

Si la sève robuste a fait nos bras si forts,
C'est que buvant le suc de la terre natale,
Nous plongeons dans l'humus des grands
érables morts...

Dans nos feuilles, parfois, une brise com-
mence,
Dolente, le refrain des vieux airs dispa-
rus,

Écoutez: elle chante et l'âme et la romance
Des aïeux survivants en nos feuillages
drus...

Nous respirons vers Dieu la prière du
sol!

Prier, chanter avec la brise aérienne,
Et l'âme du terroir et l'âme des aïeux;
Et puis, se souvenir afin qu'on se sou-
viennne,

Voilà par quels devoirs l'on grandit jus-
qu'aux cieus!

Ainsi, dans la forêt, près des bruyères
roses,

M'ont parlé l'autre jour les grands érables
verts.

Et, songeur, j'ai connu le prix des nobles
choses

Qui font les peuples grands, plus grands
que leurs revers.

Ils gardent l'avenir ceux qui gardent
l'histoire,

Ceux dont la souvenance est sans mau-
vais remords,

Et qui, près des tombeaux où sommeille
la gloire,

A l'âme des vivants, mêlent l'âme des
morts.

Ils le gardent surtout ceux dont les lèvres
fières

Ont gardé les refrains du parler maternel:
Épopée ou romance où l'âme de nos pères
Vient prier et vibrer d'un accent éternel.
En parlant bien sa langue on garde bien
son âme.

Et nous te parlerons, ô verbe des aïeux,
Aussi longtemps qu'au pôle une immor-
telle flamme

Allumera le soir ses immuables feux;
Que montera des blés la mâle villanelle,
Que mugira le bronze en nos clochers
ouverts,

Et que se dressera dans la brise éternelle,
Le panache hautain des grands érables
verts!

I did want to conclude with this poem which glorifies much better than I could the great maples of the land of Quebec and of the whole of Canada.

(Text):

Hon. M. Wallace McCutcheon: Honourable senators, I will detain you but a few moments. I regret that it is not within my competence to rise to the heights of oratory of the honourable Leader of the Govern-
ment, of Senator Grattan O'Leary, Senator

Sullivan, or Senator Gouin, to mention but a few honourable senators who have taken part in this debate. It has been a debate of very high order. I hope that nothing I will say will lower the tone of the debate, though I expect I shall be somewhat less emotional than some of the honourable senators who have spoken.

I think it is necessary to set the frame-
work within which this discussion is taking place. I listened with interest to Senator Croll this afternoon. I am sorry he is not here now to hear the compliments that I propose to pay him. Better than almost any man in this chamber he is adept at setting up straw men, and then proceeding to demolish them. He did an impressive job in that respect this afternoon.

I was particularly interested, of course, in the "Croll Poll," and I would commend him to the marketing division of my friend Senator Molson's company.

Hon. Mr. Molson: A very fine gesture!

Hon. Mr. McCutcheon: The amendment moved by the honourable Senator O'Leary (Carleton) is, in my opinion, an eminently sensible one, and I intend to support it. I intend to support it because it faces reality—the reality of a country already divided on its symbols. It attempts to head off the more serious danger to our national unity if this closure-imposed flag is raised.

Before I proceed further, let me say that I am not here pleading a case for the Red Ensign. What I am appealing for is that we try to obtain a flag that will unite, rather than divide the country. Such a flag, in my opinion, will bear some symbols of our country's history, of our two principal founding peoples and their contribution to Canada.

Many of us here, as well as in the other place and throughout Canada, have been asking—and Senator Willis raised this point—why this debate? Why the insistence on a new flag now? Why has this issue taken top priority in public discussions since last May?

On May 15 last, just two days before he appeared before the Canadian Legion in Winnipeg with his three maple leaf flag, the Prime Minister outlined his list of legislative priorities in the other place. I could bring editorials and news comments indicating that if that were the list of priorities, there would have been, as the event established, no summer recess. As Senator Willis mentioned, there was no mention in that list of priorities of the flag, two days before the Prime Minister's speech to the Canadian Legion in Winnipeg. There was, of course, the usual "out" that any leader of a government announcing legislative priorities must give, that other matters may arise to be dealt with. However, at the time the Prime Minister made that statement in the