

Designation of Nova Scotia

This is a situation of that type. If indeed it is a benefit to have purity of form in respecting Latin, then let us weigh that against the factors of the effect on the population and the cost.

If this Bill were to lead to great happiness in the province by those persons affected by the change, I would favour moving ahead quickly with this Bill. However, I must admit that I can see no striking advantages.

I would like to add another factor for consideration, that of the image abroad. More persons than ever are travelling to Canada these days because of Expo and what is happening overseas, and we can assume that many of them will want to travel to our beautiful seaside province known in all Francophone tourist literature as "Nouvelle-Écosse". Who is to explain to all these hordes of would-be tourists that, alas, Nouvelle-Écosse is no more? What will Francophone tourists think of a province which has just lost its clearly French appellation? How will they interpret that, I wonder? Would they be disappointed or upset by this change? I think that would be unfortunate, Mr. Speaker.

Nova Scotia, with its Acadian culture and its growing number of Francophone institutions is proudly Francophone, just as it is proudly Anglophone. Both parts of that collectivity deserve the right to express themselves in the name which they have chosen historically and to which they have cleaved over the centuries, Nova Scotia in English, Nouvelle-Écosse in French.

I also wonder what has happened to the Official Opposition. We do not have one member of the Liberal Party in the House of Commons, not merely to contribute to the debate, but there are none here at all. Thank you and merci, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

Mrs. Carole Jacques (Montreal—Mercier): Mr. Speaker, my name is Carole Jacques, Member for Montreal—Mercier. Mr. Speaker, a lawyer's memory never fails, they say.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to speak to the Bill entitled An Act respecting the official designation of "Nova Scotia". I want to approach this matter from a national angle.

One might say that the name "Nova Scotia" is part of the cultural heritage of Nova Scotians and, in fact, of all Canadians. It is a part of our cultural heritage because it is the name which for nearly 300 years has appeared in all our official documents, all our newspapers, all our business or personal correspondence.

How would a Francophone used to saying "Je viens de la Nouvelle-Écosse" feel if, henceforth, he had to say "Je viens de la Nova Scotia"? Probably the same way an Anglophone would feel when saying "I come from Nouvelle-Écosse". One would get the impression the sentence was begun in one language and finished in the other.

The words "Nova Scotia" may very well be derived from Latin, but still they do sound English because they have been used for years to designate one of our maritime provinces. It would be too much to ask Francophones to say "Nova Scotia"

instead of "Nouvelle-Écosse", just as it would be to ask Anglophones to substitute the words "Colombie-Britannique" for the words "British Columbia". In either case it would be foreign to the speaker's language.

Is there any logic in the fact that Anglophones did not translate the Latin phrase *Nova Scotia*, as Francophones did? Rather than logic, what is involved is a historical process that led to the constant use of the words *Nova Scotia* on one side, and *Nouvelle-Écosse* on the other. I feel it is not proper that we should be logical to the point of imposing uniformity in all areas.

Canada was not built on uniformity. The proof is that we have here today French-speaking Members and English-speaking Members. What gives this country its character is that it was developed under the influence of various stimuli, each evolving in its own right. Let us not now impose rigid uniformity.

Mr. Speaker, when I was a child, I had the chance to visit Nova Scotia, and its people with their extraordinarily warm hospitality that is well reflected in the words *Nouvelle-Écosse*. It would be infringing upon their rights if we were to substitute the Latin name *Nova Scotia*. The rights of citizens secured over centuries, contrary to toponymic usage, would require amendments to constitutional documents—and besides, this is a provincial matter—and a number of necessary changes dealt with by federal law, and soon and so forth, Mr. Speaker. This would have a negative impact on the French-speaking population, because *Nova Scotia* is perceived as an English name.

The translation of names goes contrary to good usage with respect to proper names. The name is Latin and not English. The name is to be found in the 1621 Charter issued by King James to William Alexander. We must realize, Mr. Speaker, that Nova Scotia has very dynamic minorities which have vested rights over time that we cannot infringe upon. We have to respect as a Government and as a federal Parliament the rights of the French-language minorities outside Quebec.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order, please. Debate. The Hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of State for Science and Technology (Mr. Lanthier).

Mr. Claude Lanthier (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity today to see our Anglophone Members in the House of Commons vehemently defending a French designation whose existence has been consecrated by history! I am very proud of my Anglophone colleagues today.

● (1730)

[English]

I am proud of my Anglophone colleagues who are defending so vigorously the French appellation "Nouvelle-Écosse". This is an historic moment, not only in the House of Commons, but in the Progressive Conservative Party, which was once