

United Nations

the most universal utility, and then recommend it to the committee dealing with this problem at the United Nations.

• (5:10 p.m.)

If procedures such as this are carried out, instead of the language difficulties increasing steadily over the years they would be gradually lessened. Having set up the mechanism to deal with new terms the committee would then review older terms both scientific and otherwise, terms which could readily be made into one word for all languages. The members of the committee could then promote the chosen words until they became commonly accepted round the world.

I hope that through these methods the various languages of the world would be gradually brought together. Increased communication should bring about increased understanding and co-operation, which is for the good of all. Therefore I commend this initiative to the house and to the government.

Mr. Reg Cantelon (Kindersley): I should like to say at once that this suggestion has my unqualified support, and therefore I do not intend to take too much time in speaking about it, as I would not want to be accused of talking it out. However I wonder just how efficient the method suggested by the hon. member will be. I hope it will work but I think some difficulties might be encountered. However, if it can be carried out and taken to the United Nations, and if a committee can be established to work on these scientific terms and come up with a series of them—and there are a great many that can be adopted internationally—then I hope Canada would take the first step in adopting them.

I should point out here that, so far, Canada has not been very forward looking in taking initiative in the scientific field. Some three years ago I suggested to the house that initial steps should be taken to introduce the metric system. So far as I can see nothing along this line has been done as yet. The United States is making some attempts to convert to the metric system; Senator Pell having introduced a bill in the U.S. senate which seeks to do so. He pointed out that 90 per cent of the world's population now uses the metric system, and some 27 countries in Europe do so also.

So if we could do our part in this respect, it would be a good indication that not only Canada but the whole world should use a system of scientific terms as suggested by the hon. member who introduced the motion

[Mr. Ryan.]

before us. I wish to conclude by repeating that this motion has my unqualified support, and I can only hope it will be carried to a completion.

Mr. D. W. Groos (Victoria (B.C.)): Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member who introduced this motion is certainly to be commended for drawing the attention of the house to the necessity of standardizing and internationalizing scientific and technical words. As the previous speaker has pointed out, this is in line with the general movement among nations to standardize linear and weight measures through the adoption of the metric system, and to establish a more general usage of decimal coinage. I think we must realize, however, that this takes a long time. Certainly the hon. member must be prepared, as must all of us, for a considerable length of time to elapse between the initiation of his proposal and its actual fruition.

I have had some experience in the military field with the standardization of equipment. This necessitates the standardization of small items which, in the normal course of events, none of us would even think of. I refer to the standardization of the screw threads of machine parts, the standardization of the purity of metals which go into equipment, and even the standardization of very fine measurements used in the electronics field.

This is a problem which is taking on new dimensions as scientific research and industrial development continue to carry us rapidly forward into new and unexplored fields. It is a problem which is becoming more complex as more and more people of different languages expand their programs of research and development. As has been pointed out, the standardization of technical and scientific terms has become very urgent in view of the fact that we have entered the computer age. Computers have opened up new and virtually infinite opportunities for scientific research and industrial development. In fact we could almost say that now there is a requirement for research into research on research programs, to carry it to a logical conclusion.

For all these reasons it is a matter which has attracted the serious attention of scientists, technicians and engineers both in their respective fields and in common programs to which the United Nations agencies and various international scientific organizations are devoting manpower and money.

We have heard some of these programs outlined by the speakers who have preceded me. Quite obviously, in this increasingly