dot the "i's" and to realize that it is necessary to have true bilingualism and not just intentional bilingualism. I cannot get over the proposed amendment. It seems impossible to me that, in 1969, in the light of all the events which have occurred during the past few years, that a member for parliament could even think of moving an amendment which reads in part as follows:

—has declared his intention and willingness to learn the other official language.

Mr. Speaker, it is almost inconceivable, almost unbelievable. We know fully well that if it were ever implemented, it would work only one way. There is no precedent enabling us to find out that a unilingual French-speaking person would be hired exclusively because of its qualifications. Again, unfairness would prevail and perhaps even worse than now.

You can see, Mr. Speaker, how "off-the-track" one is when saying that. Therefore, with such arguments and opinions it is not surprising that for all practical purposes the Progressive Conservative party has disappeared from the province of Quebec. And the four who succeeded in coming off well were lucky. Why? Because that party never understood that the basic problem was perhaps less a matter of language than one of participation by the founding people of this country, a participation that we want to regularize today, to bring to normal. We want abnormal things to become normal and it is unfortunately for some people some kind of revolution. And this is too bad because everybody can rest easy, everybody can be sure that there will never be a case in a district with an English majority where a French-speaking person will enjoy priority for the only reason that such a person is French-speaking.

• (9:40 p.m.)

On the other hand, we hope we shall never see in such a district public service employees unable to communicate with the local people. Should such anomalies exist at present, they must absolutely be abolished.

And if need be, Mr. Speaker, I will suggest something to the government. I admit that people are not born bilingual and that it is difficult for an English-speaking person, in the North-American context, to learn French. On the other hand, even if it were to be more costly, I wonder whether it would not be a good idea to provide service both in French and in English at the same time.

Besides, that is what is done in other bilingual countries to avoid frictions between races and having a unilingual civil servant located in a bilingual district lose his job. I even agree with the idea of waiting until he retires. If that is what is feared, then let another civil servant be appointed, bilingual this time, and have the two perform the same duties. Then it can be said that the service is truly bilingual. The service could be bilingual in two ways: through a bilingual civil servant, or through different persons providing