

This is evidently in accord with the various acts that are more or less brought together in this draft legislation. Well and good. But how can anyone discuss a draft like this unless he knows what he is talking about? No one can know what he is talking about unless the most important words, the words that form the basis of the legislation, are defined. There is an obvious reason for that. According to a decision of the privy council, the most magnificent speeches that are delivered in the house cannot be produced in court. The law speaks for itself, except that we have to consider jurisprudence. Let us consider the trouble to which a judge will be put the first time he has to interpret this piece of legislation where we do not find the definitions that are of the utmost importance, the guiding stars, the pillars of light, which we need in order to understand the new enactment. I urge the minister, therefore, to remove the fear of all difficulty, all misunderstanding, all quarrels and all litigation by defining "citizenship, nationality, naturalization and status of aliens." It may be said, "Go to the dictionary and see what Webster says."

Mr. MARTIN: Oh, no.

Mr. POULIOT: I do not say that the minister would say that. The minister is a man of too much legal science and experience to speak in that way to his colleagues. I am delighted and reassured by the fact that he has said no to that possible suggestion. The bill was brought down last year and was set aside and we have it again this year. We must make it a good bill or drop it *pro tempore*. Is the minister willing to define those four words that we find in the title of the bill?

Mr. MARTIN: The words "Canadian citizen" are defined in sections 4, 5, 7, 9 and 10.

Mr. POULIOT: Just one moment. It is wrongly drafted and I do not put the blame on the minister.

Mr. MARTIN: It is my fault, if there is a fault.

Mr. POULIOT: No. The definitions should be in the interpretation section. We should not have to run through the bill to find definitions; they should be at the beginning. The corner-stone is not in the attic; it is down below. I would ask the minister to make some amendment. I will not bother about it, but I hope he will amend the bill for the sake of those who wish to take advantage of this legislation. The legislation should be clear. We have had enough discussion and the bill itself must be made clear. There must be no misunderstanding whatever. I thank the minister for what he has said, but a layman can-

not go through the bill or understand it without having all the definitions together. That is a warning to all those who draft legislation. Our legislation is putrid; it is half-baked. We have reached the stage where a minor clerk can hand out anything to the Canadian people from his desk or over the telephone. There must be a change and everyone must have respect for legislation. This is a thing I have insisted on for a long time. We are not ready to sponsor legislation if it is not decently drafted. If it is not properly drafted it should be left in the keg for some time to mature and improve like good wine.

Mr. FULTON: I was struck by the Secretary of State's definition of "consultation" and it cleared up in my mind some points as to the way things are decided within the cabinet and, perhaps, the consultation which goes on between, say, the wartime prices and trade board and the Minister of Finance before a decision is announced. That definition of "consultation" will, I think, clear up for many of us a good many of the anomalies we have found in announcements of government policy and the interpretation they receive by various ministers. I do not know whether the Secretary of State consulted his own previous statement before he made the statement this evening as to the anomalies which exist at present in the elections act and which will exist as a result of this bill, but he has frequently, indeed constantly, sought to refute the suggestion that after the passing of this measure the right to vote will be in no way dependent upon becoming a Canadian citizen. However, he said that the object of the bill is to define and establish the rights and duties of citizenship and to create in the minds of all of us a clear understanding of the great privileges which are involved in becoming a Canadian citizen. I would refer him to his words, which he uttered on moving the second reading of the bill, as reported at page 503 of *Hansard*:

Under this bill we are seeking to establish clearly a basic and definite Canadian citizenship which will be the fundamental status upon which the rights and privileges of Canadians will depend.

I ask the Secretary of State this question: Is there any more fundamental right, any greater right, or one more inherent in citizenship than the right to vote? Is there any privilege which a Canadian citizen could value more than the privilege of casting his vote on election day, despite what the hon. member for Temiscouata says? If that is so, and I doubt whether the minister would deny it, then it seems to me it must logically follow that if