

Official Languages

fears that Canadians have in respect of the successful implementation of this bill will not be assuaged.

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words about this bill because I think it involves a matter which goes far beyond party lines. We are trying through this bill to make a series of judgments as to how best we can carry out the spirit of this legislation. As the last hon. member who spoke pointed out, this will add greatly to the unity of this country.

It is rather unfortunate that the committee had to be small and that we could not all be members. With a large number of us as members of the committee I think there might have been greater understanding, a greater exchange of opinion and views. However, that lack could not be helped. The committee had to be small for various reasons.

So far as the implementation of this measure is concerned, this is one of the most difficult, delicate and dangerous pieces of legislation we are likely to pass in this session. For this reason there are differences of opinion among the members of all parties. The hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) pointed out that among his colleagues there are those who do not see eye to eye with him in respect of this amendment. I am one of those members. I shall go into my reasons in just a moment. Surely even those on the government side must be prey to these anxieties and differences of opinion. The minister should not take pride in having assumed a stance and maintaining that this stance must be defended at all costs. I think it is up to us to pool our best thoughts and judgments as to the effect of this bill across the country.

Let me point out one of the dangers of the bill. We are inclined to believe that the big central provinces are the provinces mostly concerned and affected by this languages bill. Perhaps at this moment it is true that they are more directly affected. Consequently I go along with what the hon. member for York South said, that there should be provisions for two members, one English speaking and one French speaking, from each of the central provinces to make sure there is a complete representation of feelings on this board. It would be even better in my opinion if there could be members who spoke both English and French. In this way I think we would have good representation, and this should be our aim. There should be a complete understanding of the provinces on the part of those people who are chosen.

[Mr. Nowlan.]

Let me turn now to my strongest objection. In our anxiety to make sure of complete representation for the central provinces which have these difficulties and have to work with this measure from the beginning, we should not be blind to the fact that it is equally important to make sure that the rest of Canada is represented on this board. This is not a matter which concerns only Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and parts of Manitoba. This question concerns all of Canada.

It is our hope that everyone in Canada will increasingly be able to feel *chez soi*, no matter what part of the country they may find themselves in. Mobility is increasing. It is our hope that the curtains, iron, bamboo and the rest, which have existed in various parts of Canada will be removed and that we shall become one people. I do not mean this in the melting-pot sense but in the sense that we shall be free to go back and forth across this country as our own.

I urge the minister to include a representative from British Columbia on this board. I come from a province which is as yet almost untouched by the necessity of dealing with this problem. That is precisely why I want British Columbia to be represented. As the years pass British Columbia is bound to be drawn closer and closer to the rest of the country. Some of us do not like to face the facts of our geography, but it is true that because of the geography of British Columbia we are already much too far away from Ottawa to obtain the best kind of unity. British Columbia is much too far away from the Atlantic regions to obtain the understanding we need. If there is more truth than poetry in some of the jibes that British Columbia is in danger of becoming a separatist province, the reason is in large part related to our geography. The Rocky Mountains are not only a geographical barrier, they are a psychological barrier. I want British Columbians to feel from the beginning of the implementation of this languages bill that they are in on the ground floor.

From the beginning the people of British Columbia should know what is going on and should feel that they are a part of this measure, even though this problem does not touch us at this time. If we are in on the ground floor the task of those of us who come from British Columbia will be much easier. It will be much easier to explain the languages bill to our constituents if we can go now and say that because of the composition of this board a representative from British Columbia will be included. The people will then have a stake in