

I regret to have detained this committee at such a length, but it occurred to my mind that perhaps the duty would devolve upon me to explain why, after voting with the Prime Minister as against the leader of the opposition, on the second reading of this Bill, why after voting with the Liberal party under those circumstances I am now forced to vote for the amendment put by the hon. member for Beauharnois (Mr. Bergeron).

Mr. FITZPATRICK. (Translation.) Did I understand my hon. friend to state in the course of his remarks that the Minister of Justice had in his possession certain documents purporting to emanate from the Catholic hierarchy protesting against the wording of the law now under consideration and claiming certain rights and privileges for the minority?

Mr. LEONARD. (Translation.) I stated that I had been informed that the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice had received letters from the proper authorities asking to be more adequately protected.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. (Translation.) I must say that I never received any such letter as that stated by my hon. friend.

Mr. LEONARD. (Translation.) No letter whatever?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. (Translation.) Yes, I received one letter.

Mr. BERGERON. Before the motion is put I wish to make a few remarks in answer to the criticism made by the Minister of Justice of the wording of my amendment. I drew the amendment in French and afterwards had it translated into English, the translation may be badly made. If the minister will look at the French version of the amendment he will see that the word 'school district' is used. In the translation into English this is improperly rendered 'school section.' The translation was badly made and that is probably the explanation which my hon. friend desires.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. If my hon. friend would permit me to look at it it would be better, the translation is so exceedingly bad.

Mr. BERGERON. I wish my hon. friend would read it in French.

Mr. MONK. Before the vote is taken I think it is perhaps better that I should give some explanation in answer to the remarks made by the Minister of Justice just after my friend from Beauharnois spoke, and also to explain my object in voting for the amendment now under consideration, and why I voted yesterday for the amendment presented by the hon. member for Labelle. I intended to give these explanations in speaking in support of the motion of which I have given notice and which will come up in a moment. It would, however, be perhaps better and clearer and save time if I gave these explanations now. There is one point to which, I have no doubt, the attention of

the House has been drawn for a long time in connection with clause 16 and the second amendment of the Prime Minister. That point is that that clause does not provide any guarantee or protection for the Catholic minority in that province, when that Catholic minority in any particular locality in which they are organizing happens to be in a local majority. There is no doubt about that, it is sufficient to read subsection 1 of the section proposed to be substituted in order to see that. The subsection reads:

Nothing in any such law shall prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to separate schools which any class of persons have at the date of passing of this Act under the terms of chapters 29 and 30 of the ordinances of the Northwest Territories, passed in the year 1901.

Therefore this clause only provides a guarantee of protection and maintenance of existing rights such as they are where the Catholic minority being in a given locality in a local minority have organized a separate school. Where they are in a majority in a locality and they organize a school district under the ordinances referred to in this subsection they have no guarantee that their rights will not be interfered with. When this question came up for discussion at first and I spoke upon it I was not aware, nor was any one in this House I think aware, that that case of a majority organization was the most frequent case in the new provinces. As I understand it, there are 150 schools where the Catholics being in a majority have organized what we may term for the purposes of this discussion public schools, and therefore they have no guarantee of any protection in the future. It is, on the contrary, in a minority of cases that they are organized into separate schools.

Mr. BOURASSA. In nine cases.

Mr. MONK. In nine cases, and in 150 cases they lack that protection. As I understand it, this parliament has declared expressly in favour of protection, of the guarantee of the maintenance of rights in favour of a Catholic minority. I shall not discuss the reasons which have led to the confirmation of that principle by a very large majority in this House and as far as we have been able to test public opinion the sentiment expressed by the House has been confirmed throughout the country. Under those circumstances I deem it the duty of the government to supplement this provision in subsection one by guaranteeing to the minority protection all over the province. That is the reason why I voted for the amendment of the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa). We have an intimation from a very high authority, up to the present moment at least, Mr. Haultain himself, who has declared publicly that the struggle for educational independence will be pursued; it will continue. We have seen fit in this parliament in the exercise of our legitimate functions to secure protection to