

*Canadian Flag*

the eternal credit of the mayor of Ottawa, Miss Whitton, that she sent a telegram to the Legion convention apologizing on behalf of the city of Ottawa for this disgraceful cartoon.

It seems to me that we do not need a new flag to have a distinctive flag. Canada now has a distinctive flag, one that symbolizes its spiritual and cultural heritage. In 1921 the Canadian government requested King George V to order a new coat of arms for Canada. His Majesty instructed the royal college of heralds to design a suitable coat of arms, which was then placed on the red ensign. I wonder if some of those who are shouting for the end of the red ensign have taken the trouble to learn the significance of the design it bears. The couchant lion in the coat of arms was the symbol of William of Normandy—it originated in France. The red lion is the traditional emblem of the kings of Scotland, from whom it can be traced back by devious routes to the ancient tribe of Judah, which legend says founded the city of London 1100 B.C. Ireland is represented by the harp. The fleur-de-lis emblem was brought to Canada by the early French settlers. It is the emblem of a France which no longer exists—a royalist, not a republican, France. And, finally, there are the three maple leaves to symbolize the union of people of all racial origins in the new country of Canada. All our history is embodied in these emblems on the flag we now have. Since 1924 it has been the recognized emblem of Canada all over the world. Canadian troops fought under it in world war II, then in Korea, and are carrying it proudly today in Cyprus. Canadian Olympic teams carry the red ensign, and it flies over all buildings owned or occupied by the federal government or its agencies both in and beyond Canada. It has been the distinctive flag of Canada by official proclamation since 1945. Nothing can grow if it is severed from its roots. To try to cut Canada off from the roots of its traditions and its history can only have a withering effect, set province against province and culture against culture. We do not need a new flag; we need a return to the ideals and principles upon which our country was founded.

The matter of a free vote on this flag issue has been much discussed both within and without this house. A lot has been said about the freedom of members to vote as they choose, without regard for party lines. But how can it be called a free vote when the Prime Minister has stated unequivocally that he is staking his government's life on the outcome? How can members of this house

[Mr. MacRae.]

who support the government vote against the flag measure, when they know that if the Prime Minister's flag is not adopted it will mean forcing another general election on the Canadian people? On May 19 the Prime Minister stated:

I think I should make it quite clear that when the government submits to parliament a matter of policy—and this is certainly a matter of policy—the government must stand or fall on the results of the decision of the house.

Arthur Blakely, writing on the subject recently in the *Montreal Gazette*, had this to say—and he said it very well—on the dilemma in which certain members must find themselves on this issue:

If they vote one way, their consciences may be maintained in good working order, but their government may go down the drain. If they vote for the other side of the proposition, the government would survive while their consciences might be lost. So there it is. Liberal M.P.'s will be free to vote as they please: As long, that is, as they can resolutely ignore such considerations as the fate of their party and of their government. And all this, in the certain knowledge that they won't become candidates for immediate expulsion.

Unfortunately, we come back again and again to the all-important fact that imposition of this white flag on all of Canada will divide our nation further, and perhaps irreparably. It is true, of course, that a substantial majority of the people of the province of Quebec want the Prime Minister's flag. But I believe that what is happening in Quebec today is that a determined group of fanatical young French Canadians is attempting to erase from the history books what happened on September 13, 1759, and to rewrite the next 205 years to read, not as it happened but as they would have liked it to have happened. It is quite true that rural Quebec over the years has not progressed economically as have rural Ontario, the prairies and British Columbia. I can fully appreciate the problems, having been born in Quebec and having lived for most of my life in northern New Brunswick, where the problems are much the same although for different reasons. But I feel that much of the difficulty in Quebec over the past 200 years has been attributable to their educational system. It has been a system that trained able theologians, philosophers, lawyers and doctors; but at the same time it has failed in the sciences, mathematics, engineering and allied skills on which modern civilization travels.

What too many are attempting to do today in Quebec is to place the blame for this failure on English speaking Canada; and, Mr. Speaker, I for one—and I am sure many