

tem has given its proofs in the departments where the chiefs were broadminded and used common sense. This proof for instance is to be found in the Department of Trade and Commerce. With the present system we can have at the same time, the publication of the trade bulletin both in English and French. There is great improvement in the publication of the Year Book. Why should this not be in the departments complained of? If the Minister of Trade and Commerce is able to make a success of translation in his department without the help of Bill No. 4, why not the Minister of Agriculture, why not the Prime Minister, why not the Secretary of State himself?

Another reason why I am opposed to this bill and shall vote in favour of the amendment of my hon. friend for Ottawa, it is, as I stated at the outset, this gilded measure tells me nothing. There is nothing in the bill which safeguards the rights of the French language and there is nothing which would constitute an official recognition of that language, so far as translation is concerned.

Mr. ST-PÈRE (Translation): That is a fact.

Mr. DUBOIS (Translation): To any observing mind, the past is there to prove it. Not always have we had, in a wide measure, what we had a right to expect. I feel convinced, in spite of the good will of the hon. Secretary of State, we shall still not be able to make a success of Bill No. 4. As long as he holds that portfolio, perhaps—I have so much esteem for him, I have heard of him for ever so long; but the hon. Secretary of State shall not always occupy the post he has, he shall be replaced. Will the superintendent of this translation bureau be a broadminded man, will he interpret the law, Art. 133 of the British North America Act with an open mind? Experience has taught us, that when we leave it to the government to interpret an act, often, the letter of the law is applied rather than the spirit. Therefore, sir, with such apprehension, I am forced to vote against bill No. 4, unless the hon. Secretary of State wishes to state to the house that this bill is a clearer recognition of the official statute dealing with the French language in the debates. If the hon. Secretary of State would publicly state that it is a greater guarantee for the French language, I could be more lenient towards the measure under consideration.

According to this bill, it is simply a centralization of the translators, and we find in clause 3 a formula which gives me some concern:

[Mr. Dubois.]

3. (1) There shall be a bureau under the minister, to be called the Bureau for Translations, the duties and function of which shall be to collaborate with and act for all departments of the public service, and both houses of the parliament of Canada and all bureaus, branches, commissions and agencies created or appointed by act of parliament, or by order of the governor in council, in making and revising all translations from one language into another of all departmental and other reports, documents, debates, bills, acts, proceedings and correspondence.

There is a long enumeration, but it is not stipulated whether this bill will specially provide for the French language. Moreover in paragraph 2 of clause 4:

(2) The minister may from time to time designate such translators or other employees in the public service or in any department or branch of the public service as he may deem necessary for carrying into effect the provisions of this act, and the governor in council may, from time to time, transfer to the bureau any of the said translators, or other employees so designated.

This is another matter of apprehension. Let us take as an example a qualified translator in the Department of Agriculture, who happens to be a French Canadian. Far be it from my thought, the idea that some one will take advantage of this bill to openly persecute my compatriots. That is not the point. However, what would happen if we were dealing with a narrow-minded man, as this has sometimes happened? Let us suppose, therefore, a French Canadian translator in the Department of Agriculture, whose turn has come for a promotion which might perhaps interfere with the promotion of translators belonging to another nationality. Perhaps, means would be found to transfer this competent translator—finding some excuse—from the Department of Agriculture where he might continue to be in the way of one more influent than himself, to the bureau for translations under the plea that his services are specially required in the latter place.

My hon. friend the member for Hochelaga (Mr. St-Père) expressed such an apprehension while a number of my colleagues entertain similar fears in this respect. Are we not justified, sir, in having some apprehension to vote in favour of this measure? In no way does it embody all the guarantees necessary so far as translation efficiency is concerned; and—I speak on my behalf—as to the safeguarding of our rights to the French language.

I can also give another reason for my apprehension. You are aware, sir, that in 50 per cent of the departments of the government for translation there is no bilingualism. We note that, in many departments, we have not been dealt with fairly. I have