

House of Commons

it will be, would in part at least be nullified if steps are not taken—and I assume they are being taken—to get the right kind of simultaneous translators with the right kind of training.

I recall, Mr. Speaker, that at the United Nations—and this practice began in the United Nations itself—some of the simultaneous translators have been so well trained and are so successful in this art that they can make a person sound infinitely better in another language than his remarks sounded in the language in which it was made. Perhaps that will be our happy experience in this house. If that is the case, perhaps those of us who make speeches would wish to circulate the French translation.

In any event, Mr. Speaker, I rise merely to express my own support and the support of our party for this measure of practical value, of political symbolic importance, a measure which was introduced, I am proud to say, last November 25 by a Liberal member of this house and which is now being embodied in the motion put forward by the government.

Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, we in the C.C.F. are very pleased to support the motion that is now before the house. Over the years we have recognized bilingual rights in this country as set forth in our constitution. We feel that in a further aspect this is merely fulfilling those parts of our constitution. Simultaneous translation, as has been said, has been operating for a number of years at the United Nations. It has been operating effectively and well. While it is a five-language translation in the United Nations, it will be a two-language translation in the Canadian House of Commons.

I believe it is recognized by every member in this house that Canada's stature in the world has been growing year by year. I think one of the reasons, among many others, is the fact that English speaking Canadians and French speaking Canadians have been and are building a strong nation from the unity that has been created by those two great races. The motion that will be passed today, I am sure with unanimous support in this house, will be a further indication to all peoples in the world that Canada is a tolerant nation. While there may be differences, there is respect and good will.

In this motion members of parliament have recognized important aspects of our constitution, as I have said, and political parties as such are taking further steps to recognize the bilingual nature of our nation.

The C.C.F. party recently had a national convention in the city of Montreal. At that convention we had the use of simultaneous translation, and I believe we were the first

political party in Canada to use simultaneous translation as it will be installed in this house, namely earphones and a translator in a booth, the same type of simultaneous translation that is used in the United Nations. This is a further indication that the C.C.F. party recognizes the bilingual nature of our nation.

I might say that the city of Montreal gave our convention a very warm welcome. Some of us were honoured to be entertained by the mayor of Montreal, Senator Sarto Fournier. Members of the convention were invited to a reception arranged and sponsored by Mr. Gerard Picard, president of the Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour, and Mr. Roger Prevost, president of the Quebec federation of labour. All our experience in the city of Montreal indicated to us the essentially bilingual nature of our nation and the importance of making a further step as we are doing today.

I do not expect, Mr. Speaker, that this will be the last step in this direction that will be taken by the Canadian House of Commons. As a matter of fact I for one thought we would be making another step, probably during this session. I thought that would be done because of the debate that took place during the last session and the vote that was taken subsequent to the debate on the proposition that cheques issued by the federal government should be bilingual. Hon. members will recall that that vote was almost unanimous, being 167 in favour and only 9 opposed. I suggest to the Prime Minister with great respect that early consideration should be given to progress in this further direction.

Over the years the C.C.F. has recognized the need for further symbols and emblems of the nature of our Canadian society.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): What was the date of that vote?

Mr. Argue: The date was January 31 of this year. It was a vote on a bill which was presented by Dr. Poulin, an independent member of this house.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Who opposed it?

Mr. Argue: I will not get into the political aspects of who was opposed to the motion, but I think the vote indicates that generally the proposition had full support in this house, because I would suggest that since only nine members opposed it, and it was not opposed by any political party, such a proposition should receive full support at this time.

I was saying that the C.C.F. believe that as the years go by there will be further steps taken to demonstrate growing Canadian unity and I would hope, along the lines of a motion I presented in this house during