

Canadian Flag

one brief reference to a cartoon which appeared in the *Ottawa Citizen* and a reply thereto by General Charles Foulkes, former chairman of the chiefs of staff. I think it is worth putting on record. The last paragraph contained these words:

To have affection and pride for a flag and a symbol which was once a flag of battle seems to me to be misunderstood by some people. Perhaps it is because they never saw, or wanted to see, that emblem—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I apologize for interrupting the hon. member, but his time has expired.

Mr. Skoreyko: I have only a few brief comments to make before I conclude.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent to the hon. member continuing his remarks?

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Churchill: Liberal closure.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Vincent Drouin (Argenteuil-Deux-Montagnes): Mr. Speaker, I had no intention of taking part in this debate which has lasted already long enough, but after listening to the remarks of some hon. members opposite, I thought it my duty to express dispassionately an opinion based on reason.

Our hon. friends opposite said that they already had their flag, that Canada already had a distinctive flag with the red ensign, a flag connected with our history and the traditions of our land. If so, I congratulate them and envy them because, as for me, I have never had a Canadian flag. And I say this without the least resentment. On the contrary, I envy those who were able to fly, in the front of their house, a flag which they considered as the flag of their country.

Mr. Vincent: Who gave it?

Mr. Drouin: Personally, I considered the red ensign not as a Canadian flag but as a sign that my country, Canada, was dominated by another.

England was a good colonizing power and I think we would not have fared better under France.

I never felt that the battle of the plains of Abraham was either a victory or a defeat. It was just something that happened in the history of my country. But the Westminster treaty has for me the importance of a victory because it was a decisive step towards my country's independence, and I feel that the adoption of a truly national flag will somehow

complement that treaty and constitute a symbol of independence.

My family has been in Canada for 11 generations. My ancestor, Robert Drouin, came from France in 1649. He gave up everything to settle in a new country. He did so without any second thought; he came to a new country with a new spirit just like those who, every day, get their Canadian citizenship. In fact, those people have also left their country without looking back. They came to Canada, a country they believed to be independent.

Recently, a neighbour of mine came to my place to ask me if I could get him a small three maple leaf flag like the one I had on the radio antenna of my car. I knew that he was of English origin and that he had been living in Canada for a short while only. When I asked him why he wanted to fly the proposed flag he told me: When I came to Canada from England, my native land, some ten years ago, I left everything behind. I also left the union jack and I have come to Canada as to a new country.

And he said: "Now, I am a Canadian".

Mr. Speaker, why should we, who have lived here for generations, not be as Canadian as this man? Why are some of us more British than Canadian?

As far as I am concerned, I am proud to be French Canadian. I am proud to be linked with France by cultural bonds, but I do not want any political links with France. I do not wish to see either the fleur-de-lis or the tricolor on the future Canadian flag. I want, for my country, an essentially Canadian flag, a flag which will reflect Canada's independence. And I am certainly not the only one who thinks so.

I believe that others than Canadians of French origin, or people from Quebec, will share my views. We have heard the proof here in the House. There was not a single French Canadian member, nor even any member, whether French or English speaking, from the province of Quebec, who wanted to retain the red ensign as the Canadian flag, notwithstanding the respect and admiration he might have for that emblem.

On the other hand, there are, in the house, a few dozen English speaking or new Canadian members, who unreservedly support the three leaf flag.

Our friends opposite want a referendum, to submit the question of a distinctive flag to the Canadian people. Their argument is based on the fact that there was a referendum in 1942 to authorize conscription in