

*Official Languages*

with the damage that will be done, by the implementation of this bill in its present form, to Canadians of all ethnic origins as well as to the national interest. This damage will arise from the discriminatory nature of the bill.

Discrimination is the very essence of this legislation. It will discriminate against all Canadians who, because of the area of Canada in which they were born and the total lack of second language facilities in those areas, have little hope of being classed as bilingual. It will favour those born into one language and brought up in two—in other words, French Canadians.

I very much doubt whether there is in Canada, or anywhere else for that matter, a person who is truly bilingual in the sense envisaged by this bill. Neither do I believe that it is possible for anyone, be he of French or English language background, to reach the condition of bilingualism espoused by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier) in this theory of a fully bilingual state, and which they are attempting to create by this legislation.

In saying this I am not being critical, bigoted or stubborn. I am not saying bilingualism is good or bad, desirable or undesirable, fortunate or unfortunate. I believe that human limitations and the facts of life in Canada and in North America as a whole make my statement true. When you have legislation that prescribes, as a condition of employment and career advancement, that a person must be bilingual, you are imposing upon that person something that he is powerless to acquire of his own volition. To my mind it is similar to the arbitrary physical standards set out as a condition of employment in the R.C.M.P. or armed forces. It is a physical attribute that is imposed by nature, not by individual desire or initiative. It is an accident of birth.

• (8:40 p.m.)

The facts of life in Canada are that many Canadians of French ancestry have been born into French speaking homes and raised largely in an English speaking environment. The reverse is true of very few Canadians of English or other ethnic backgrounds. Any law that has the effect of compelling employees of the public service to be bilingual automatically restricts the recruiting ground of the Public Service to the French sector of the country. It openly discriminates against those who by chance of birth come from other areas of the country and from a background other than French. As reported in the Montreal

*Star* of April 16 last, Mr. S. A. Blackburn, the man responsible for the language training program in the Public Service of Canada said:

—a second language can only be attained by one who is prepared to work on a full-time basis in a second linguistic and cultural milieu for a long period—a year or more.

Indeed, it is obvious that most Canadians cannot be fluently bilingual.

Mr. Blackburn is further reported to have stated that in his opinion the truly bilingual person is virtually non-existent. "Even the bilingual person", he added, "is at an enormous disadvantage if he has to do intellectual, creative work in a second language."

One does not need to have particularly clear perception in order to see what the effect upon Canada and Canadians will be if the public service of the nation is closed to all who are not already partly bilingual. In this regard it might be well to look at the experience of the Public Service Commission with respect to recruitment on a language basis and in language training, as set out in the 1968 report of the Public Service Commission. On page 24 of the 1968 annual report is found this paragraph:

Furthermore, the Commission felt it could not rely mainly on external recruitment of personnel already proficient in both English and French to staff positions where both languages were required since this course of action would have had unfortunate consequences. Opportunities for acquiring second language skills in many parts of Canada would have resulted in the Commission's having only a limited capacity to recruit in certain regions of the country. Secondly the career status of employees already in the service would have been adversely affected since through no fault of their own they found themselves lacking second language skills. Finally to have relied mainly on external recruitment to meet required linguistic objectives would have taken perhaps 20 to 25 years in order to attain a satisfactory situation unless a wholesale replacement program was undertaken.

On page 30 of this document is a table headed "Distribution by Training Levels of the Total Active Student Nominations, November 30, 1968". Underneath the table are to be found the following words:

It will be seen that approximately 88% of those studying French as a second language are in the two lowest levels while this is the case for only 41% of those studying English.

Furthermore, in Table VII, which shows distribution of identified population in the designated categories by levels of instruction, we see that 13,520 English speaking students are learning French whereas 3,200 French speaking students are studying English. On page 44 of this document are to be found