

Then is it strange that we should love
This land, our land, the best?

I would like members to zero in on the nine word changes and to think in terms of what happens in the House from then on. The original Weir version of "O Canada" reads as follows:

● (1250)

O Canada! Our home and native land!
True patriot love in all thy sons command.
With glowing hearts we see thee rise,
The True North strong and free!
O Canada, Glorious and free,
We stand on guard, we stand on guard for thee.
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

The version in Bill C-36 is as follows:

O Canada! Our home and native land!
True patriot love in all thy sons command.
With glowing hearts we see thee rise,
The True North strong and free!
From far and wide, O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
God keep our land glorious and free!
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.
O Canada, we stand on guard for thee.

This great nation needs and deserves an official national anthem. Whatever the decision is, we are looking at a change of only nine words. We are also looking at an enlightened group in this House, the members of which will discuss the subject matter in private members' bills. I take great pride in supporting Bill C-36.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, in a few days Canadians will celebrate the anniversary of confederation. After 113 years, Canada still has no official national anthem. It is more than time, Mr. Speaker, for this House to adopt "O Canada" as our official anthem. For several generations, millions of Canadians have recognized the work of Calixa Lavallée in the national anthem. It would therefore be appropriate, Mr. Speaker, for us to do the same on the eve of Canada Day.

[English]

I therefore bring the views of my colleagues very much in support of the action the government has taken today, and I want in that context to compliment the hon. member, who has just spoken for the Conservative party, for his important initiative on the same subject. I fully support both actions and, indeed, the mandate expressed by all members of the House in the motion passed on May 21 calling for this action.

Canadians from coast to coast on Canada Day of this year will at long last be rising to sing the song as their official national anthem, a song which most of them thought for years already had been established as such. As I said a few minutes ago, it is an appropriate action to take at this time and is long overdue.

I want to say in this context that part of the understanding expressed by the minister in introducing the subject today is

National Anthem

that a committee will be struck during the next session to deal with some important changes in the wording. I want to underline two of them only; the expression "our home and native land" is one the minister has already indicated is of concern to the government. We have to recognize the fact that, apart from the important original people of this land, the rest of us are immigrants in our ancestry, as well as many immigrants who will become Canadians before very long, all of whom, I think would appreciate terminology other than "our home and native land".

Secondly, in this period of the evolution, slowly but importantly, of equality between the sexes, the line in the song "all thy sons command" should clearly be changed, to remove the obvious masculine bias, in favour of some alternative.

Those are two concerns members in all parties have which can be dealt with by the committee to which the minister has referred. Other members will then have the opportunity to express their concern about other specific words.

I want to conclude my comments by indicating that however one may differ, and whatever suggestions might be made about changes in the wording, some of which are important, the main point to be recognized today is that at long last we in this land will have our own national anthem. I think it is symbolically important that the anthem happens to have been written by a Quebecker. Particularly at this point in our history that is worth noting and worth stressing. It is something all of us in our land, whether we are from Francophone heritage or not, should be proud of. It is a good day for Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and the House went into committee thereon—Mr. Francis in the chair.

Clause 2 agreed to.

On Clause 3—*Public domain.*

[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: Mr. Chairman, I would like to suggest the following amendment pursuant to the order of the House made earlier today.

[English]

Therefore, I should like to move, seconded by the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton:

That Bill C-36 be amended by adding thereto, after clause 3 on page 1, the following:

"4. This act shall come into force on a day to be fixed by proclamation."

The Chairman: Hon. members have heard the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the committee to adopt the said amendment?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

Clause 3 agreed to.

Schedule agreed to.

Clause 1 agreed to.