

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

Moreover, because of a greater national awareness, being fully aware that it is the bastion of the French-Canadian nation the centre from which it must radiate and extend its influence, the province of Quebec or the government of Quebec intends to increase French immigration and immigration of French speaking people, and modernize its social and humanitarian legislation correspondingly.

For these reasons, it is imperative, particularly with respect to French immigration and immigration of French speaking people, that the federal minister of immigration take no initiative or decision in this field, nor must he elaborate any definite policy, without consulting the Quebec government, taking into account the position of this province, and keeping in constant touch with the representatives of the Quebec government.

Let us not forget that the Canadian federation originated in a pact between the two great founding nations. Now, the first responsibility of the Quebec government lies in the survival and self-fulfilment of the French Canadian nation and of its French culture. The parties to a pact or a contract must consult and discuss with each other.

It does not seem to me that the federal minister of immigration, before his recent visit to Paris and after he returned got in touch with the Quebec government with regard to French immigration to Canada and to measures which the central government intends to bring forward in this field taking into account the views of Quebec.

I trust the minister tonight will give the house an assurance that he intends to consult with the Quebec government soon and that, in the future, he will not take initiatives concerning French and French speaking immigration without first getting in touch with the Quebec government through the regular channels.

• (10:10 p.m.)

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, my department is interested in the problem of French immigration which also concerns me personally. As a matter of fact, since I became head of this department, I made two trips to France in order to promote French immigration.

When I met with Hon. Jean-Jacques Bertrand, Quebec minister of justice and immigration last August, I asked him to speed things up and to organize his immigration service as soon as possible. The Hon. Guy

[Mr. Allard.]

Favreau, one of my predecessors, had also urged the provincial government to establish an immigration service in 1963.

Ever since confederation, that is since 1867, the province of Quebec has had nothing to do with immigration, even if it had a clear jurisdiction under the constitution. Now that some interest is shown in the matter, the federal government, which was within its own jurisdictional rights, should not then be censured.

I met Hon. Jean-Jacques Bertrand in France. After having conferred with five French ministers, I met the Quebec delegation to which I made a report on my trip. When I returned I wrote to the Quebec premier also to report.

So I wonder where the hon. member for Sherbrooke got the opinion or rather the information to the effect I did not communicate with the Quebec provincial government. On the contrary, I contacted its representatives on several occasions and kept them abreast of my representations. There is one particular thing I wish to point out to the hon. member: I do not intend to telephone the Quebec provincial government every day in order to know if French immigration is of interest to them.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Marchand: I believe Quebec authorities will have to develop their own policy and express themselves the desire to meet with us for discussing that policy, because I am not in the immigration department as a head clerk of a department that could be eventually established in Quebec.

In his remarks, the hon. member for Sherbrooke has not taken into account apparently the equality of both governments in a matter that seems very important and in which are involved both levels of government.

Mr. Speaker, the position taken by the federal government—which has been indicated on several occasions—is to interest itself in immigration of French speaking applicants. We wish to co-operate with the province of Quebec, but co-operation requires efforts on both sides. It is necessary that the Quebec government should indicate clearly that it is interested in our immigration policy; it will have to elaborate its policy before we can be asked in the House of Commons whether we know that policy, because it has never been formulated. Then, if all those things happen—

Mr. Speaker: Order.