

have and have had to make greater efforts than Anglophones to make themselves understood.

I am speaking, Madam Speaker, of a psychological situation in which an individual finds himself when he realizes he has to learn and use a second language in most of his dealings with others, and realizes at the same time that someone else considers the knowledge of a second language as an option which he may accept or reject. If, Madam Speaker, there are people in our country who admit the existence of bilingualism gives Francophones a competitive edge in getting a job with the federal government or any other business, it is not up to us to conclude that advantage exists because French-speaking Canadians, Francophones, have been more or less forced in the past to make greater efforts than their English-speaking fellow citizens.

That need to make a much bigger effort is twice as great in communities where Francophones are a minority such as the Franco-Ontarian and Franco-Albertan, to name only those.

Madam Speaker, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism recommended that Canada become officially bilingual, and for some twenty years now we have been working at improving the situation without getting to the level of improvement that would satisfy everybody. Presumably we will never be able to satisfy everybody in that context. However, I think we have come to a point where the reality of a bicultural, bilingual country is accepted and it is only as to the degree, the extent of that acceptance that we have major differences.

Madam Speaker, I would like to briefly return to the matter of other languages, which is referred to in the legislation. I have in my constituency a good 30 per cent of people whose mother tongue is neither French nor English. Most of them, perhaps 25 per cent, have a native mother tongue. I would like to ask Hon. Members and all Canadians to consider the situation of those who have a native mother tongue. We boast too much of being a bilingual country. Of course we are a multilingual country, but officially we are bilingual. It is not good enough for our natives to hear that myth of the two founding peoples which oftentimes is linked to bilingualism, because basically this is still a myth and a legend, an accepted story that is just the same offensive to some extent for members of the first nations in our great country.

Madam Speaker, my colleague for Thunder Bay—Nipigon (Mr. Epp) referred this morning to the situation, the inertia among institutions. This is a fact. I believe that inertia is very hard to overcome—it will always be a struggle to ensure the principle that services in the official language of one's choice should be available throughout the country. I am convinced we are grateful that in some areas of the country, there are only very small minorities whose mother tongue is the other official language and it is often very difficult, even among civil servants who want to serve the minority language community. Even for those civil servants this is often difficult in view of the volume of demand and the urge to maintain one's own

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strength, especially when they are of the other mother tongue and they were trained in the second language in that area.

Madam Speaker, we have institutions whose goal is to support and develop bilingualism in Canada, mainly of course the Commissioner of Official Languages and the Joint Committee. This is the only Joint Committee on which I sat and of which I wanted to be a part, in view of my own views on the Senate, but at any rate it is a Committee that did a very needed and demanding job, especially in the area of official bilingualism.

Madam Speaker, my colleagues and I have often noticed, during sittings of the committee, that there were shortcomings as far as bilingualism is concerned. In some Government or semi-Government institutions there is a mentality which tends to negate the equality of both official languages.

We have also to consider and correct the situation which exists in certain parts of the country, where it is extremely difficult for someone born outside the majority group, the dominant linguistic group, to find employment in the federal or provincial Public Service.

To conclude, Madam Speaker, I wish to emphasize the point I was making earlier. Bill C-72 is too important to be passed expeditiously by the House, following some kind of agreement, it is too important to be treated like that, but I would like the Government to react to the motion of the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier and present its Bill to the House for second reading.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): Questions and comments. Resuming debate. The Hon. Member for Charlevoix (Mr. Hamelin) has the floor.

Mr. Charles Hamelin (Charlevoix): Madam Speaker, each time I rise to speak about linguistic issues, and especially the linguistic duality of Canada, I feel that I am touching on the very fabric of this country, on the best of what makes Canada what it is. It is Canada in its Sunday best. Today I would like to speak about Bill C-72. Naturally, I agree with my colleague for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier), who praised this Bill with some reluctance earlier, but whose feelings I share to a very large extent. I believe that the Hon. Member would probably deserve the title of "First Defender of the Canadian Linguistic Duality", and I seriously believe that we should consider putting up a monument to him now rather than later, as, with the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme), and many others from all political parties, especially the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier has shown constant determination to bring out the best in Canada make this country what all Canadians would like it to be.

I am therefore rather surprised at the position taken today by the Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier. I understand that he belongs to an Opposition party and that it is traditional for the Opposition to move motions that condemn the Government and to use terms such as inaction, lack of political will and