

*House of Commons*

last session, that steps will be taken soon to see whether we cannot reach general agreement on a design for a distinctive Canadian flag, which a growing number of Canadians are coming to believe should be adopted.

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Argue:** I want to support and agree with the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition where he said that more and more members of this house are learning the French language, and some of us who have made some start in that direction should continue our efforts. All members who do not now speak French should give consideration to learning the French language.

We have had the good fortune of having Professor Edouard Peloquin come to the House of Commons from the city of Montreal. He is able to stay in Ottawa two days during every week for the purpose of providing lessons for members of parliament. I express the hope that the government and Your Honour may consider whether it might be possible to have a bilingual teacher on the staff of the House of Commons available to members so that instruction might be taken by members any day during the week. It is not possible for all of us to attend when these lessons are given because of the great calls made on our time by other things we have to do. I think the government should consider having available a fully qualified bilingual person to give instruction in the French language and also the English language, if there should be need for that to be done, because I believe such a service would be most valuable and would receive full support from members of the house.

We are proud to unite at this time with the Conservative and Liberal parties in supporting a motion which we believe in its very essence is Canadian, and which will receive the overwhelming support of Canadians from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

**Mr. Alexis Caron (Hull):** Mr. Speaker, as the simultaneous translation system is not yet installed perhaps I might try to say a few words about it in my poor English. The matter has been studied for quite a few years, and I want to thank the government for making the system a reality. It will be of great advantage to many French speaking members of the house who will be able to play their full part in discussion of the business before the house.

There is one thing that may be bad, because up to now the French speaking members in particular have had to make an effort to try to learn a little English to be able to deal with matters brought before the house. Even if what the hon. member who has just spoken

has suggested is done it will require effort on the part of those who want to learn a second language to be able to do the work needed for that task, but I hope more people will try to learn a second language.

I know that such systems have been installed at the United Nations and at NATO. Such a system is in effect in Belgium where more than one language is spoken and in Israel, where four or five languages are spoken. All these countries have statesmen and representatives who speak more than one language. When I attended a NATO meeting a couple of years ago I noticed that the representatives of England, France, Portugal, Belgium, Holland, Italy, all the countries represented there, were at least bilingual. They could speak their own language and French, or they could speak their own language and English. I remember that the English representatives could listen to French and answer in English, and did not have to make use of the earphones.

I hope this will become the case in Canada. I hope we will take advantage of the opportunity to learn a second language or speak it better than we do now, so that in future years, as the Leader of the Opposition has said, the translation system may perhaps not be used very much. I know one thing; with such a system you have to have translators who are very good. I remember that I was speaking French one day in the house and the hon. member for Vancouver East asked me to go a little slower so he could try to follow me. I know when I speak in French I forget myself and speak very rapidly. I hope the translators will be able to follow those who speak French rapidly, so that English speaking members will have a good idea what we are saying when we are speaking on a particular subject. Therefore I am very happy to support the motion, and I hope the system will be in operation in the very near future.

There is another point I should like to mention, and that is the possibility of extending the system to the galleries of the house. I know that many French speaking Canadians come here and complain of the fact that the proceedings are almost wholly in English, and they do not understand English enough to be able to follow what is going on. At the United Nations an earphone is attached to every seat in the gallery. The only thing you have to do is turn a button in order to hear the language you want to hear, and thus you are able to follow the debate.

If this is possible at the United Nations, where four or five languages are spoken, it would be much easier to instal similar facilities in the galleries of the house so that