

Private Bills

try's band plays "O Canada". When foreign bands honour this country, they likewise play "O Canada". When members of Canada's service clubs attend conventions abroad, they are stirred by the welcome strains of "O Canada". The story of "O Canada" is almost as old and revered as confederation itself.

Mr. Speaker, when I was at university, I was in residence with many American students and was told by many of them how striking and fitting an anthem "O Canada" was for this country. Their opinions in this respect, I have subsequently found, are shared around the world. The government, by item no. 45 on the order paper, has expressed its resolve to take such steps as may be necessary to have "God Save the Queen" recognized as the royal anthem in Canada. This should come to pass in the next session, "God Save the Queen" will, therefore, continue to be recognized as an anthem of Canada.

But I would ask that this bill be passed today, to approve the principle that "O Canada" should be the official national anthem of our country, to enshrine its traditional words and music and to honour in perpetuity the names of Calixa Lavallée, Adolphe Routhier and Stanley Weir—the men who made possible this breast-swelling, patriotic song, the singing of which fills our hearts with such pride and joy in our country and in our countrymen. I would point out that apparently when Judge Weir rearranged the music of Calixa Lavallée to accord with his English words as well as the French words, he copyrighted his work. Such copyright was then sold or assigned to Leo Feist Limited of Toronto and was subsequently transferred to that firm's successor, Gordon V. Thompson Limited. When I was preparing this bill I spoke with the general manager of Gordon V. Thompson Limited and he told me it would be quite in order either to print the words and music of "O Canada" as they appear in the *Encyclopedia Canadiana*, in the bill itself, or, in the alternative, to incorporate such words and music by reference to the relevant page in the encyclopedia. I have followed the latter course.

As this may be the only opportunity I shall have to speak in connection with this bill, I feel I have to anticipate some possible criticisms and allay some possible doubts. I know that some newcomers to this country and some editors of journals have proffered some criticism of the Weir verse in English. In the first line, the word "native" is objected to

[Mr. Ryan.]

by some who were not born here and others feel there are too many repetitions of the words "stand on guard". With respect to the criticism of the word "native", I would think that newcomers to the country should be prepared to accept this small inaccuracy pertaining to themselves on the basis of poetic licence. Again, such individuals could easily in their own singing of the anthem substitute "chosen" for the word "native".

In respect to the second line of the refrain the first words "we stand on guard" are now often substituted in practice by the words "O Canada". This cuts out one of the repetitions. Actually, I have been considering many of the criticisms that I have encountered and have come up with this verse in English, being a substitution in part for the first verse of the Weir version. I will give it to the house for what it is worth, as an example:

O Canada! Our home and dauntless land!
True patriot love in all thy sons command.
With glowing hearts we see thee rise
The true north, strong and free,
In unity, O Canada,
We sing in praise of thee.

Land of our hopes, glorious and free!
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

Here is another Canadian's idea of how the English words of "O Canada" should be amended. In a letter dated February 24, 1965 Mr. William E. Algie of York Mills, Toronto, wrote to the Prime Minister as follows:

Dear Mr. Pearson:

The Rotary clubs of district 707 are holding their yearly conference at the Royal York Hotel on March 26th and 27th. I am arranging for several songs to be sung at the conference and one of them is, I hope, "O Canada".

However, there are several words in it that I do not like. One of them is the reference to "our native land" which seems to discriminate against those who have made Canada their home but were born in some other country. Second, I would like to incorporate something about the new Canadian flag with its bold maple leaf; and third, I do not like the boring repetition of "We stand on guard for thee".

I have therefore revised the words as per the attached, but have retained as much as possible the lyrics which have become familiar to Canadians. I like the play on words using "treasured land" to mean both "beloved" and a land holding many treasures. I also like the reference to the words "We stand on guard united" because that is the one thing this country needs more than anything else, to stand united. The expression "sea to sea" ties in with the Canadian coat of arms "A mari usque ad mare".