

*Flags of Canada*

ing to our conscience on a subject of essential significance, like the adoption of a distinctive national flag.

This afternoon, I heard the hon. member for Laurier (Mr. Chevrier), deal as he has done but rarely since sitting in this house, with the matter of a distinctive national flag.

At this time, I refer to an order in council enacted on Wednesday, September 5, 1945, of which I will read a few excerpts:

The Canadian red ensign should be flown on federal government buildings and all doubt with regard to the relevancy of flying this ensign whenever a distinctive Canadian flag is to be flown, should be dispelled.

It is desirable to authorize the flying of the Canadian red ensign on federal government buildings within as well as without Canada, and to remove any doubt as to the propriety of flying the Canadian red ensign wherever place or occasion may make it desirable to fly a distinctive Canadian flag;

Therefore, His Excellency the Governor General in Council, on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, is pleased to order and doth hereby order that the red ensign with the shield of the coat of arms of Canada in the fly may be flown from buildings owned or occupied by the federal government within and without Canada.

That departmental order was enacted in 1945, under the Mackenzie King government. And who was a member of the cabinet council at the time? None other than the hon. member for Laurier who then co-operated in the enactment of that order in council. How is it that the hon. member, the former member for Stormont, was in favour of a flag bearing the red ensign in the fly, while today, as the member for Laurier, he wants a distinctive national flag? I cannot understand his attitude. He is not sincere, he is not consistent. He changes his views as he moves from one province to another and he will probably be a candidate in some other province at the next election, and he probably will then have some other conception of a distinctive national flag.

Mr. Speaker, may I read here part of a statement Mr. Pearson made during the election, when campaigning in the province of Quebec. This item from *Le Devoir* of March 7, 1958 reads as follows:

Mr. Pearson's statement on the necessity of a national flag has been welcomed in the capital city. However, it has been noted that during his meeting with the students, at the Reform Club of Montreal, the Liberal leader saw fit to add, on the matter of the flag, that it may be necessary then to discuss whether such a flag should or should not contain the union jack. A Conservative with nationalist tendencies observed that in the province of Quebec Mr. Pearson gave some guarantee to a certain well known English-speaking group.

That is, he maintains—or at least, does not clearly repudiate—the avowed opinion of Jack Pickersgill and James Sinclair on that matter. This is not what had been expected by the people of Quebec who are irrevocably in favour of the adoption of a distinctive national flag, without any sign of subservience to any country. A Liberal told us this: "If Mr. Pearson said he is in favour of having the union jack in our national flag, he would have done better to hold his tongue. His statement will do more harm than good to the Quebec Liberals."

Ladies and gentlemen—

Excuse me, Mr. Speaker, I am so conscious at this time of addressing the people of Canada, since all the hon. members in this house represent the people of this country, that I have perhaps disregarded the rules of the house.

But I cannot understand the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition, who is very much of a diplomat. He reminds me somewhat of that non-committal type of diplomat who says no and yes at the same time. He is always sitting on the fence whenever he goes in the province of Quebec. During the last election campaign, he was in favour of a distinctive flag and, if he is asked to be specific, he favours a flag bearing a union jack. The Leader of the Opposition reminds me a little of the hon. member for Laurier whose views about the adoption of a Canadian flag change from year to year.

As for the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate (Mr. Pickersgill)—a member of this house referred to him this afternoon—I put a question to him, Mr. Speaker, following which the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate made a correction, as reported in *Hansard*. This is what he said:

I stated many times and I state again that the Canadian flag is the one stipulated by order in council of December 5, 1945.

The hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate's feelings about the Canadian flag are the same as those of the hon. member for Laurier at the time his government passed the order in council in 1945.

I understand the attitude of the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate since his leader is not the Leader of the Opposition, but rather the premier of Newfoundland.

Mr. Speaker, a flag is not only the symbol of an adult nation, it is also the result of that nationality itself, its official confirmation by means of an order in council emanating from responsible authorities. Is there anything more depressing for Canadian delegates