

*Private Bills*

the Queen as the head of our state, that should be one of our national anthems. I will go along with that. It can be given a secondary position, because I love "O Canada". I will tell you honestly that I love the English version of it. I am going to be frank. The French version does not appeal to me, but it might appeal to the French. As I said before, I will agree to accept the French version translated into English for the sake of unity. I am not one who is concerned with this Franco-British dispute that is going on right now. What are we going to do? How many more versions are we going to have? If my translation is wrong, I hope those who know French will correct it. I have put it on the record. It was given to me by somebody capable of translating the French version.

What is this house going to do? I think the best thing this member could do would be, instead of asking us to pass this bill as he did, to withdraw it and forget about it for the time being. I think we need to know what version we are going to accept.

**Mr. Barry Mather (New Westminster):** Mr. Speaker, I rise simply to say that the New Democratic party supports this bill and would like to see it passed. I sit down to expedite the vote.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Maurice Rinfret (St. James):** Canada being in the process of adopting national symbols of her own, it is only natural after having adopted a distinctive flag, to seek now to adopt as our national anthem "O Canada", music by Calixa Lavallée, French words by Hon. Sir Adolphe Routhier, English words by Hon. R. Stanley Weir.

We now need to give official status to a national anthem, and the one provided for under this bill is the traditional "O Canada", known today throughout the world for its stirring music and original words.

The Canadian people are very familiar with "O Canada" which it has considered for many years as its unofficial national anthem.

Mr. Speaker, "O Canada" is a beautiful song which anybody can sing and it can also be played with vigour either by accompaniment or by an orchestra. Canadians of every ethnic group long learned to honour "O Canada" in their hearts and sing it at every public celebration and even at many smaller meetings.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that no one in this house would object to parliament giving "O

Canada" an official status as the national anthem of this country. I am happy, Mr. Speaker, to support the bill of the hon. member for Spadina (Mr. Ryan) for the adoption of "O Canada" as our national anthem.

*[Text]*

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I second the bill of the hon. member for Spadina (Mr. Ryan) for the adoption of the beautiful song "O Canada" as our national anthem. This anthem has been accepted for many, many years across Canada by English, French and Canadians of all origins as a true vehicle for their national expression of solidarity, and I cannot conceive of any other song that would fit so closely to our aspirations as a nation.

Calixa Lavallée, a musical genius of our land, composed the martial music of this song. Hon. Sir Adolphe Routhier is the authoritative composer of the words so beautifully translated by Hon. Stanley Weir.

The member for Spadina has mentioned a few changes in the English wording that could be brought forward, namely the changing of the word "native" to the word "treasured" and also a shorter phraseology so that the words "we stand on guard for thee" would not be as repetitious. These proposed changes may be good suggestions but I suggest that today this house adopt the principle of the bill, and that it be adopted without any amendment.

Unofficially "O Canada" has for many years been the true national anthem of this country by the will of the people. Now is the time to give "O Canada" an official status. I express the hope that this parliament will be expeditious in the adoption of this bill because I feel that this is also the wish of every true Canadian.

**Mr. Mandziuk:** Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question? I agree with everything he has said, but does he not think that we should have one version for the whole of Canada, or is he prepared to accept the existing half a dozen versions?

**Mr. Rinfret:** Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise the hon. member that for many years "O Canada" has been sung in all ten provinces, and it is the spirit given to this song by Calixa Lavallée, Adolphe Routhier and Stanley Weir that we envisage. It is with great pride that I hear "O Canada" sung in the words of Stanley Weir and it is with the same pride that I hear it sung in the words of Sir Adolphe Routhier.