

Mr. DUPRE (Translation): Will my hon. friend permit me? ?

Mr. MERCIER (St. Henri) (Translation): Certainly.

Mr. DUPRE (Translation): I think that the statement that the work of translation is not being carried out, especially since 1930, is an absolutely unfounded charge, because never has the translation been so well done and kept up than since 1930.

Mr. MERCIER (St. Henri) (Translation): It is not what I stated, I did not fix any particular date; I mentioned just now all the governments which have been in office, within the last twenty years. However, I am ready to abide by your statement. You have made a special study of the question and you have just stated to the house that the English documents, for the most part, were not translated. Then this deficiency rests with certain departments, the translation having been neglected in those departments.

Mr. DUPRE (Translation): I mean that the translation, although deficient, is better than before. I do not wish to interrupt my hon. friend without his consent.

Mr. DUGUAY (Translation): He is sufficiently perplexed, at present.

Mr. MERCIER (St. Henri) (Translation): At all events, whether this defect existed before 1930 or since 1930, it simply means that documents were not translated in time, both under your administration and the previous one. We, therefore, agree. In the cases mentioned, there has been a deficiency somewhere. Why were these documents not translated under both administrations? Because no one supervised the work or else there were not sufficient translators. You cannot deny this fact. And should you intend to supply all the translation you spoke of, no economy will result since more translators will be required to obtain more efficiency. Therefore, the explanation given to the house for enacting this bill, namely more efficiency and economy, falls short.

I contend that in placing all these translators under the same roof, all these young men, brilliant as most are—

An hon. MEMBER (Translation): They will be contaminated!

Mr. MERCIER (St. Henri) (Translation): Had they not been brilliant, they would not have been kept in the employ of the state. I take too great a pride in the welfare of my county to imagine that in all the depart-

[Mr. P. Mercier.]

ments there are no efficient officials. By confining all these translators from the various departments in the same office at the bureau for translations, individual differences will be levelled down and that will hinder their chances of promotion.

Under the circumstances, particularly after hearing the arguments put forward to-night, I am more convinced than ever that this bill is useless and will not make for efficiency in translation unless more money be spent. Then where would the economy come in?

I have no orders to give to anybody, I have no desire to give any nor am I conceited enough to do so, but I may say this: Instead of this wild topsy-turvy with no better result and with greater cost, because they will have to increase the staff, wherever there are not enough employees in a department let the minister in charge of that department appoint some. He need not apply to the Civil Service Commission; he has only to look for competent men and bring them into his department. Let him go and get them in Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, anywhere, provided that they give satisfaction. And then let each minister determine what reports must be published in French.

Last year I asked the government if the evidence brought before the radio committee of the house would be translated into French and the answer was that it would not be translated, although it was a very important inquiry.

Section 3 of Bill No. 4 gives no assurance whatever that the Solicitor General's dream will come true.

Mr. JOSEPH JEAN (Maisonneuve) (Translation): Mr. Speaker, much importance is being given to the bill now before us. The Solicitor General (Mr. Dupré), after the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa) endeavoured to show a moment ago that the effect of this measure would be the recognition of additional rights for the French language. He maintained that under section 3 of this bill, every one of the documents and reports of the various departments will have to be translated, even those that are not mentioned in section 133 of the British North America Act. I do not think that is the legal interpretation which can be placed on this measure. This bill was presented merely for the purpose of organizing the translators into one central bureau. These translators will be left to interpret themselves the constitution and in this I see rather a danger than an extension of the rights of the French language,