

and as my hon. friend is anxious for enlightenment, possibly the hon. senior member for Ottawa (Mr. Chevrier), who has already by his voice and vote declared against the principle of the bill, might within the prescriptions of standing order 65, seek to substitute for himself the hon. member for Richelieu on that committee, in order that the latter might more successfully seek personal intellectual enlightenment.

Mr. CHEVRIER: And a very worthy substitute he would be.

Mr. CAHAN: The only difficulty is that he has disqualified himself in the same manner and to the same extent as has my hon. friend who moved the six months' hoist. The senior member for Ottawa in moving the six months' hoist said in a most dramatic manner:

At this moment I defy the Secretary of State to affirm in this house that this bill will be the official recognition of the French language. I am not surprised that the hon. gentleman does not answer.

It was not my duty to reply in the course of debate, but I deemed the question frivolous because, as the hon. gentleman well knows, the official recognition of the French language at the present moment appears and appears only in section 133 of the British North America Act of 1867.

Mr. CHEVRIER: Why does the Secretary of State not say that this would be a further recognition of the French language?

Mr. CAHAN: It certainly is and I have said so; I have said so in the house in the most emphatic way in which I am capable of expressing myself in the English language. But as fundamental constitutional acts such as the British North America Act frequently require supplementary statutory provisions for carrying into full effect their constitutional provisions, this bill is brought before the house for the purpose of placing and, if enacted, will place the use of the French language in official documents of the Dominion government on a basis so broad and stable as to exceed the most sanguine anticipations of the fathers of confederation whose maternal language was French.

The hon. member for Nicolet (Mr. Dubois), if I understood him correctly—and I endeavoured to follow him—stated that if I as Secretary of State would declare that this bill increases the guarantees for the use of the French language in the administration of federal affairs, he would regard the bill with more favour. If the hon. member for Nicolet

will read section 133 of the British North America Act of 1867 and read and consider both subsections of section 3 of this bill of which he read to the house only the first subsection, he will appreciate the broad and liberal spirit in which the majority of this house propose to carry into effect the provisions of section 133 of the British North America Act of 1867.

Mr. DUPUIS: What about section 6 of the bill?

Mr. CAHAN: I am not discussing section 6; I shall discuss it when the bill comes into committee. My hon. friend was so lacking in intelligence in presenting his case the other day, that I do not think it is necessary to refer to what he then said or what he is now saying.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. DUPUIS: I rise to a point of order. I ask the Secretary of State to withdraw that expression.

Mr. SPEAKER: To say that a member is devoid of intelligence is not parliamentary.

Mr. CAHAN: I did not say that he is devoid of intelligence. He has some, but I shall withdraw the remark. The house may anticipate with confidence the vote of the hon. member for Nicolet in favour of the second reading of this bill, for otherwise—and I trust this is parliamentary—I feel I would be disposed to doubt the complete candour of the hon. gentleman in making the statement which I have quoted.

The hon. member for North Timiskaming (Mr. Bradette) frankly admitted that if the bill had been introduced by the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa), he, the hon. member for North Timiskaming, did not think any member of the house could possibly vote against it.

Mr. BRADETTE: Certainly.

Mr. CAHAN: I regret indeed if the fact that I as a member of the government introduced this bill, should prejudice its sane and sound provisions in the eyes of hon. gentlemen opposite.

Mr. BRADETTE: I rise to a question of privilege. I used those words because of what the hon. member for Labelle said as to the spirit and nature of the French language, and the proposal contained in Bill No. 4.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not a question of privilege. The hon. member's remarks were correctly quoted in the house.