

tinkering away of the royal prerogative by clandestine means instead of facing parliament with the matter. The importance of this instance lies in the fact that it is one of a continuing series of acts under this government aimed at removing from this nation all signs and symbols of our constitutional heritage. The matter is urgent in that no other opportunity is provided for debating the action of this government in frittering away, chipping away, even chopping away the very basis of our constitutional existence.

We are facing in this nation, as we have done for the last two or three years, a form of underground revolution mounted in the silent precincts of the Prime Minister's office and the cabinet, and carried out surreptitiously through the unconstitutional device of ministerial ukase. This government, I say—and there could be nothing more urgent—is acting of its own accord, without reference to parliament or the people, to scrap the armorial bearings of this nation and remove all reference to the monarch.

Any hon. member in this house may advocate the removal of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic. There is no argument about his right to do so. There is nothing to prevent parliament and the people they represent making that change. But this creeping attitude of taking these steps one by one has got to be stopped in the interests of this nation.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: You ask why the urgency. If it had not been for a diligent member of the Canadian Press this would have been kept under cover. One of the most interesting predictions of what may happen is set out in a cartoon in the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald*. There is the mailman delivering his mail. He has a bag with a maple leaf on it and the letters "CP", and he is saying "They never bite me any more; they think I work for Canada Packers".

● (2:50 p.m.)

If that was the reason for the change I do not know, but I do know, sir, that throughout recent months and years—and this is the culmination of it—there has been a continuing action on the part of this government, and in resolutions from the Young Liberal University Association, to abolish the Queen and bring about a republic. Only a week ago one of these Young Liberals' resolutions, instead of getting in to the workshop—

Mr. Pickersgill: Two weeks ago.

Announced Removal of Coat of Arms

Mr. Diefenbaker: Two weeks ago—I won't argue about the time.

Mr. Pearson: And two weeks from now?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am just wondering whether we are getting into the debate that the right hon. Leader of the Opposition is proposing.

Mr. Starr: All the Liberals are working toward it.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I suggest that the Leader of the Opposition should limit his remarks to the question of urgency of debate.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I thought that the events of a week ago would be the foundation of an emergency. One of the resolutions had to do with the civil service and it was passed by the Liberal convention, but the Prime Minister ran for cover immediately after it was passed.

You ask about the urgency of debate. Well, I will go to the *Vancouver Sun* of October 15, which has an editorial under the heading "Why This Change?" It reads in part:

The maple leaf is Canada's leading symbol. It adorns the national flag, of which every Canadian has reason to be proud. But the royal coat of arms also is a legitimate Canadian symbol as long as this nation remains a monarchy.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker:

The public is entitled to know who is really responsible for what appears on the surface at any rate to be an attempt to introduce republicanism by the back door.

So far as the urgency of debate is concerned, sir, I would sum it up in this way. This type of surreptitious republicanism cannot be brought into effect by a minister of the crown or by a cabinet. Only parliament can deal with this, or the Canadian people.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: You ask me why the urgency of debate. Well, it wasn't very long ago that they removed the Queen from the citizenship courts. We raised a storm, and back went the Queen. Now this is but a further step. I am not going to argue the subject now because I am simply asking for an adjournment, but there have been some interesting articles appearing recently, one in *The Canadian* the other day written by a friend of the Prime Minister, which sets out the reason for this action. This writer says