

The Address—Mr. Francis

cent claimed other languages. Canada's stock of persons who declared themselves to the census takers to be bilingual in French and English was only 12.2 per cent of the population; a total of 2,231,172 persons, or roughly one in eight of all Canadians. Of all those officially bilingual, 60 per cent resided in one province, the province of Quebec. It would appear that at least 80 per cent of all the bilingual persons in Canada are to be found in the three major areas of contact of the French and English cultures, namely the Ottawa valley, metropolitan Montreal and northern New Brunswick.

A policy of bilingual preference would have very important regional implications for Canadians. It would have the effect of recruiting future civil servants, to a very large degree, from some regions of Canada to the relative exclusion of other areas.

Over the long period it is the hope of all of us that the educational systems of the English speaking areas of Canada will produce much greater numbers of citizens who are competent in French than is now the case. Of our stock of bilingual persons, four out of five claim French as their mother tongue and this is a very unfortunate reflection on the extent to which the educational systems of many of the Canadian provinces are failing to produce citizens who are competent in both official languages.

I have asked many members of school boards why this is the case and why it is not possible to teach French more effectively at the earliest grades of our school systems. The other morning as I was driving to the House of Commons, I turned on my car radio. On a local program entitled "Live Wire" a woman called in and identified herself with a French name. The announcer asked if she spoke French and she said "no". He then asked if her husband spoke French and she said "not very well". He asked what her husband did and the answer was he taught French in a local high school. Too often the teacher of French has met all the formal educational requirements and has a teaching certificate within the province in which he is teaching, but fails to inspire students with a living knowledge of the language. I think it would help Canada a great deal if at the next interprovincial conference the provincial ministers of education considered the teaching of French as a priority subject for their agenda. The provinces might consider, for example, accepting teaching certificates from graduates of the province of Quebec to teach French in schools outside of Quebec, and Quebec in turn might accept graduates of English speaking institutions to teach English to students within Quebec. There is room for a great deal more reciprocity here without

[Mr. Francis.]

each province insisting on the full attainment of the teaching certificates within the province.

There is also a certain reluctance on the part of the graduates of the classical colleges and other institutions in Quebec to accept employment outside their province in communities without substantial French-speaking minorities and in school systems foreign to their religious traditions. I say to my colleagues in this house from the province of Quebec, the cause of Canadian unity will be well served if young graduates of French-speaking institutions will volunteer to accept employment with English speaking Protestant school systems outside their province in order that better French may be taught and in order that more effective bilingualism may be promoted. I hope also that within the province of Quebec, the Protestant school systems should recognize that the employment of graduates of French Canadian institutions would be the most effective means they could seek in order to improve the teaching of French within their systems.

I think most of us recognize that the earlier a child starts language education, the greater are the chances of becoming competently bilingual. At the present time there are relatively few persons graduating from the English speaking universities of Canada who would meet any objective standards of competence in bilingualism. I have recently received letters from such persons who state they are not seeking a career in the government service because they feel it will be too late for them, even now, to rectify their handicaps in knowledge of the French language.

The public service of Canada, through the civil service commission, has recently announced a crash program of an experimental nature to train existing unilingual civil servants in a second language. We will all follow the development of this program with a great deal of interest. There is no question that the development of a policy of bilingualism involves a general overhead cost to the public service and should be recognized as part of the price to be paid by Canadians for national unity. This cost starts with the annual \$1 million which my colleague from Drummond-Arthabaska (Mr. Pepin) described the other day. This is for the experimental program of the civil service commission for teaching the language, together with the costs of a bicultural institute, the general problems of the allotment of time, employment of staff and the production of the entire range of documents relating to government business in two languages. I think we should recognize that this does involve some cost, and it is a cost which those of us