



Bulletin

Vol. 25, No. 2

January 14, 1970

THIRD REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON BILINGUALISM AND BICULTURALISM

The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism recently issued the third volume of its final report entitled The Work World. This part of the report compares the income, education, occupation and control of industry of French-speaking Canadians and English-speaking Canadians. It examines bilingualism in the federal Public Service and makes recommendations for its extension, and discusses the degree of bilingualism in private organizations, with special emphasis on major corporations in Quebec and their influence on the lives of "Francophones".

The following is a summary of conclusions and recommendations concerning the federal Public Service:

The Commission produced evidence of the unequal position of Francophones and Anglophones in the federal Public Service with respect to language use and participation. With some exceptions, the Francophone public can obtain service in its language, but Francophone public servants generally cannot use their language in day-to-day functions without damage to their effectiveness and careers; they have not the opportunity to express themselves in their

own idiom at their work or to realize their full potential as individuals; and they do not participate adequately in the decision-making levels of the federal administration. The ultimate costs of this situation affect not only individual Francophones; as long as the Public Service does not draw fully on the intellectual and organizational resources of French-speaking Canada, all Canadians are the poorer.

Missing from previous attempts at reform has been a clear idea of equal partnership, of a bicultural Public Service in which both cultures co-exist and collaborate. The present government policy emphasizes individual bilingualism, but in the Commission's opinion this approach is unrealistic in the Canadian setting with its predominance of unilingual Anglophones. If bilingualism and biculturalism are to be developed, they must become embedded in the very structures and processes of the federal administration.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE UNITS

To enable French to become a language of work, the Commission's core proposal is to introduce the French-language unit as a basic organizational and management principle. These units, in which all persons will work in French, are designed to increase the presence and encourage the acceptance of the language and culture of French-speaking Canada in the federal administration. Such units should be established in every Department, although they will vary in location, size, and function. Persons supervising these units, and those above them, would need to be bilingual. As well, other departmental units providing administration, personnel, financial and similar services would have to develop bilingual capacity. Units selected for a change in language regime should perform important functions; they should be so selected as to provide upward career paths in the French language; and they should be

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