

with a clear conscience. I want it to be done on principle. But whether the Red Ensign is ratified or not, or whether a new distinctive flag is decided upon, I pledge myself to serve that flag in the same way that I have tried to serve the Red Ensign which means so much to me.

I shall support the amendment.

Hon. David A. Croll: Honourable senators, I am glad of the opportunity to speak in support of this motion. As a new Canadian I welcome the new Canadian flag. In saying that I should like to make it clear that I mean no slight or disrespect to either the Union Jack or the Red Ensign. These are two old and hallowed flags of respected lineage, and I, like many Canadians of my generation, served under both of them and am proud of both of them.

I recall an occasion in November 1945 when late one evening I was sitting in the other place minding my own business, while the Opposition was discussing the flag and giving the Government of the day under Mr. Mackenzie King a rather bad time. Ian Mackenzie, then leader of the house, walked over and handed me two sheets of paper and said, "Get out there and pitch." Those are not the words he used, but I got the idea just the same. On that occasion I placed on the record of the other place a statement on the flag, made by the Prime Minister, on May 24, 1945, in Winnipeg, in which he said that at the first session of the next Parliament he would ask Parliament to approve and authorize a distinctive Canadian flag.

The election was held on June 11 of that year, and Mr. Mackenzie King's Government was re-elected. Later on, in a speech in the other place, I quoted from the Speech from the Throne of September 6, 1945, in these words:

You will be asked to appoint a select committee of members of both Houses of Parliament to consider a suitable design for a Canadian flag.

I then went on with my speech, which was a rather emotional one, in which I supported the "Red Duster", and said that I wanted it incorporated in whatever flag would be decided upon. I used these words:

I should like to say that I belong to the "Red Duster" school because the Union Jack has peculiar and important significance to me. I want to preserve it. I want to incorporate it in whatever flag we have.

And then I went on to talk about my comrades overseas.

In April of the next year, or about that time, when we were dealing with the citizen-

ship bill, I took the occasion again to talk about citizenship, symbols and the flag, and I said this:

Maybe we shall have the old Red Ensign; maybe we shall have a crest with the maple leaf.

I was developing like the rest of the Canadians, because here today I stand in support of the maple leaf. There you have the evolution of a politician. I think I am as typical a Canadian as is anyone, and I was trying to keep up with the thinking in the country.

Senator Irvine said that she has received representations from which she has reached a conclusion as to what is the attitude towards a distinctive flag. Throughout this long debate I have kept my ear to the ground and have tried to find out what others were thinking. Perhaps I can speak about it in this way.

All of us know what a Gallup Poll is. Most of us know what a Telepoll is. The purpose of these polls is to assess public reaction to public questions and issues. I took what I might well call a "Croll" poll, which is an assessment of public reaction to the maple leaf flag. It is my view that the flag has caught the imagination and enthusiasm of those of 18 years of age and under. As far as they are concerned there is total acceptance—the reluctance to accept it is infinitesimally small. When you get to those in the age group of 18 to 45 there was some hesitation at the beginning, but they accept the flag by as large a majority as almost 75 per cent.

Those persons between the ages of 45 and 70 grow more cautious and their acceptance, I do not think, is over 60 per cent. Of those over 70 years of age, some were reluctant to change but more than 50 per cent of them accepted. From all I can gather, the score is heavily in favour of the proposed flag, and the young people of this country are delighted with it.

Honourable senators, we have to accept the truth of the old Roman maxim "Times change and we must change with them." We of Canada, and our fathers before us have come from many lands to help build this country. We left behind—and I say this as much of the English and of the French as of any other element of the population—we left behind many things that we and our fathers held dear.

It is well to remind the house and the nation in general that we have not come in the main from some dark European morass where learning and culture never flowered. It was not ignorance that led us to reject our homes and our friends and the countries of