

THE SENATE

Wednesday, January 22, 1969

The Senate met at 3 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers.

UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

ANNIVERSARY

Hon. Paul Yuzyk: Honourable senators, in view of the fact that January 22 is a very special day for all freedom-loving Ukrainians throughout the world, and particularly for over half a million Canadians of Ukrainian descent who have made notable contributions to the political, economic, social and cultural progress of our country, as well as to Canada's war effort, with leave of the Senate I rise to mark the occasion in this august chamber.

Today the blue and yellow flag of Ukraine is flying on the flagstaffs of the city halls of Toronto, Montreal, Winnipeg and other Canadian cities to commemorate the independence of the Ukrainian state, which was re-established by the will of the Ukrainian nation on January 22, 1918.

Last year the flag of free Ukraine fluttered in the breeze over the city hall of Ottawa, but this year it was forbidden, for Canadian protocol recognized officially the flag of Soviet Ukraine, which has the hammer and sickle on it to identify it with the Soviet Union. Soviet Ukraine is not a free and sovereign state.

The celebration of Ukrainian Independence Day should inspire not only Canadians of Ukrainian origin, but all Canadians of all origins to reflect upon our political and cultural heritage. It would doubtlessly give us a better appreciation of Canadian sovereignty if a comparison would be made with Ukrainian sovereignty.

It was the British North America Act of 1867, which had been drawn up voluntarily by delegates of several colonies, that established the Dominion of Canada. By this act Canada achieved a responsible and representative government based on democratic freedom for her citizens. In the subsequent years the Canadian Government gradually gained control over all external relations, achieving complete independence in foreign policy at the end of the First World War.

Canadian sovereignty was given final recognition by the Statute of Westminster in 1931. In 1947 the Canadian Citizenship Act made Canadian citizenship distinct from British citizenship. In 1952 a Canadian was appointed Governor General for the first time. This practice has become a permanent feature of that high office.

With respect to the Constitution we have only one sore problem, to find a method of cutting the apron-string which still ties it to the British Parliament. Thus Canada has evolved constitutionally from colonial status to independence, from an unknown entity to a leader among the middle nations of the world. From her early history she had been under the domination of British Imperialism. Today she is a free and voluntary member of the Commonwealth, NATO and the United Nations.

Having been part of the British oceanic empire, Canada won her independence through evolution, not through revolution, therefore without the shedding of blood in the struggle. In the meantime, she has assisted other British colonies to attain their independence, and speaks out in world forums for the cause of freedom and independence of peoples in various regions of the world.

Canada was able to gain her freedom and gradually her independence because she had been part of an oceanic empire. Although Britain had exploited her colonies economically, she brought to them civilization and the democratic forms of government as these were developing in the British Isles. When these colonies matured they gained control over their own affairs and proclaimed independence, mostly without bloodshed and with Britain's approval.

Ukraine's situation was different. She had the misfortune of becoming part of a land or continental empire. Tsarist Russia, unlike Britain which gradually developed a democratic constitution, was an autocracy with a totalitarian political system, employing terror as an instrument of policy to carry out the economic exploitation of subjugated peoples and their national territories. Ukraine, with her higher culture, civilization and democratic government, fell victim in the seventeenth century to a backward, tyrannical and ruthless Muscovite Russia. Under Russian tsarist domination, Ukraine's democratic freedom was crushed and she became a mere Russian province, deprived of her rights and even of her name. Ukrainians were forcibly subjected