

Official Languages

Mr. MacEachen: There is not a motion.

Mr. Stanfield: No, he did not put it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Standing Order 58(14) states:

In every session the main estimates to cover the incoming fiscal year for every department of government shall be referred to standing committees on or before March 1 of the then expiring fiscal year. Each such committee shall consider and shall report, or shall be deemed to have reported, the same back to the House not later than May 31 in the then current fiscal year.

Several hon. members have taken that Standing Order to mean that at the expiry of today the estimates of any particular department, more particularly the ones to which the hon. members refer, shall be deemed to have been passed by the House of Commons. This is not so. The relevant words are "shall be deemed to have reported". It is open to hon. members, at a later stage in this session, to challenge the particular estimates they wish to have challenged. I think the Chair might also say that hon. members are anticipating what may happen this evening when a meeting has been called to consider the estimates of a particular department or division of government. That is something I think the House cannot do. The estimates have been referred to the committees and until these come back, either as a result of the provisions of the Standing Order I have mentioned or in some other way, we should not interfere.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order to determine whether or not there would be unanimous consent to the proposal I put forward earlier, namely, that the Standing Order be altered so that June 15 becomes the deadline, without proposing that there be any debate on it.

An hon. Member: No, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: The Liberals say no.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Orders of the day.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

DECLARATION OF CERTAIN PRINCIPLES RESPECTING EMPLOYMENT IN PUBLIC SERVICE OF CANADA

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister) moved:

That this House,

(i) aware that, as provided in the Official Languages Act, the English and French languages possess and enjoy equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all the institutions of the Parliament and Government of Canada;

cognizant that it is the duty of departments and agencies of the Government of Canada to ensure, in accordance with that Act, that members of the public can obtain available services from and communicate with them in both official languages; while recognizing that public servants should, as a general proposition

[Mr. McGrath.]

and subject to the requirements of the Official Languages Act respecting the provision of services to the public, be able to carry out their duties in the Public Service of Canada in the official language of their choice;

do hereby recognize and approve the following Principles for achieving the foregoing:

(1) that positions which are seen, under present circumstances, as requiring the knowledge and use of both the French and English languages will be first identified, and then designated, as bilingual in the course of the period ending December 31, 1978;

(2) that positions will also be identified where English is an essential requirement of the job, where French is essential, or whether either French or English may be used;

(3) that a knowledge of English and French is one of the elements of merit in the selection of candidates for bilingual positions;

(4) that competitions for bilingual positions will be open both to bilingual candidates and unilingual candidates who have formally indicated their willingness to become bilingual;

(5) that competitions for unilingual positions will continue to be open to unilingual or bilingual candidates who meet the language requirements of the job;

(6) that unilingual incumbents of bilingual positions may elect to become bilingual and undertake language training, or transfer to another job having the same salary maximum, or, if they were to decline such a transfer, to remain in their positions even though the posts have been designated as bilingual;

(7) that employees who, as of April 6, 1966, had at least ten years of continuous service and who, since that date, have been employed continuously in the federal Public Service, will be entitled to apply for any job that has been identified for future designation as bilingual without having to indicate their willingness to become bilingual;

(8) that unilingual French-speaking and English-speaking persons from outside the Public Service who are willing to become bilingual may apply for bilingual positions open to public competition;

(9) that language training, at public expense, will be provided to unilingual public servants as well as to persons who are appointed to the Public Service to bilingual positions;

do further approve the Government of Canada, and, in particular, the Treasury Board and the Public Service Commission, taking the measures required to give effect to the aforementioned Principles; and

(ii) do further approve the taking of measures, after consultation with employee representatives, designed to produce a greater use of the French language at all levels in the Public Service, through increasing, where practical, the number of French Language Units, through further recruitment efforts by the Public Service Commission, through training programs offered in the French language and by developing proposals, in conjunction with the Governments of the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, to enhance the bilingual character of the National Capital region, thus helping to realize the objective of achieving, within the merit principle, full participation in the Public Service by members of both the anglophone and the francophone communities.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne indicated that our government would ask Parliament to "confirm the basic principles of our program for bilingualism in the public service. The resolution now before this House sets out those principles, together with further measures to achieve greater use of the French language in the public service.

Since we must this session deal with quite a few national concerns, I am sure hon. members will allow me a few moments to relate today's resolution, and the govern-