

Canadian Flag

Now, motion No. 44 which is under consideration today reads as follows:

That the government be authorized to take such steps—

Shall I dispense with the reading of this motion?

Some hon. Members: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Taking into consideration the references and quotations just cited, and more especially the view expressed by the Speaker of the British house on November 13, 1912, where he said:

—the rule of course is if any honourable member feels embarrassed on voting on a resolution that the Chair shall revise the resolution in order that the member may, if he wishes to vote "Aye" on the one part and "No" on the other not be embarrassed by having to vote "Aye" or "No" on the whole of it,—

—I must come to the conclusion that the motion before the house contains two propositions, and since strong objections have been made to the effect that these two propositions should not be considered together, it is my duty to divide them as follows:

(a) That the government be authorized to take such steps as may be necessary to establish officially as the flag of Canada a flag embodying the emblem proclaimed by His Majesty King George V on November 21, 1921—three maple leaves conjoined on one stem—in the colours red and white then designated for Canada, the red leaves occupying a field of white between vertical sections of blue on the edges of the flag.

(b) That the government be authorized to take such steps as may be necessary to provide that the royal union flag, generally known as the union jack, may continue to be flown as a symbol of Canadian membership in the commonwealth of nations and of our allegiance to the crown.

Therefore, unless there should be an appeal to the house from my decision, and my decision is not sustained, it is my intention to put the question on the first part of the motion as divided.

OFFICIAL ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW DESIGN

Mr. Speaker: Since there is no appeal, the question now is as follows:

The Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) moves, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Favreau):

That the government be authorized to take such steps as may be necessary to establish officially as the flag of Canada a flag embodying the emblem proclaimed by His Majesty King George V on November 21, 1921—three maple leaves conjoined on one stem—in the colours red and white then designated for Canada, the red leaves occupying a field of white between vertical sections of blue on the edges of the flag.

[Mr. Speaker.]

Are the members ready for the question?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, in the interesting discussion that preceded the opening of this debate, we went into a great deal of constitutional and parliamentary history. I do not propose to go back to 292 B.C., but I would remind the house that this is the 750th anniversary of the signing of Magna Carta, June 15, and perhaps it is an appropriate occasion for the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) to indicate that he is still standing on guard to protect what he considers to be the ancient rights and privileges of parliament.

Today is another anniversary, a little closer to home both in time and in space. One hundred years ago today, on Monday, June 15, there was a dramatic moment in Canadian history when, in parliament, Sir John A. Macdonald and George Brown, two strong and even bitter political opponents, agreed to meet and try to end their long antagonism for the purpose of creating a Canadian confederation which one day would stretch from sea to sea. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that this resolution which is now being discussed one hundred years later will, when action is taken on it, result in a united effort, above party and above personalities, to strengthen and ensure the survival of the confederation which Macdonald and Brown, putting patriotism above all else 100 years ago, did so much to create.

The resolution before the house, the procedural significance of which you have now indicated in so far as its possible division is concerned, reads as follows:

That the government be authorized to take such steps as may be necessary to establish officially as the flag of Canada a flag embodying the emblem proclaimed by His Majesty King George V on November 21, 1921—three maple leaves conjoined on one stem—in the colours red and white then designated for Canada, the red leaves occupying a field of white between vertical sections of blue on the edges of the flag and also to provide that the royal union flag, generally known as the union jack, may continue to be flown as a symbol of Canadian membership—

Mr. Diefenbaker: Order, Mr. Speaker, that is not the resolution. You have separated it.

Mr. Pigeon: You have to change your speech.

Mr. Bell: The Prime Minister has the wrong speech.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, it has been suggested by the right hon. Leader of the Opposition that I am not even allowed to read