

a country and as individuals, we must take it. French Canada can survive not by turning in on itself but by reaching out to claim its full share of every aspect of Canadian life. English Canada should not attempt to crush or expect to absorb French Canada. All Canadians should capitalize on the advantages of living in a country which has learned to speak in two great world languages.

Such a country will be able to make full use of the skills and energy of all its citizens. Such a country will be more interesting, more stimulating and, in many ways, richer than it has ever been. Such a country will be much better equipped to play a useful role in the world of today and tomorrow.

How can we realize these aspirations? We believe that this bill is one step in that direction. It is not the first step, and, to place it in context, I will mention some others which have been taken since the appointment of the Royal Commission under Mr. Dunton and Mr. Laurendeau in 1963.

#### ACTION ALREADY TAKEN

A programme of language training for federal public servants was started in 1964 and has since been greatly expanded to develop proficiency in both languages in those centres where it is required. The Government recognizes that its objectives in this field cannot be accomplished overnight, and that their fulfilment must not involve any prejudice to the careers of civil servants who are not bilingual and who have devoted many years of their lives to the public service. Nevertheless, substantial progress has been made.

About 5,000 hours of language training a day are now available for public servants. I am happy to note that a number of members of this House have been taking advantage of these facilities.

Because we are engaged in a project that, as far as we know, is unique in the world in both size and scope — the rapid growth of this programme resulted for a period in serious problems of administration. As the demand for training has far exceeded the capacity of the system, priority has been given to training executive and administrative officers. The Government intends to expand the language training resources further over the next four years on a scale sufficient to meet the objectives announced by Mr. Pearson, to which I will refer in a moment. This will require an increase in the number of classrooms from 76 to 133 and an increase in the number of teachers from 175 to 339.

There is no easy way to competence in a second language, but in three and a half years, enough such competence has been acquired by many senior officials to permit both English-speaking and French-speaking participants in conferences and committees to use their mother tongue, confident that they will be understood. We have every assurance from this experience that the objectives of the public service language training programme will be reached.

On April 6, 1966, Mr. Pearson made a policy announcement in this House on bilingualism in the public service of Canada. He stated that the Government "expects that within a reasonable period of

years a state of affairs in the public service will be reached whereby (a) it will be normal practice for oral or written communications within the service to be made in either official language at the option of the person making them... (b) communications with the public will normally be in either language having regard to the person being served".

At that time he announced a number of measures to promote these objectives. I should like to mention the progress to date on three of them.

(1) A salary differential has been paid since 1966 to those holding secretarial, stenographic and typist positions in which both languages are required and where both are used.

(2) A special programme for improving bilingualism among senior executive officers was also begun in 1966. Under this programme each year some 20 English-speaking civil servants with their families spend a year in Quebec City, while some ten French-speaking civil servants and their families spend a year in Toronto.

(3) In 1967, reasonable proficiency in the two official languages, or willingness to acquire it through appropriate training at public expense, became an element of merit in the selection of university graduates recruited for administrative trainee positions where the need for bilingualism exists.

At the end of 1967 the Laurendeau-Dunton Commission issued the first volume of its report which made a number of important recommendations on language rights. The report stated: "we take as a guiding principle the recognition of both official languages, in law and in practice, wherever the minority is numerous enough to be viable as a group".

#### CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE APPROVAL

At the Constitutional Conference held in February of this year, the Federal Government announced that it accepted the objectives set by the Royal Commission, that it would take steps to implement the proposals applicable to the Federal Government, and that it hoped the provinces would implement those requiring provincial action. We also stated: "the Government of Canada will be prepared to help in the implementation of these proposals if we are asked to do so. We will be glad to join the provincial governments in devising the methods by which our assistance could be made most effective".

During the February meeting the Constitutional Conference reached the following consensus on language rights:

(1) French-speaking Canadians outside Quebec should have the same rights as English-speaking Canadians in Quebec.

(2) Each government should take the necessary actions in this field as speedily as possible, in ways most appropriate to its jurisdiction and without diminishing existing rights recognized by law or usage.

(3) The Conference established a special committee to examine the Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism and other matters relating to language rights and their effective provision in practice, and to consult on methods of