

*Canadian Flag*

must exercise tolerance and co-operation toward each other in our differences of opinion in order to unite this country and build a great nation, and we must perform those exercises of co-operation and tolerance in the selection of a flag of which we can all be proud.

Some hon. members will no doubt suggest that already a committee has studied this question and come to decision. That is not quite a completely true statement. I have before me three different flag designs. While I realize I am not permitted by the rules to display these designs in the house, I should like at this time to describe them. One design has a maple leaf with a red band on one side to the left with a union jack, and a red band to the right with a fleur-de-lis. I understand that design was turned down by the committee.

We have another design which embodies three maple leaves with a blue band to the left and right. When the committee voted on this design they decided, rather than turn it down, to retain it until they had made a choice between that design and the design embodying one maple leaf with a red band on the left and on the right. Finally the committee had to make a choice, and this choice was forced by a squeeze play. I do not intend to suggest any motives behind this situation but I do believe that the people in this country question seriously the motives behind this forced choice. In any event, the committee report refers to a design with one maple leaf with a red band to its left and right, as the committee's choice for a distinctive Canadian national flag. That is a false, wrong and completely incorrect statement of what occurred. The committee stated that it preferred that flag to the Pearson pennant which embodied the three maple leaves and the two blue band design. The committee did nothing more than choose the design now before us in favour of the Pearson suggestion.

The people are confused as to what decision the committee made and, if they are confused in that regard, surely they are confused as to any design selected by this parliament. Therefore, they are entitled to express their opinions through a plebiscite. One might ask what problem the committee did solve, and whether it was unanimous in its solution. Had the committee decided that the flag now before this house was the flag for Canada, over all designs submitted to it, that would be a different proposition and we would be out of order now in continuing this debate. That, however, is not the situation.

[Mr. Woolliams.]

Let us be frank in our assessment of the decision made by the flag committee. When we were in government there were more Conservative members on committees than Liberal members, C.C.F. members, New Democratic members or Social Credit members. Of course, it is only in the last few years that there have been Social Credit members in this house at all, but that is neither here nor there. Committees are set up with the majority of members being members of the government party. That same situation prevailed in respect of this flag committee set up by this Liberal government. That committee decide by a majority vote exactly what the government intended. They really did not solve the problem with which they were faced.

I realize that some hon. members will say that we on this side asked that a committee be set up, but in answer to that suggestion I say that as long as a committee works in the way that committee did, while it performs a function, it is not performing the kind of function that was expected or asked for. The function we expected that committee to perform is not reflected in its report, which in effect states that the committee rubber-stamped a certain flag design. I am certain that no flag design was even considered until it had been approved, and I suggest that is the fact.

Most Canadians are thinking today of what Liberal spokesmen have said in the past in relation to their right to express an opinion in regard to something of this importance. In this regard I should like to quote—not from an editorial—what Jack Doupe said about this subject. What he has to say is an historical fact and I am sure it will not be disputed by any member. Mr. Doupe said:

More typically Canadian, and more effective, than these private bills is the sort of event—of which there must have been countless others—that J. W. Pickersgill reports from the 1943 Quebec wartime conference in his account of the Mackenzie King papers:

"Later that same afternoon, while walking in the Citadel grounds with one of his secretaries, Mackenzie King (Pickersgill quotes) 'saw the Canadian flag and the union jack flying side by side in the grounds.'"

This is what happened, and this is the opinion expressed apparently by the Minister of Transport, Mr. Pickersgill, who said he had arranged this the day before. He is supposed to have said:

"I had been put out when I saw the union jack and Canadian flags flying one beneath the other—the Canadian flag beneath the union jack, the day that Churchill arrived." He had subsequently