

I should like to say to the translators who have participated so ardently in the widespread propaganda and lobby against this bill that they must understand from now on that this government assumes responsibility for this bill, and that it will not be moved, on grave questions of public policy, by intimidation or threats emanating from any members of the public service of Canada. I suggest to these gentlemen that they forget the active part which they have taken in propaganda and lobby, that they separate themselves from this unseemly strife which prevails throughout the country, and that they seek hereafter to cooperate cordially with the representatives of the government in a joint endeavour to improve this important branch of the public service, from which the government has no desire to retire them, but every desire to retain their useful services.

It has been clearly explained that the translators who will be transferred to the bureau will not include those discharging secretarial stenographic services in the several departments who are exclusively employed in conducting the English and French correspondence of those departments. The minister who will have charge of the administration of this act, after careful consultation with the heads of the departments and with the civil service commission, has the right to designate the officials and employees who may be transferred to the bureau, but the persons so designated may only be transferred to the bureau by order of the governor in council. Thus every reasonable precaution will be taken that experts required in any department for translating scientific or technical work will not be so transferred if such departmental service would thereby be rendered less efficient.

It has frequently been incorrectly stated during this debate that all the department heads are opposed to the creation of the proposed bureau. I say most positively that that is not a fact. So far as I am aware, ten or more department heads are decidedly not so opposed, while several of the departmental heads who were consulted, such as mines, national revenue, national defence and post office, stated that for strictly technical work they will require the continued services of certain of their translators who are now employed by them and who are trained in the special work in those departments. I have no doubt whatever that the governor in council, after full inquiry, will give favourable consideration to the particular needs of these departments. There should be no difficulty in organizing the work so as to provide fully

[Mr. Cahan.]

and satisfactorily for all these special requirements.

The hon. member for Gloucester (Mr. Veniot) and his colleague from Richelieu (Mr. Cardin) pleaded in mournful voices, and with a wealth of unfounded assertion, that if this bill is enacted the translators will no longer enjoy the right of promotion to become deputy ministers of departments or chiefs of branches, and that they will be promoted only to petty positions from time to time available in the proposed bureau for translations. In 1887 and 1888 I sat in the press gallery reporting the proceedings of this parliament, and since that time I have taken more than a merely casual interest in parliamentary and governmental affairs. But I have yet to learn, during the last half century, of a single translator who has been promoted to be a deputy minister or chief of any branch of any department of the government in this country.

I wonder if hon. gentlemen opposite who made use of this argument can now recall any such promotion. A few weeks ago a translator of the Senate was appointed a member of the civil service commission, and such promotion is, I believe, unique in the history of parliamentary institutions in this Dominion of Canada. I say deliberately that no translator employed under the provisions of this bill will be deprived of the possibility of promotion to any advanced position in the civil service for which he is otherwise qualified.

In the translation branch of the public service there are a very considerable number of positions with salaries ranging from \$3,300 per year to \$4,100. The hon. member for Richelieu also contends that this bill provides no remedy for the evils of the present system, which are obvious even to his blinded eyes. These evils, in my opinion, result from an utter lack of authoritative and efficient administration. The essential cure for negligent or incompetent administration is to provide capable administration; and I am personally confident that there are competent men available, of the French Canadian race, preferably those already experienced in the existing translation services, who, under a competent superintendent responsible to a minister of the crown, will make effective the necessary reform.

The hon. member for Richelieu admits that he has never given much attention to matters of translation and that he is sadly in need of enlightenment. This bill, I trust, will go to a select special committee of the house,