

Government Organization

Mr. Chairman, it is unbelievable that the Polymer Corporation should have among its employees as many senior officials with a salary of \$17,000 or more and whose mother tongue is neither French nor English than officials whose mother tongue is French.

As far as I am concerned, Mr. Chairman, to go to the bottom of it, I asked another kind of question about the same company, and I am going to quote the answer given. That takes the cake, as the Quebecers of the Lotbinière constituency would say. I therefore asked: For each of the proprietary Crown corporations, how many employees speak French only, how many speak English only and how many are bilingual?

For the Polymer Corporation, the answer was a very short one. I was told that none of the 2,744 employees of the Corporation spoke French only. There is no need to go on, because this is most provoking and is a clear indication of discrimination. But as I do not want to delay any further this debate, I want to tell the minister that we set very high hopes on the new concept of administration brought up in this bill and we agree on that. We approve this new department and the new practice it advocates in management, but we are very much concerned over the much talked-about question of bilingualism.

I have many more statistics to quote, but I should like to tell the other ministers concerned that nearly every department is facing the same problem.

Mr. Chairman, I know that the honourable minister who is suggesting this new department is among those best able to correct the injustice done to bilingualism.

I noticed that at the very beginning of his speech, he did not talk about bilingualism advisers. Will there be any in his department? If so, how many? Will courses be organized to provide a greater bilingual service? Will the ratio for bilingual officials earning \$17,000 and over a year be more balanced than the one I mentioned, namely 4 against 71?

Mr. Chairman, I do not want to delay the debate any further, but I must insist on that question of the utmost importance. I trust that the minister will be able to give us satisfaction in that respect.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, there is another matter which puzzles me very much, that of the Queen's Printer. Section 48 and the next ones provide that one of the deputy ministers shall be an officer of the new Department of

Supply and Services, replacing the Department of Defence Production and posted to the Printing Bureau with the title of Queen's Printer.

● (4:20 p.m.)

The first problem I see is the following: if Canada is truly a sovereign and independent country, named Canada and not Great Britain or whatever you like, it seems to me out of date to still use in our legal texts such archaic expressions as "The Queen's".

Mr. Chairman, notwithstanding any respect due the United Kingdom, we could exclude from our legislation expressions reminiscent of a kind of colonialism out of fashion in our midst.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I believe that it would be advisable to strike out such expressions in our legislation, and I am surprised that while aiming at modernizing and updating the organization of the government in the light of 1969 concepts, we should persist in threading the beaten paths of colonialism. Therefore, we should not wonder why so many people are questioning the value of our legislation and the modernization of our government. For every step forward that we take, we take one backward; we move like a crab, which means that we are motionless. That is what our governments think.

My last remark is about the office of Queen's Printer. In the answer he gave on Monday or Tuesday to the hon. member for Prince Albert, the Prime Minister suggested that the position of Queen's Printer has now been vacant since December. It is very difficult to get information, but I would like to be enlightened on that subject. Is the office of Queen's Printer vacant or not? Who suggested to the Queen's Printer to resign, or did he resign on his own? In what department is Mr. Duhamel now working? We would like to know, to congratulate him on his new appointment.

In my opinion, it is fundamental that we be informed since there is every reason to believe, and I refer to the very remarks of the Prime Minister, that the Queen's Printer, Mr. Duhamel, was doing a fine job. He was one of the few French-speaking deputy ministers in the Department of Defence Production. Mr. Chairman, we doubt that the government sincerely wants to establish bilingualism since it downgrades the sole survivor of the French Canadians in that department.

[Mr. Fortin.]