

very familiar with yourself. It is one of the many languages we find in British Columbia.

I am pleased to say when I look at the list that there are 2,000 individuals who are presently speaking the Shuswap language. As the provincial leader of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs indicated, it is not one of the languages that unless something is done will not be preserved beyond the next decade or so. As a matter of fact, as I said earlier, only three of the 55 languages will remain in place unless some action is taken.

What action are we requiring? We certainly are going far beyond the suggestion of an institute. I suspect that we are getting very close to the point raised by my hon. colleague for Western Arctic in Bill C-269—which, of course, we support—calling for an aboriginal languages foundation.

The assumption we all make is that this is going to require some investment so that native people across our great country will have an opportunity to develop the necessary learning materials, provide the necessary learning infrastructure, so that young and old alike will be able to learn and become fluent in their native language. I think this is in the spirit of our country and something that we certainly ought to do as expeditiously as possible for Canada's first citizens.

I know in Kamloops the Shuswap Tribal Council has made tremendous gains in developing curriculum for kindergarten and grades beyond, in terms of the language classes as well as a cultural introduction to the reality of the native experience in central British Columbia.

The initiative the government is taking regarding Bill C-37 is one that we support obviously because of its encouragement and development of Canada's heritage languages. But again, as this amendment makes very clear, we certainly do not want to exclude the aboriginal languages of Canada from that consideration. We want to set aside a major initiative to ensure that language becomes our preoccupation in terms of assisting aboriginal people across the country. We want them to develop the necessary infrastructure to develop their own languages which will enable them to build their cultures with strength and on a good foundation.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Government Orders

Some hon. members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: The question is on Motion No. 1 standing in the name of the hon. member for Vancouver East. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Some hon. members: No.

Some hon. members: On division.

Motion No. 1 negated.

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East) moved:

Motion No. 2

That Bill C-37 be amended in Clause 6 by striking out lines 37 to 40 at page 3 and substituting the following therefor:

"mendment of the Minister from nominations made by organizations and institutions concerned with the teaching of heritage languages."

She said: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to be able to speak briefly to this second amendment which we have put forward. This recommendation relates to the board of directors of the proposed Heritage Languages Institute. The original motion in the bill says:

The activities of the Institute shall be managed by a Board of Directors consisting of a Chairperson and not more than twenty-one other directors, to be appointed by the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the minister, after the Minister has consulted such governments, institutions, organizations and individuals as the Minister considers appropriate.

Our feeling is that this part of the bill, clause 6.(1) actually allows the minister and the Conservative Party to do what they always do and what they are doing now in the Senate, that is, to make patronage appointments to a new institute. I do not like to suspect ulterior motives but it seems the way the government has gone about establishing this whole institute, while taking away funds for all community programs for heritage language, really smacks of a political motivation. I am surprised that the Conservatives would do it in this way. This clause also allows the minister to recommend people to the cabinet who would then make patronage appointments and we can expect that they would largely be Conservatives. They would then go to the electorate and say, look at the this wonderful thing we have done for the heritage languages in Canada.

Our amendment is to change the process for appointing members to the board to make it far more democratic, more practical and efficient. We think it is up to