

Official Languages

debate is adjourned I propose to dispense with what I intended to say by way of opening remarks. I would like to say, however, that I, too, was surprised to hear the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis), speaking for the New Democratic party, say he was appalled at certain of the conditions that the clauses of the bill seemed to impose upon the people of Canada. I listened to his speech with much interest, and it seemed to me to be a speech intended for the consumption of those in western Canada as well as those in eastern Canada, depending on which part of his speech one read. In other words, it seems to me that the position of the N.D.P. on this bill is one of riding the fence.

Mr. Gilbert: Do not worry about the New Democratic party.

Mr. McInosh: I would never do that because I doubt whether I will live to see the N.D.P. form the government of this country.

In rising to take part in this debate, I fully realize that what I have to say is my own opinion and is not intended to be a reflection on anyone. What I say may be twisted and misinterpreted in an attempt to belittle me as a bigot and possibly a reactionary. However, let me repeat that what I am going to say is my own opinion.

This morning when the Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier) commenced his speech he said that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) had already stated this measure was extremely important in the view of the government because it touched the very foundation of Canadian unity. I think he also said that language rights were the very core of unity within our country. I entirely disagree with him on that because I think this bill will become the core of disunity in this country in places where there never was disunity before.

The Secretary of State also said no doubt there is a risk of encountering many petty objections. For example, he said there are people who will object because of a narrow, conformist attitude. It is an unfortunate fact of life in Canada today that anyone who feels compelled, as I do, even by conscience or principle, to question measures such as the one now before us in Bill C-120 runs the risk of being branded a WASP racist. I do not care how I am branded; I feel, as a matter of principle and conscience, that I must have my say.

A disproportionate number of pundits, academics and politicians who prefer theories and paper solutions to hard headed, workable

legislation have blindly accepted the idea that our only hope of national survival lies in trying to legislate unity. This cannot be done. You cannot impose equality of race and language by federal coercion.

These apostles of the B and B commission, whose high priests I might say, are the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State, are like propagators of new faiths throughout history, narrow, fanatical and inflexible. They are the evangelists and sole trustees of the latest gospel; those who differ with them are infidels and heretics. To question the dogmatic assertions of one of them is to open the floodgate of their collective wrath. This I appreciate, Mr. Speaker, and this I am prepared for. But I believe that it is high time for some plain speaking, for the voice of inexpert, unacademic, ordinary Canadians to be heard on this question of race and language.

The bogey of separatism has been skilfully inflated, the facts of history and of current events so expertly distorted, that ordinary Canadians in many parts of the country have been hoodwinked into believing that massive concession to a minority is the only answer; that the "gospel according to St. Pierre" provides the only way. Bilingualism and biculturalism have become what is known as the "in" thing. It is fashionable today to sprinkle French clichés into your cocktail chatter, to talk of total immersion, and to discourse on the need for linguistic equality. We just heard what the last speaker said a few moments ago. Too few of those who have adopted this fad have paused long enough to consider the facts and implications that are the guts of the whole question with which Bill C-120 attempts to deal. For too many Canadians it is sufficient that the "B & B" Commission is popular, and the current "thing" is to be "for" it. But this debate, Mr. Speaker, is not a cocktail party conversation. This legislation is not just an interesting and provocative theory. This debate is a deadly serious discussion of tremendous importance to the everyday life of Canada and every Canadian. This legislation will become a hard and binding fact affecting everyone if it passes through parliament.

● (3:50 p.m.)

Because it affects the whole nation so intimately and so radically, I believe it should not be allowed to be whisked through parliament without there being the most searching and candid examination. I am opposed to this bill as bad law, bad politics and bad public