

*Flags of Canada*

(Translation):

In my opinion, we have waited all those years mentioned by Mr. Heward in his book on the Canadian flag. I am convinced that today Canada is ready to be given a flag by its government or to select one if the opportunity arises.

(Text):

Mr. Speaker, I know that many still believe and are sincere in their opinions that the union jack should be chosen in any Canadian flag. I have been indebted to Mr. Cumberland, who was the supreme president of the native sons of England, for his book "The History of the Union Jack".

I have great respect for the union jack and great admiration for what it represents. I do not believe that Canadians, by adopting a flag which is absolutely different than the union jack, would have less love or respect for the union jack or what it represents. To use a famous phrase of Sir Wilfrid Laurier when speaking on another subject, "It is not that we love Great Britain less, but it is because we love Canada more".

The union jack dates from the time of the third crusades, when Richard Coeur de Lion, instead of going overland like most other nations, equipped a fleet and had a naval battle against the Saracens near the city of Beirut. Close to that city there was a grotto dedicated to St. George. As the result of a visit there Richard Coeur de Lion decided to choose the cross of St. George for the flag of England. It has been argued by many people that Richard Coeur de Lion was a French Norman king, and that really we should have nothing against the union jack because, after all, there were some French connections. But the racial connections should really have nothing to do with the flag that is the flag of this country.

In reading this book I find that it was James VI of Scotland who in 1603 became king of England. He was, I believe, the second cousin of Elizabeth and the great-grandson of Henry VIII. In 1606, in order to avoid quarrels between Scots sailors and English sailors he decided to have a flag that contained the cross of St. George and the cross of St. Andrew. But this flag was what they called an additional flag, and each country kept its own national flag. It was only on merchant ships that this new flag, called the union flag, would be at the main-top mast and the national flag was fore-top.

However, in 1707, in the reign of Queen Anne, the parliament of Scotland was abolished, with the result—and only then—that the union flag of what they called the two Britains, north Britain and south Britain,

was adopted as the flag used all over Scotland and England. But it was not until 1801, when the parliament of Ireland was abolished, that the real union jack was formed by also including in the union jack the cross of St. Patrick.

So we have a formula. That is, if it is necessary to have the union jack as a flag we must have unity of parliament. As long as Scotland had her own parliament, the Scots people had their own flag and the English had their own flag. Only when the Scots parliament was abolished was the union jack used in Scotland and in England. But the king of England was the king of Ireland long before he was king of Scotland, and the Irish used their flag as long as they had their own parliament. It was only in 1801, when the parliament of Ireland was abolished, that they adopted the union jack. So, while they had the same king, they had different flags.

To be logical, those who want the union jack as their flag should be in favour of abolishing our parliament here and having it in London. Then we would be part of the same kingdom; then we could accept it. But as long as we have different parliaments we cannot have the union jack as our flag unless we first admit that we are not independent, that we are a colony. If we are prepared to do that, yes.

As far as the red ensign is concerned, the way the red ensign is now composed, every time I see it I feel a deep humiliation because the place of honour of the flag does not belong to Canada. It belongs to another country. I prefer the old union jack which we use in Manitoba to the flag which shows Canada to be subservient to another land. This is no reflection on Great Britain. It is no reflection on the other country whose emblem is in that flag, because it is not there because the other country wants it; it is there because Canadians have not had the courage to do anything about it up to now.

I am asking for a referendum because this question has been discussed for the last 35 years without action being taken. Motions and private bills have been brought down by members of all political parties. Perusing *Hansard* I find that as far back as 1925 an order in council is set out fully in *Hansard* providing in part as follows:

The minister therefore recommends that a committee be appointed to consider and report on the most suitable design that should be adopted for a national flag.

In 1934 and again in 1935 motions were introduced by Mr. Dickie, the then Conservative member for Nanaimo, respecting a Canadian flag. In 1938 the Liberal member for North Battleford, Mr. McIntosh, put forward