

will start to work and sooner or later, depending on the spirit of our conciliation, the flag will become a valuable influence for unity.

Honourable senators, with due deference and respect for the sponsor (Hon. Mr. O'Leary, Carleton), I find it impossible to support the amendment.

**Hon. John A. Robertson:** Honourable senators, in rising to take part in the debate on the amendment to the main motion, I do so after considerable thought and a great deal of listening to what has been said in the debate.

I would like first to congratulate my good friend and colleague the honourable Senator O'Leary (Carleton) for what I believe is one of the finest, if not the greatest, speeches we have heard in respect to the flag debate during the past six months.

I also wish to congratulate the honourable Leader of the Government (Hon. Mr. Connolly), and all other senators who have spoken to this date. This has been a most informative and interesting debate throughout.

I listened very closely to the honourable Senator Pouliot yesterday. During his address I came to a number of conclusions. I notice that my honourable colleague Senator Clement O'Leary, is chuckling—he stole part of my speech, and therefore I shall have to follow a different course.

The honourable Senator Pouliot, from that famous town in Quebec, Rivière du Loup, was, as usual, at his vocal best in speaking of the need for a distinctive Canadian flag. He made his usual approach, employing one of his favourite methods of waving an olive branch in one hand and a baseball bat in the other.

Mention has been made of the approach that Mr. Godbout and Mr. Duplessis took about the flag of the Province of Quebec, and that was just too bad that the same method was not used in the present circumstances. That is all water under the bridge. This new flag was launched in a sea of discontent, one of the very roughest of seas. We are all well aware of the reception it received that memorable day in the City of Winnipeg. I say to all honourable senators that if there ever was an inopportune time to introduce a new flag, that was the day. It was a very sad occasion, and the flag presented at that time is not the flag under discussion and consideration today, but a different one.

In reading *Hansard* of the other place one must assume that the policy of the Government must have been this: If you cannot say anything good about the new flag, don't say anything. So, honourable senators, they said practically nothing, and this proposed

flag was adopted by nearly all Government members along with nearly all those of the smaller parties. This must have been the policy projected through caucus—I can only guess this much, because we do not know what they said and what they did not say. I can assure you that these members will have to answer to their constituents when they return to their constituencies at a later date. Of course, the answer is one for which we shall have to wait.

I listened in this chamber as the honourable Senator Pouliot ran down the Royal Canadian Legion brass. I am sorry he is not here tonight so I could look over and smile at him. He also ran down labour unions and their leaders. Not speaking for the rank and file, I immediately thought of the Bar Association when he said that, and I wondered if he attended all their meetings.

Speaking for myself, I served in the armed forces, along with four of my brothers, under the flag that is presently flying atop the Peace Tower. Like my father and my grandfather, I have lived in happiness and security under this flag throughout a lifetime.

I listened to the honourable Senator Croll's remarks earlier today, and he called himself a new Canadian. I wondered, if he thought he was a new Canadian, what his idea would be of an old Canadian, because I think he has been with us for some 60 years, and if he is a new Canadian then I guess I must be too.

With respect to the "Croll Poll," as he called it, I was most impressed. In fact, I was going to ask him if he conducted that poll in his own backyard. I assume that he did. Then, when he said, "Time is running out. I want a flag now and I cannot wait," I felt like saying, "Maybe Santa Claus will be good to you too." With regard to his remarks about a changing world, Canada, like the rest of the world, has been changing vastly over the last 100 years, and I do not think we have to be advised of that fact.

Then the good senator mentioned living in the past. Well, I can only say that I wish for my family and relatives the same happiness living in Canada this next 50 years that I have experienced during the past 50 years. Certainly, a new flag will never change our standards of living. Again, in reference to the past, I told Senator Croll as he passed out of the chamber, hustling to a committee meeting this afternoon, "Senator when you start speaking of the past I immediately think of the members of your profession. On any occasion I have had the opportunity to sit and listen to a lawyer, in court or in one of the offices upstairs, I have come to the conclusion that they are the champions at digging into the past."