

*Supply Bill—Representation at Tokyo*

explain the reason why the government is taking this particular step at this time. The paragraph in the speech is as follows:

As contemplated by the conclusions of the Imperial conference of 1926, provision was made on July 1 for direct communication between His Majesty's government in Canada and His Majesty's other governments of the British Empire. The further implementing of these conclusions which aim at more effective consultation through personal contact by the appointment to Canada of a representative of His Majesty's government in Great Britain is being discussed between the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs in Great Britain, who is at present in Canada, and members of my government. By agreement between the governments of France and Canada and the governments of Japan and Canada it is proposed that each of these countries shall be represented in the other by a minister plenipotentiary.

So that, as early as January of this year, the house had before it, in a form which permitted full discussion and debate, the question of the advisability of opening a legation at Tokyo. Then a short time ago we had an amendment moved by the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa) which was brought in on the motion to go into the supply of the Department of External Affairs. That amendment dealt with external affairs and was very largely concerned with just such questions as the one we are now discussing. The debate occupied considerable time and opportunity was given for hon. members to discuss their views on the subject of legations. Then we moved into the estimates of the Department of External Affairs, and those estimates, as I recollect, took two days of discussion, including the time occupied on the motion to go into supply. When these estimates were before parliament, among others assented to was the estimate for the legation at Washington, and the estimate for the opening of the new legation at Paris. I submit that it was quite permissible during the discussion on either one of these estimates, for hon. members to discuss, to the extent that my hon. friend has discussed this afternoon, the advisability of a legation being opened in any part of the world. There was plenty of opportunity then. Then, again, some days ago when we were proceeding with miscellaneous estimates, we came to the item on Tokyo, and the acting leader of the opposition requested that the item be held over pending the return from a trip to the west of my hon. friend the leader of the opposition. It is quite true that in further discussing the items on Saturday my hon. friend the leader of the opposition, in order to help us expedite business, did not take up the

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

discussion of the item at that time. I think he was guided in that purpose by the desire to assist the government in bringing proration about speedily, and I wish to thank him for his courtesy in that regard.

Mr. BENNETT: I said we would discuss it on the third reading.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My hon. friend made it clear that we would discuss the item on the third reading of the bill at the time of concurrence. If this item is being discussed at the last minute it was not from any desire of the government to avoid an earlier discussion, or because of any lack of opportunities for discussion.

May I say to my hon. friend from Argenteuil (Sir George Perley) that his speech seems to me to be, in many particulars, as much in support of the policy of the government in opening legations as an argument against it. His first objection was that it was creating an unwise precedent. May I point out to my hon. friend that he preceded that remark by drawing attention to two cases where the precedent had already been made? A legation has been opened at Washington and a legation has been authorized for Paris, and therefore the precedent has already been established. The precedent was fully discussed when the question of representation at Washington was before the house, and it was again opened for full discussion when the question of representation at Paris was being discussed. My hon. friend says there is a difference between Washington and Paris and Tokyo. Certainly there are some major differences, but there are also important considerations which are applicable to all. My hon. friend spoke of the circumstance that the United States was a near neighbour. The United States is our nearest neighbour on the south, but Japan is our nearest neighbour on the west and France is our nearest neighbour on the east. One thing which I should like to draw to the attention of the house is the peculiar and rather remarkable position in which Canada stands in relation to the countries in which we are opening legations. I was very much impressed the other day by a remark of the hon. member for St. Lawrence-St. George (Mr. Cahan) who was referring amongst other things, I think, to the orient and speaking of the influence of Canadian thought on many public questions. He hoped to see Canada playing more and more a part in the councils not only of the empire but of the world, because he believed Canadian opinion would make for friendly relations as between the different countries,