

Canada Day Act

this House both in seniority and experience. His idea was Canada Day. Let us preserve that idea. Let us crown this member's fine career to this stage at least by honouring his idea which is the result of many years of experience in the House of Commons.

My objection to the name Confederation Day is based on the fact that the word "Confederation" does not have any real definitive significance for Canadians. It does not reflect our history. In fact, to quote that noted constitutional authority, Maurice Ollivier:

Confederation applies to sovereign states which, without losing any degree of their sovereignty, unite for certain specific purposes, and at the same time, reserve the right to abandon this union, which is valuable only so long as it serves their purposes.

Dr. Ollivier gives as an example the Confederation of the Rhine, which existed in 1805 under the protection of Napoleon and was dissolved several years later. We also have the example of the Confederate States of the United States of America which have a different background from the colonies of Canada which became a Federation by Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom.

I wish to thank the hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Gervais) and the hon. member for Lapointe (Mr. Marceau) who have both expressed themselves forcefully in support of this motion at the committee stage. As Members of Parliament from Quebec they have expressed the same view as I have, a member from Ontario, that no name compares in suitability to that of Canada Day.

• (2:40 p.m.)

A recent poll conducted by the Ottawa *Citizen* revealed that a large majority of the people favoured the name Canada Day as opposed to Confederation Day. I recall an occasion in my area last July when 10,000 people, young and old, assembled at Stoney Creek for a Canada Day celebration. Although it was unofficial, it was official in their minds. With the co-operation, support, friendship and good will of this House of Commons this measure could be passed this afternoon. I hope we can take a new constitutional step forward by passing this amendment in respect of Canada Day. The spirit and soul of our nation demands response to a strong will on the part of the Canadian people to develop our significance as a united nation. One method of so doing is to unite behind this amendment today. We have the opportunity today. It is a rare opportunity and a wonderful chance for those of us who are present in this House today to lay

[Mr. Gibson.]

stress on unity by creating a change in Canada by unanimous consent. If any member should dissent, may I point out that the cause will be delayed. This bill will go to the bottom of a large pile of bills and never return here for months.

I appeal to all members of the Conservative party to unite with us in respect of this amendment. I understand there is a general disposition on all sides of the House to pass the amendment. If toward the end of the hour any member should continue talking so that a vote may not be taken on this bill, the unity which seems to exist in this House today would be destroyed. If toward the end of this hour this should happen we would be losing a real opportunity for co-operation. When I look across the way and see the hon. member for Halifax I think of the history of that part of Canada. When I see the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie) I think of the tremendous historical significance of his part of the country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Gibson: I think of the great history that learned gentleman represents. When I think of these members, who are strong Canadian Members of Parliament, I cannot help but feel that there will be a disposition to pass this bill.

An hon. Member: What about the hon. member from Edmonton?

Mr. Gibson: Edmonton, too. I think of the fine people from Edmonton to Victoria. It is with a real feeling of national pride that I stand here today.

Mr. Osler: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question? Does the hon. member recall that this is the one-hundredth anniversary of Canada becoming Canada, and that we became a three million square mile country instead of—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Brewin: Mr. Speaker, may I ask a question?

Mr. Gibson: Certainly.

Mr. Brewin: I should like to ask the hon. member whether he would direct his honeyed words beyond Halifax to this corner of the House.

Mr. Gibson: Certainly, Mr. Speaker. As I look at the learned member for Greenwood, who is always eloquent during hours like this,