

## CIVIL SERVICE COUNCILS

Mr. J. S. WOODSWORTH (Winnipeg North Centre) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 4, to amend the Civil Service Act.

Hon. ERNEST LAPOINTE (Minister of Justice): Explain.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Mr. Speaker, this bill was introduced last year. It provides for the setting up of machinery to permit of consultation between employes in the civil service and the officials of the government. It is designed to provide a means for the hearing of grievances and for promoting efficiency, and is in line with the expressed purpose of the Prime Minister, which he made clear some time ago when he said:

I think that in the relations of the civil service and the government, a council on which there would be representatives of the civil service to speak directly to members of the government or to take up with heads of the departments matters of interest to all government departments, could be of the utmost service to all concerned.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

## CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT

Mr. J. S. WOODSWORTH (Winnipeg North Centre) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 5, to amend the criminal code.

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): Explain.

Mr. WOODSWORTH: Mr. Speaker, this bill is designed to repeal the clause of the criminal code dealing with blasphemous libel. This is an old piece of legislation, which is practically obsolete and which I believe has been used only once in the history of Canada.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

## GOVERNOR GENERAL'S SPEECH

## ADDRESS IN REPLY

The house resumed from Friday, January 27, consideration of the motion of Mr. Ilesley for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the session.

Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it is not difficult to conform to the old traditions of this and other parliaments in congratulating the hon. gentlemen who spoke so splendidly on Friday last. The speeches in which they moved the address in reply to the speech from the throne were noteworthy. My hon. friend from Hants-Kings (Mr. Ilesley) is a graduate of the school

of law from which I also graduated, and I have the natural pride of a fellow alumnist in his splendid achievement in this chamber on Friday last. My hon. friend from Provencher (Mr. Beaubien), who was elected by acclamation, was thereby placed in the position of being a member of this assembly who, with his adaptability, would have found himself quite happy and with great serenity making the same speech on this side of the house had the fortunes of war permitted.

I regret very much that, although it may be difficult for the house to believe it, I was so overcome on Thursday last that I failed to thank my hon. friend from Acadia (Mr. Gardiner) for the very kind sentiments which he expressed to this house upon my election to the position I now hold. I desire now formally to thank him and those associated with him for the very kind sentiments to which he gave utterance and particularly for the expression of the hope that I might be able to discharge the duties of this difficult position in a manner satisfactory to the country at large.

It always seems that there is sadness mixed with joy in all assemblies of this character. The cables this morning conveyed to us the sad intelligence that the great commander in chief of the British forces during a long period of the war had passed to his reward. It is a matter of profound sadness to all of us; so great was Lord Haig, so great his achievements, so dogged his courage, his persistence and his effort, that the sorrow at his passing is very marked even in a country such as this. I am sure that wherever men are gathered together in this country which sent so many thousands to that great conflict, there will be a feeling of deep sympathy for his wife and family who survive him, together with a feeling of pride that the empire produced so great a soldier at such a time of stress.

But the speech with which His Majesty's representative has been pleased to meet this parliament is remarkable more for what it does not say than for what it does say. I fancy that there is some measure of satisfaction, perhaps, in the mind of the Prime Minister because he has concluded that if the country has prospered so well without his doing anything, it may be desirable to continue that inaction in the future as in the past. I fancy some such thought as that was in his mind, and in the mind of the Minister of Immigration (Mr. Forke), when the speech was being prepared. At any rate, the speech is sufficient for my purpose because it enables us to look at the affairs of this country from