

*House of Commons*

those French speaking persons who do not understand English and are visiting parliament will be able to follow the debates. That applies also to those who speak English; when speeches are made in French they will also be able to follow the debate. They are the people who will be paying for it. The money does not come from our pockets. It will be paid for by the Canadian public, and I hope when the public visit Ottawa they will have the same opportunity as hon. members to follow our debates in French or English.

(Translation):

**Mr. L. J. Pigeon (Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm):** Mr. Speaker, when he put on the order paper a resolution in favour of simultaneous translation, the right hon. Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Diefenbaker) carried out one of the promises contained in the speech from the throne.

I want to commend him publicly in this house for introducing a bill that will help lead representatives of the two great races in our country, that is all hon. members, to better mutual understanding and appreciation. Thus English-speaking members will be able to follow speeches delivered in French by their French speaking fellow-citizens, and vice versa.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this system of simultaneous translation might well prove the greatest step towards national unity since confederation.

I know that, with simultaneous translation, all hon. members in this house will be able to understand one another better. I feel it will impart a new and greater sense of unity. And if Sir John A. Macdonald were living today, I am sure he would support this proposition. I would even say that, if simultaneous translation, if that system, had existed at the time of confederation, I am certain that Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir Georges Etienne Cartier, and all the fathers of confederation, would have favoured its use in parliament.

May I recall at this time part of a highly inspiring address made in this house in 1890 by the most illustrious of all the fathers of confederation, Sir John A. Macdonald, when he defined in these words the spirit of the pact of 1867:

I have no accord with the desire expressed in some quarters that by any mode whatever there should be an attempt made to oppress the one language or to render it inferior to the other; I believe that would be impossible if it were tried, and it would be foolish and wicked if it were possible. The statement that has been made so often that this is conquered country is *à propos de rien*. Whether it was conquered or ceded, we have a Constitution now under which all British subjects are in a position of absolute equality, having equal rights of every kind—of language,

[Mr. Caron.]

of religion, of property and of person. There is no paramount race in this country; there is no conquered race in this country;

As I said, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister, in moving this resolution, promotes, and somehow gives a more concrete form to national unity. I would say that in doing so the right hon. Prime Minister follows the doctrine of Sir John Macdonald. In a word, he favours national unity.

In the past, briefs had been submitted to the former government in favour of simultaneous translation. Need I mention here the brief submitted by the Junior Chamber of Commerce of Canada, with a membership of 25,000. According to a report in the *Montreal Gazette*, on May 23, 1956, the Junior Chamber of Commerce submitted to the Speaker of the House of Commons, then Mr. Louis-René Beaudoin, a request for the installation of a simultaneous translation system in this house.

The principle of national unity will thus be reinforced, and all hon. members of this country will be able to appreciate and understand each other better.

When listening a few moments ago to the hon. member for Hull (Mr. Caron), who had risen in support of this project, I was thinking of his speech in this very house when he said, as can be seen on page 510 of the official record of this house of December 1st, 1953:

That is why I do not agree with the suggestion that there should be established in this chamber a system of translation similar to that which they have at the United Nations. Such a system would tend to stop efforts to speak the second language. I hope such a system will not be installed in this house.

Well, the House of Commons is not a school for the teaching of French or English. It is a forum for the discussion of all the problems of the Canadian nation. If a member wants to hear a speech in French, or in English, all he will have to do will be to put on his ear-phones and he will be able to follow what is being said in the other language.

I congratulate the right hon. Prime Minister of Canada who is the symbol of national unity. I congratulate and thank him on behalf of the people of Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm.

**Mr. Yvon Dupuis (St. Jean-Iberville-Napierville):** Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to speak at length about this motion. The leaders of the different parties represented in this House of Commons have just expressed their views and it is now a matter of record that the three parties in this house support the motion for the establishment in this House of Commons of a system of simultaneous translation.