

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

MISCELLANEOUS PRIVATE BILLS AND STANDING ORDERS

Fifth and sixth reports of Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Private Bills and Standing Orders—Mr. Givens.

[*Editor's note: Text of foregoing reports appears in today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

PROVISION RESPECTING STATUS AND USE—
APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSIONER, ETC.—
REPORT STAGE

The house resumed consideration of Bill C-120, respecting the status of the official languages of Canada, as reported (with amendments) from the Special Committee on the Official Languages Bill, and motion No. 7 (Mr. McQuaid).

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Is the house ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Pursuant to section 11 of Standing Order 75, the recorded division on the proposed motion stands reserved.

[*English*]

Mr. J. H. Horner (Crowfoot) moved:

That Bill C-120, An Act respecting the status of the official languages of Canada, be amended by adding to clause 40, the following subclause 5:

Official Languages

"(5) Notwithstanding anything in this Act, no person shall be refused employment or promotion within the Public Service of Canada on grounds alone of inadequate acquaintance with either of the official languages mentioned in this Act, provided that the applicant has declared his intention and willingness to learn the other official language."

● (5:30 p.m.)

He said: Mr. Speaker, may I say at the beginning of my remarks that I intend to do what Your Honour instructed the hon. member who preceded me to do. I shall confine my remarks to the subject matter of this motion. If anyone cares to check the record he will find that the speech I made yesterday on another amendment was short, succinct, entirely in order, and dealt specifically with that amendment. This being the last of a series of seven amendments I think it should receive serious consideration by the house, particularly in view of the remarks made earlier this afternoon by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) and in view of the information which he tabled. He assured us that clause 40 will not change the merit principle, but will only ensure that that principle will stand as it is already written into the Public Service Employment Act. On the basis of that statement, and on the basis of the information he tabled about the hiring of university students, the numbers of them who were bilingual and the numbers who were not, I do not think he can have any real objection to this amendment.

My amendment clearly states:

Notwithstanding anything in this act, no person shall be refused employment or promotion within the Public Service of Canada on grounds alone of inadequate acquaintance with either of the official languages mentioned in this act, provided that the applicant—

—And I underline these words.

—has declared his intention and willingness to learn the other official language.

I can see no reason for any unilingual French speaking member of parliament, or French speaking Canadian seeking employment or promotion in the federal civil service objecting to this amendment.

Many of the suspicions and fears about this bill are based on its possible effects within the civil service. An article in the *Calgary Albertan* of Wednesday, July 2 headed, "Civil Servants Perturbed—Languages Hit Morale" points out how badly the morale of the civil service has been affected by this bill. Adoption of this amendment would assure applicants for jobs in the civil service that they would be treated with equality and fairness.