

Canadian Flag

accepted as a flag distinctive of Canada. The union jack, while not a flag distinctive of Canada, may correctly be flown on land in any part of His Majesty's domains.

I question whether this would be a suitable time at which to have parliament determine which particular flag—the union jack, the red ensign or some other flag to be specially designed—should be declared to be the national flag of Canada.

Then in 1944 he used very strong words in this regard. I spoke in the debate on external affairs and said something should be done about bringing about a Canadianism within our land, Canadian citizenship and the like, and also that action be taken in respect of a flag. He went on to say, as found on page 6276 of *Hansard* for August 11, 1944:

And anyone who raises the question of race to prejudice anyone of another race in this country is doing the greatest disservice that can be done to Canadian unity and to Canadian nationality. And not only do I wish to see our people recognized as Canadians, but I also wish to see a Canadian flag recognized in this country.

Those were the days in 1944 when the Minister of Transport was, one might say, at the periphery of prime ministerial greatness.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, they will not laugh when they hear the next paragraph.

I would like to see it the flag that our Canadian men are fighting under today. We have a Canadian flag unfurled in battle today by our very brave men in Italy and in France. I think in time the people of this country of Canada will say we want to have as a Canadian flag the flag they are carrying in battle today.

I know, Mr. Speaker, I am just giving the gospel according to Mackenzie King. The Prime Minister did not sit under him but I am fairly certain he had an official position. Then Mr. King went on to say, and I can give the quotation if anybody wants it, that as far as a flag for Canada was concerned he could not under any circumstances see such a flag without having thereon the union jack as part of that flag.

What has happened? I know there are different views on this matter. Some say they want the Canadian ensign. Others say they want changes made in the Canadian ensign in order to show fully the fact that our two races were brought together in confederation.

What about a distinctive flag? There is a new definition being given to a distinctive flag by the Prime Minister. He would have us believe that a distinctive flag is one upon which there is no reference to the heritage of our country, nothing of the greatness of its past. He said: Don't worry about the past; we are going to look into the future. I am

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

not going to make any reference to the tremendous inspiration he apparently has in mind will be aroused in the hearts of Canadians as they look at this new emblem he has produced. But I am going to say this. In 1945 a committee was set up. The Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin) was a member of that committee, as was the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge). There is no mistake in that connection. The resolution appointing the committee referred to the fact it was expedient that Canada possess a distinctive national flag, and a joint committee was set up to consider and report upon a suitable design for such a flag. The Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin) attended the committee meeting on December 4, and he said this:

In the new world we will be better fitted to do our part if we have an essential feeling of internal unity and oneness.

He also stated that the committee was to report on a suitable design for such a distinctive flag. He said that it should be a symbol of this great nation, one to which affection and loyalty could be attached and which could become a sign of unity and purpose and make Canada great. The minister of justice of that day, Hon. Mr. St. Laurent, had said this earlier. Hon. Mr. St. Laurent, when he was prime minister and while he was minister of justice had no other view than that, in the union jack being upon the flag of Canada, there was no suggestion of subservience. He said, and I am simply paraphrasing his remarks, that it is simply bringing to the notice of all Canadians what they owe to their British traditions.

I believe there are many who would like to see the preservation of the red ensign but are only too willing, in the interests of bringing about national agreement, to have something additional placed thereon. This was the situation in 1945 and 1946. What should be done about it? Well, the decision in 1946 was this:

Your committee recommends that the national flag of Canada should be the Canadian red ensign with a maple leaf in autumn golden colours in a bordered background of white, replacing the coat of arms in the fly; the whole design to be so proportioned that the size and position of the maple leaf in relation to the union jack in the canton will identify it as a symbol distinctive of Canada as a nation.

This was the recommendation made by this committee, and the vote on it was 23 in favour and 1 opposed. The one opposed was Mr. Lacroix. I point out that fact. The members of all the various races met there and