

#### PROFICIENCY GOALS

My immediate concern as Minister of External Affairs, and yours as members of the Department, must be to ensure that they are met as fully and as rapidly as possible both in Ottawa and abroad. For this reason, our Department anticipates meeting two important deadlines in the Government's declaration of principles, which means that by 1970 in the case of appointments from outside the service, and by about 1975 in the case of promotions, bilingual proficiency, or a willingness to acquire it at Government expense within a reasonable time, will normally be required.

For this reason also, the Department has established a number of practical procedures designed to develop a comprehensive approach to bilingualism in the foreign service. These procedures are already beginning to bear fruit. Last year's figures show that among our foreign service and administrative officers 28 per cent can be classed as bilingual, and a further 20 per cent have a good knowledge of both languages. It is also estimated that, during the past year alone, a fifth of all departmental employees attended language courses.

These accomplishments must, however, be seen against the broader background of the basic requirements of Canadian foreign policy. If you read carefully the White Paper *Federalism and International Relations* and its supplement *Federalism and International Conference on Education*, you will recognize that one of the main purposes for writing these papers was to outline the steps being taken by the Federal Government to frame and implement a policy that meets the requirements of the two major linguistic communities in Canada. In that way, the White Papers contribute to constructive consideration and discussion of the implementation of the Canadian system in the field of international relations. They also provide an opportunity for an examination, not only by experts but by the public at large, which can only serve to enhance Canadian unity and the interests of all Canadian citizens.

#### LANGUAGE EQUALITY

Canadian foreign policy must not only be consonant with the interests of Canadians across the country but also take account of our distinctive Canadian cultural and linguistic heritage. Thus, in framing and implementing foreign policy, the Canadian Government must recognize the traditions which both French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians seek to maintain and develop within the fabric of the Canadian federation. Accordingly, it must be based upon equal status for the two official languages across the range of operations of the Department of External Affairs. It must also promote the interests of all Canadians of both major linguistic communities. Particularly in the projection of the Canadian character abroad, it implies that Canada must make a special effort to establish a proper balance by increasing its relations with *francophone* countries not only in Africa, where our programme has been stepped up, but also in Asia and in Europe. It also entails pursuing the effort that is already under way to reinforce and promote the use of the two official

languages in international organizations and agencies. This we are doing.

At the same time, if our intention is to create a climate and conditions that will enable every officer to serve his country in either of the official languages, we must continue to encourage the use of the officer's own language as a working tool and to ensure that both English-speaking and French-speaking officers have a sufficient knowledge of the two languages to be able to comprehend each other in day-to-day working situations. Especially in the performance of their duties abroad, our officers should be a living illustration of the Canadian linguistic duality. They must also meet the requirements of their fellow citizens travelling outside Canada.

#### MORE FRENCH-SPEAKING RECRUITS

All this means in practice that, in our Department and others concerned with Canadian activities abroad, there is a particularly striking need for officers to be competent in both official languages. We therefore have to be very sure that this need is being met as effectively as possible. I think your presence here today, together with representatives from other departments which share in the important task of representing Canadian interests abroad, testifies to the importance which all of us attach to this task.

Over the past few years, we have in fact accomplished a good deal towards translating the principles of bilingualism into practice. Our recruitment of junior officers, as you know, has been particularly successful in terms of their ability to work in the two official languages. We have also been fortunate in recent years in being able to bring about a substantial increase in the proportion of new officers speaking French as their mother tongue. In the last three years, close to a third of the new entrants have been French-speaking. Because these groups, taken together, involve some 140 officers, they have improved the linguistic balance in the service as a whole. This is of vital significance, for bilingualism cannot possibly flourish unless both groups are well represented.

In promoting this policy it is important to keep in mind that French-Canadian diplomats, in the same way as English-speaking officers, should be assigned to a great variety of functions in all our missions and divisions. It is not the policy of the Department to have one or other group specialize in particular fields, or particular geographical areas, to the exclusion of others. There should be no functional or geographical area where either French-speaking or English-speaking officers cannot be asked to serve. This in itself will entail for the future a solid competence in both languages for all our officers....

In brief, we want French-speaking Canadians to make greater use of their language as a living instrument. We do not want our linguistic investment to go to waste. The Government and the Department can go only so far in assisting individuals in their attempts to master their second language. Thereafter it will be for each individual concerned to ensure that he develops his potential to the maximum....