

United Nations

The second of my observations is this: However imposing this difficulty may seem, I do not think there is any general dispute that a great advantage would be obtained by having a greater degree of standardization of scientific and technical terms throughout the world. There are obvious advantages attached to moving in this direction. The question is, not whether we should move in this direction but how we should encourage the development of this desirable state of affairs.

It seems to me—and this has already been shown by my hon. friends from Parkdale (Mr. Haidasz) and Victoria (Mr. Groos)—that the persons best fitted to carry on this particular task are those working in the various scientific and technical fields. Take for example the discipline of physics. It would appear obvious that the only persons who would know how to go about standardizing the scientific terms used in physics are physicists themselves. It is my understanding that physicists do in fact use a great many common terms and that they are making considerable progress through the International Union of Physics in developing common nomenclature. This international union, like other similar bodies in other sciences, has meetings and sets up committees to discuss terminology, amongst other matters.

This is an example of the kind of thing that is being done by non-governmental organizations composed of scientists or technicians working in a particular field, to develop standardization and internationalization of the language they use. If this is going on, and I understand it is quite widespread, then it does not appear to be necessary for governments to step in and attempt to have some very broad comprehensive committee tackle the problem, under the sponsorship of the United Nations.

I go on, now, to a further point which relates to the functioning of the United

Nations itself. I personally am not convinced that the proposition put forward by my hon. friend from Spadina is one which the house should adopt. I would be fearful, lest by assenting to this resolution, and presuming the ultimate success of a comparable resolution within the general assembly we would be introducing governmental participation in a field which has hitherto been non-governmental. I should like to elaborate on this point.

Even during the worst period of the cold war it was possible for scientists on both sides of the divide between the nations to participate in exchanges of information about their particular specialties. What would happen, however, if governmental propositions were put forward to deal with this field? Inevitably—and this has been well demonstrated by what is happening within specialized agencies of the UN—political issues would be introduced into the field of pure science. For an example we need only look to the experience of UNESCO in recent years. The annual meetings of this organization have been bedevilled—I do not apologize for saying this—by the introduction of general international issues such as the problems of South Africa, the Middle East, and cold war politics.

A further example, of course, is the way in which political issues—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): Order. The hour for the consideration of private members business has now expired.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Rapp: Is there any change in the program for tomorrow or Friday?

Mr. McIlraith: No change.

At six o'clock the house adjourned, without question put, pursuant to standing order.