

PEACE WITH BULGARIA.

BILL FOR CARRYING THE TREATY INTO EFFECT READ THE SECOND TIME.

Hon. NEWTON W. ROWELL (President of the Privy Council) moved the second reading of Bill No. 46 for carrying into effect the Treaty of Peace between His Majesty and Bulgaria.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that while this Bill has been printed it does not appear to have been distributed.

Mr. ROWELL: I understand it has been distributed. It is exactly in the same form as the Act which was passed last session ratifying the Treaties of Peace with Germany and Austria.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I have no objection to proceeding with the Bill other than that I do not believe members of the House are in possession of copies of it.

Mr. FIELDING: In the case of a Bill of such vast importance as this we should not depart from the rules of the House. Has it been printed in English and French?

Mr. ROWELL: Yes.

Mr. FIELDING: That is very satisfactory.

Motion agreed to and the House went into committee, Mr. Boivin in the Chair.

On section 1—the Governor in Council to make such dispositions as may be necessary to carry out the Treaty:

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I would like to ask the minister whether he contemplates that it will be necessary for the Governor in Council to make any appointment, or to establish any office, or to pass any Order in Council in connection with this particular Treaty. If so, what particular appointment, or office or Order in Council does he expect will be necessary.

Mr. ROWELL: My hon. friends will see that the Treaty deals with the question of debts and property—not only tangible property but property rights in the enemy country and in our own. There are debts due by Canadian nationals to Bulgarian nationals, and by Bulgarian nationals to Canadian nationals, and the Treaty provides a method by which these debts shall be liquidated or adjusted. Provision is made in this Treaty, just as in the Treaties with Germany and Austria, for two methods of dealing with the liquidation of these debts. One is the establishment of a Clearing Office. The other is the liquidation, un-

der process of law, subject to the provisions of the Treaty. If a Clearing Office is decided upon either of two courses may be adopted for its establishment: Canada could establish a Clearing Office herself under the terms of the Treaty, or a Clearing Office may be established for the whole British Empire, Canada coming in under its provisions and a branch being established in this country which, so far as Bulgaria is concerned, would be but a branch of the British Empire Clearing Office, but as between ourselves and Great Britain, would be the Canadian section of the Clearing Office. If the Government decides under the terms of the Treaty, to exercise the option given for liquidating these debts through Clearing Offices in the two countries, it would be necessary to establish either the general Clearing Office or the branch Clearing Office under the provisions of the Treaty. Then with regard to appointments, if the two Clearing Offices are unable to adjust the debts due by the nationals of one country to the other, provision is made in the Treaty for referring the matter to the Mixed Arbitral Tribunal which adjudicates upon these disputed claims. Provision is made that each government concerned shall appoint a representative who shall attend the sittings of this tribunal in order to supervise the claims that may be presented on behalf of its nationals and while any national having a claim to prosecute before this tribunal may be represented there by his own counsel, the presentation of the claim of the nationals will be generally supervised by the representative of the government of the country interested. That would be an appointment to be made under the terms of the Treaty.

Then in reference to Orders in Council. In the liquidation of enemy debts, and in the disposition of enemy property and in other matters, very large powers are given under the Treaty which would require express legislative authority to exercise if general authority was not given to the Government under this Bill to deal with these matters by Order in Council. To illustrate: If the Clearing House proposal is adopted, each government agrees to prohibit its own nationals from dealing directly with the nationals of the other in adjusting these claims. That could only be done by legislation. Were not the prohibition sanctioned by legislation, then the moment peace is declared a national in one country might treat with a national in the other country in the adjustment of their respective claims.