

Bill No. 288, for the relief of Elsie Marlyn Garayt Johnson.—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 289, for the relief of Leone Rhea Leduc Metcalf.—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 290, for the relief of James Arthur Ablett.—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 291, for the relief of Goldie Slovinsky Tkatch.—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 292, for the relief of Harold Fassett Staniforth.—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 293, for the relief of Clair Morgan Lockner Middleton-Hope.—Mr. Maybank.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

ARRANGEMENT OF FLAGS—ABSENCE OF UNION JACK FROM PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. A. KIDD (Kingston City): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the leader of the house. Why has the union jack been discarded from the flag pole today, and why is it not flying on any of the three flag poles, either on top of or in front of the parliament buildings? Who is responsible for giving instructions as to what flags should be flown?

Right Hon. IAN A. MACKENZIE (Minister of Veterans Affairs): I believe my colleague the Minister of Public Works could answer that question better than I can.

Hon. ALPHONSE FOURNIER (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, in 1945, right at the close of the war, an order in council was passed stating that the red ensign would be flown on public buildings. I did not expect this question today. However I can say that I believe the officials of my department have followed the order in council passed at that time. That would explain why they have put the red ensign on all public buildings.

Mr. KIDD: I should like to ask a supplementary question. Does the minister realize that when Mr. Churchill was here the union jack was on the right and the Canadian ensign to the left? When General Montgomery was here the Canadian ensign was on the right—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Question.

An hon. MEMBER: That is a speech.

Mr. KIDD: I am asking a question. When General Montgomery was here the Canadian ensign was on the right and the union jack on the left.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand the hon. member has put his question and has received his answer.

Mr. J. H. HARRIS (Danforth): Mr. Speaker, with respect to your ruling, the [Mr. Abbott.]

Minister of Public Works has not answered the question completely. He, himself, sir, suggested he was answering only with regard to the Canadian ensign in the top position. He has not answered that portion of the question which had to do with flags flying either to the right or the left of the Canadian ensign. My question, supplementary to the one asked by the hon. member for Kingston City, is this: Why is not the union jack flying in some place, somewhere, inasmuch as there are three positions which are recognized today, namely the Canadian ensign in the centre position, with one to the right and the other to the left? With due respect, sir, I should like to have an answer with regard to the two other official positions for flying the flag.

Mr. MacINNIS: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. KIDD: Let him answer.

Mr. FOURNIER (Hull): I can only repeat that the officials of the government are following the terms of the order in council passed in 1945. I believe that order in council was tabled in the house and was explained by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) at the time. Furthermore a committee of the House of Commons sat for a session or two to try to find a distinctive flag for our country, and the report which came back to the house recommended the red ensign. On all our buildings we are flying either the union jack or the red ensign. If hon. members will read the order in council they will see that we are justified in flying the red ensign over public buildings.

I am answering in an impromptu fashion, because I had no notice of the question. However if the hon. member wishes me to make a further statement I shall study the matter and make another report later.

Mr. HARRIS (Danforth): Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege, as a member of this honourable chamber for over a quarter of a century, and having read the history of Canada since confederation—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. HARRIS (Danforth): On a question of privilege; I have some rights, and I propose to exercise them—with all due respect to you, sir, and the usages of this honourable House of Commons. We did give way in 1945 to the ensign, with the union jack, on every occasion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. HARRIS (Danforth): I asked—