

Pleads for Bilingualism In Schools of Ontario

Pleading the cause of bilingualism in the public schools, Aurelien Belanger (Lib., Prescott), yesterday in the Ontario Legislature, challenged its opponent to launch a government inquiry into the manner in which English is taught in the English-French schools.

The challenge was made in answer to criticisms, which he said, were made outside the House. "We would like an official investigation," said the member heatedly, "in our bilingual schools and I can tell you what they will find. They will find that English is taught in the bi-

lingual schools just as well as it is taught in the English schools."

Asks Government Aid.

The issue arose as he drew toward the conclusion of his contribution to the Throne Speech debate. "I cannot take my seat," said the French-Canadian member, "without fulfilling my duty to my English-speaking constituents by bringing to the attention of this House a resolution asking this government to give them not only the permission, but the help necessary to introduce French into the curriculum of the public schools in those sections where French prevails."

Behind the resolution, he said, was their recognition of the fact that "in this country, French is an official language with the same footing under the constitution as English." He pointed out that advertisements were made frequently for bilingual applicants to the civil service. One-language men and women were under a handicap. Because of this handicap, ratepayers of Russell and Prescott have asked he said, that the bilingual teaching provision be extended.

Mr. Belanger charged that French was taught in the high schools of

the Province as a dead language, "and as a result, the students in this bilingual country of Canada come out unable to speak properly one sentence in that language."

In his concluding remarks, the member declared, "We are trying in our (the bilingual) schools to instil in the hearts of the children a love of King, a love of country and a love of this Province."

Question of Religion.

Mr. Belanger, in discussing another phase of education, lauded Opposition Leader Drew for having stated that religion should have a wider space in the public schools. He claimed that, under the present system, in the children's schooling "religion is divorced from the profane sciences." He lauded Colonel Drew for having stated publicly also, in reference to the English-French racial question: "While there may be a majority, there is no dominant race. The two were on a footing of equality."

"A statement like that goes a long way to cement the unity for which we are striving in this House," said Mr. Belanger.

In critical mood, he scored the Opposition Leader for having suggested "the best interests of the people of this Province can be served by surrendering some of their rights to the Central Government."

Hon. Eric Cross, Minister of Welfare, will continue the debate today.