

*Official Languages*

I remember an incident which is still very clear in my mind, and goes to show how much progress we have made in New Brunswick, though it is hardly acknowledged.

In 1953 or 1954, the present member for Carleton-Charlotte (Mr. Flemming) was premier of New Brunswick. I shall not grudge him some respect for the high position he held then. He came one day to pay a visit to Saint-Louis College in Edmundston, where I was a student. All students and professors had gathered to meet the premier of New Brunswick. He was welcomed with great courtesy and even with some warmth. His first words were to apologize and to tell us that we had all his sympathy but that he could not speak French. I was very impressed at that time. I would even go as far as to say that I shall never forget it as long as I live. So there was the premier of an unofficially bilingual province who could not speak French but sympathized with everybody. It was the thing to do in those days to sympathize with such people.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to point out once again that in New Brunswick sympathy has evolved into an officially recognized bilingualism. Our premier is bilingual and so are a number of ministers and members. The legislature in Fredericton has simultaneous translation facilities, and our institutions, such as our two normal schools are bilingual, and not one head, except perhaps a pig head, had to be chopped in order to achieve this. There were no injuries or disorders. That is how far we have progressed in New Brunswick, my own province.

● (3:30 p.m.)

Why should not the situation be the same all over Canada? I am rather young, for I will be 35 soon. However, I wish I were still younger.

When that legislation has been approved by parliament and given royal assent, Canada, will enter, so to speak, a new era of confederation, brought about by the courage of the present government, under the aegis of its gallant leader, and tomorrow's confederation will be altogether different from that of yesterday.

As the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) and many other members said so eloquently during this debate, Canadian youth is longing for this legislation on the official languages. It is only a beginning, but we want it, and that is what all hon. members should want. Even

[Mr. Corbin.]

if many of us are bound to keep their prejudices and their grudges all their lives, let us have at least enough magnanimity to give today and to-morrow's youth the tools that are essential to build and strengthen the future of confederation. The hon. members who are firmly opposed to this bill should have enough intellectual and legislative integrity not to impose on young Canadians the yoke they themselves had to bear all their life.

It was thought that the debate on the Canadian flag had struck a death-blow to the very heart of opposition to true Canadian nationalism. But we still can see today that the beast is not quite dead yet. It will heave a few more sighs. All Canadians and all those who will come to settle in Canada will be able to breathe more freely, because the apocalyptic beast of separatism, of extremism, of prejudice, of fanaticism and of bitterness will be dead, as I hope and pray it will.

In this Canada week, Mr. Speaker, I wish to conclude my speech by these words: Long live Canada.

Long live English Canada.

Long live French Canada.

Long live a Canada united from sea to sea!

[English]

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed thoroughly the speech made by the hon. member for Madawaska-Victoria (Mr. Corbin). I agree with much that he said and noted his remark that he had reached the ripe old age of 35. I think that is a very good age and I would be happy to be that age again. I can tell him, however, that by the time he reaches the age of 36 he may wish he had not made some of the comments he made today.

There are people in this house who hold very strong views on this issue and have expressed their views strongly and forcefully. Some of those views are not views I entertain, and hints I will drop as to how I shall vote on this measure will probably indicate this. Although I cannot agree with the contentions of some other hon. members in their entirety, that does not mean that I think that in making their comments they were animated by motives which would compel them to seek the disunity of this country. Any issue as emotional as this one, any issue affecting race, religion, language, or which take us back to the issues of our heredity and is thus hundreds or even thousands of