

true, and if anyone knows it, we certainly do. Still, we had surprises in store for some people even in Montreal, where we reaped 157,000 votes, that is as many as the NDP in all of Quebec. In fact we had 100,000 more votes than the PCs and the NDPs combined in the province of Quebec. People will say: Yes, but that may be a trend peculiar to Quebec. How could that be, seeing that I said the same things in Quebec as in the other areas. I went to the Maritimes and said exactly the same thing. I stated that the differences of opinion with regard to linguistic matters did not constitute a real problem but that it was made to look like a problem because of a sad lack of purchasing power in all of the provinces.

• (2100)

In Quebec you hear people say, even economists like Mr. Parizeau, for instance, we don't have enough because Ottawa gives too much to the West. You go West and meet economists who tell you quite the opposite: we don't have enough because the Trudeau government gives too much to his "pea-soupers" from the province of Quebec. You hear provinces rearing up against each other. Although it is not a matter of language, it had been made into a matter of language.

You hear people talk about those Frenchmen from Quebec, then in Quebec you hear people berating the Anglo-Saxons in the other provinces, but in the meantime the financiers are having a ball. Has it ever been noticed that the monetary system has no language? It speaks neither French, nor English, nor Ukrainian, nor Japanese, nor Chinese. It is peculiar how everyone understands the language of the monetary system. There is no one who does not know the difference between a ten dollar bill and a twenty dollar bill, whether English, French, or Ukrainian. And that is the system they dare not touch. Let us fight one another, in French and in English.

Some are praising the government's policy on the official languages, others criticize it, while some others commend it, but as soon as our backs are turned, they violently object to it. Frankness is not much in honour. And then, someone will say: It is all the fault of the French or the English, and then we go on fighting one another with great spirit.

Mr. Speaker, the policy on the two official languages of Canada does not mean that the English-speaking from British Columbia have to learn French. This is where the government is now seriously at fault. To tell a 55 year old man that he has to learn French or English, I find, is a bit stupid. There are people who try to learn the second language and I congratulate them. This afternoon, I heard the Leader of the official Opposition speak French. There were some passages that I did not understand too well, but, at least, he made a commendable effort, and I congratulate him. The other night, on the TV program "Bye Bye 72", he was not introduced in this perspective... However, those who learn the second official language, deserve to be congratulated. To those who learn English at the age of 50, the same applies. Therefore, I say to the government, let the two official languages be recognized, yes, but to implement this, there is only one way: give the provinces the grants they need to be able, in their jurisdictional area, to teach the two official languages starting

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with the first year in grade school and there you will have—

Mr. Speaker: I regret to interrupt the hon. member for Témiscamingue, but the time allowed to him has expired. Unless he gets the consent of the House he cannot continue. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed. The hon. member for Témiscamingue may continue his remarks.

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I thank very sincerely all my colleagues for allowing me to keep on with my remarks, but I will not overtax their generosity.

Mr. Speaker, I was saying that the only way to get people from sea to sea to know the two official languages, is to teach them at school—not in Grade 13, not at university level, for it is too late then, but when the child is in primary school, in first or second grade; at this stage he will easily learn any language.

I had a personal experience of this. I have two sons, one of whom is sitting with me in this House. When my two sons were but little fellows of five or six, one of my neighbours back home in Rouyn was Ukrainian. He also had a little boy of the same age. The three children played together. One night at dinner, my two boys came to the table talking to one another. I could not make out a word of what they were saying; they were speaking Ukrainian. They had not learned the language at school; they had taken it up while playing with their little friend.

Mr. Speaker, the Ukrainian boy also was speaking French at that age. This only shows how easy it is for children to learn a foreign language.

And in Canada, if we view the problem on the national level, we find the same thing. I do not think that a single province would refuse federal grants designed specifically to promote the teaching of the two official languages in Canadian schools, be it in Vancouver, Halifax or Montreal. It would be the end of the fights now going on in Montreal for instance where it is ordered: You shall learn French, only French, nothing but French. It is no good to tolerate such views and the Quebecers who contend that the French fact is about to disappear are dreaming in colour. They are having the wrong dreams, they are happy heads.

Mr. Speaker, while 100 years ago, there was not one million French Canadians in Canada, today, there are six or seven million of us. What is more, the French language is better spoken today than it was 40 years ago. There has been an improvement. But there will always be prophets of gloom, pessimists. We have some in Quebec, and there are some outside the province who, as out West or in Ontario, say "Speak White". That is not much better than those who in Montreal also say "Speak white" in French in one place, in English in another.

Mr. Speaker, the way we go about it now will not solve the language problem in Canada. Even though the royal commission on bilingualism and biculturalism was set up at a cost of I know not how many millions of dollars to inform us that French is spoken in Quebec and English