

And further down it says:

(a) communicates the code word,—

The person might indicate that code word over the telephone innocently if he did not know that it had been laid down on a piece of paper inadvertently and placed on his desk. I am not prepared under those circumstances—and again I emphasize this—to let the Solicitor General have this power, in particular this Solicitor General or one to be appointed in the future. Indeed those in the past were not always above the law. Therefore, I want a judge to give the authorization.

Can I call it four o'clock, sir?

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. It being four o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely public bills—

Mr. Yvon Pinard (Parliamentary Secretary to President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I request the unanimous consent of the House so we may proceed to consideration of Bill C-234 and that all items appearing on the order paper before that bill be allowed to stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order. The House has heard the request of the parliamentary secretary. Is there unanimous consent?

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Agreed.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Agreed.

● (1602)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

[*English*]

HOLIDAYS ACT

ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL HERITAGE DAY

Mr. Mark MacGuigan (Windsor-Walkerville) moved that Bill C-234, respecting National Heritage Day, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is, on the one hand, a pleasure to be able to speak again on this important piece of unfinished business. On the other hand, it is a slightly unhappy occasion in that it is necessary to speak on it again, to find that the bill has not yet been passed and that the government bill with a similar initiative which had been introduced in the last session has not been reintroduced. Nevertheless, I understand that the

Heritage Day

government is committed to this initiative and will at least in time bring forth legislation on its own behalf.

In the meantime, I would certainly like to advance the acceptance of national heritage day through my Bill C-234. Indeed, as I will develop in the course of my remarks, there is at least one substantial difference, perhaps two, between the bill which I am proposing and that which it appears the government would desire. I would suggest on both points that the consensus of parties which is represented in my bill is the preferable position to take.

I wish to say first that it is a pleasure to have an opportunity on an occasion such as this to celebrate my national heritage as well. We Irish have become so Anglicized that we do not have as many chances to parade our original origins now as we used to. In some places they still turn rivers green on St. Patrick's Day. In most cases all we can do is wear a badge to indicate our origin. In my case all of my ancestors came here from Ireland in the 1830's and forties. It is a long time ago, but I like to look back on that heritage because I believe it has made an important contribution to what Canada is today.

That is what each of us feels about his heritage in Canada. That is one of the great things about this country, perhaps the greatest, that we each have a distinctive heritage. Each of us can look at his own heritage and his own contribution to Canada with pride. Our government looks at all of these with pride as having made a contribution to the development of our country.

With respect to national heritage day, I believe two provinces have adopted national heritage days. I think the territory of the Yukon has also done so. In addition, there are a number of large organizations which are very instrumental in pressing for the establishment of our heritage. Kinsmen are one of those groups and I frequently had an opportunity of appearing before them. They have been taking a major initiative with regard to this legislation. I believe Optimists International have taken a similar position.

Bill C-234 is a symbol of the richness of our national heritage. I believe it is strongly supported by all the people of Canada. In a questionnaire which I included in a householder last month, I asked my constituents the question: "Do you favour Heritage Day as a national holiday in February?". The replies are now in, about 700 in all. Of those, 68.7 per cent favour a heritage day as a national holiday in February. Only 31.3 per cent are opposed. In fact, most of those who were opposed objected only to the date, not to the concept. They wrote on the questionnaire other dates they would prefer. Nevertheless, the date proposed in this bill is obviously the one around which there is the greatest popular consensus.

I would like to go back to the genesis of this bill in the justice committee. In 1973, this matter came before the justice committee with some degree of force because there were quite a number of bills at that time which were referred to the