

### *Heritage Day*

committee. The committee was being asked in some way to resolve this problem.

I might just mention that some of those who presented bills were the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie), the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens) and the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Leggatt), I believe. He was certainly a member of the justice subcommittee which straightened out the matter and I believe he had a bill. There were also several former parliamentarians such as Mr. Reginald Stackhouse, the hon. member for Scarborough East at that time, and Mr. Nelson from British Columbia. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) will know his constituency.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Burnaby-Seymour.

**Mr. MacGuigan:** He was the member for that area at that time. Having regard to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, I would like to pay a special tribute to him for his support in this important task.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. MacGuigan:** He has been indefatigable in his activities with regard to this legislation. I am encouraged by that because I have noticed in the course of my public life, and even more in the course of his, that he very often in the long run gets his way with many of those pieces of legislation for which he so tenaciously struggles in this House. That gives me added reason to hope that before very long we will see the fruits of his labour, mine and those of many other people and get this measure on the statute books of Canada.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. MacGuigan:** I wish to refer to the report of a subcommittee of the justice committee that was presented in that committee on December 18, 1973. As I mentioned, there was a diversity of options. The justice committee set up a subcommittee of which I was the chairman. We were able to bring in a unanimous report which made the following recommendations. Although this is found in the minutes of the justice committee at page 32:4, I do not think it would be a bad idea to put it in *Hansard* today. I presented the report of the subcommittee on the subject matter. It read as follows:

The Sub-committee on the subject-matter of a National Holiday of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs has the honour of presenting to the Committee the following recommendations:

- (1) That the Government consider the advisability of introducing legislation to establish the third Monday of February as a new legal holiday;
- (2) That this holiday be kept and observed under the name of Heritage Day;
- (3) That the particular aspect of our heritage to be honoured on this day should be varied by proclamation from year to year. In the opinion of the Sub-committee the focal point of the celebration for the first year should be the Canadian Flag, for the second year our first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, and for the third year, our native peoples;

[Mr. MacGuigan.]

(4) That a new Standing Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament, chaired by the Speakers of both Houses, should be established to recommend to the Government the theme of the holiday from year to year;

(5) That the Government consider the advisability of issuing a special stamp and coin each year to mark the celebration more fully.

After debate thereon, on the motion of the hon. member for York-Simcoe the report was concurred in unanimously by the justice committee. I might just make a few additional comments on that.

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** What year was that?

**Mr. MacGuigan:** December 18, 1973. The name was varied from heritage day to national heritage day on my initiative because of the difficulty of finding an adequate translation in the French. It was thought that the word "patrimoine" by itself might not signify exactly the right thing, that "patrimoine national" was the preferred phrase. Therefore, we made the insertion of the word "national" in the English as well to keep the name of the holiday parallel in both languages.

There was a subsequent resolution of the justice committee which recommended that the Canadian Bill of Rights should be the focal point of the celebration in the fourth year. That has also been added to the bill.

I did not proceed with the idea of a standing joint committee of both Houses of Parliament chaired by the Speakers of both Houses to advise the government, not because I had a change of mind on this, but because it seemed a bit too elaborate a setup for a single matter of this kind.

The matter was put in the hands of the government to decide by proclamation but with the understanding and recommendation I am making here now that this be done on the basis of a consensus of party leaders, or whatever form of consensus might be established, so that the holiday which was established would not be one which brought any acrimony to the Canadian scene but was one which had very general support in all segments in this House and, therefore, in all parts of Canada. Indeed, it would be political folly for a government to proceed in any other way on a matter of this kind.

I will come to that subject later, but not too much later because I do not want to prevent other members from making a contribution to this debate. I wish we were not having a debate but simply putting the bill through. Since I do not sense that to be the disposition of the House, I think this to be an opportune time to put some things on record.

The bill which is before us represents an initiative of an all-party body. It represents the feelings of all groups in Canada. There seem to be only two arguments against it. One was raised by the hon. member for Palliser (Mr. Schumacher) on a previous occasion and his opinion may be shared by other hon. members.