

Canadian Flag

Jacques, French being the language of the court at that time.

There is something of deeper significance in this attempt to destroy the symbols of our past. I think it is associated with the materialism of the nineteenth century. The intellectual movements which came out of the nineteenth century counted many which gave rise to a distortion of scientific principles. The science of eugenics, for example, was blown up into the theory of the superiority of certain races which has plagued the twentieth century. The fact that we keep talking about the founding races and bringing race into this discussion is I think, a reflection on this age; it is something we should have long grown out of in this country. Someone has said that man attempted to destroy God in the nineteenth century as a result of which, in the twentieth, he is in great danger of destroying himself. If you destroy the symbols, if you remove the symbols which go back to the foundation of western civilization, which go back to the crusades, which are identified with the slow evolution of our political institutions, how long will it be until the facts upon which those symbols are based are also destroyed in this country?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Dinsdale: I do not intend to deal with the maple leaf as a symbol. It has its place on buttons, badges and other things of that kind where it has been used to good effect. Dr. Eugene Forsey has placed the matter in proper perspective. He says: "A government which is firmly committed to the absolutely bicultural character of our country is yet proposing a flag which contains not the slightest reference to any culture whatsoever—not even agriculture."

An hon. Member: Very funny.

Mr. Dinsdale: Someone across the way says "very funny". It is not funny. It is tragic.

Mr. Bigg: You fellows speak better sitting on your rear ends—why not stand up and make a speech?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Dinsdale: The Minister without Portfolio (Mr. Dupuis) says it is very funny. It is tragic that a government should adopt this hypocritical approach to such an issue. I try to be as charitable as I can, but there is only one explanation: It hopes to split the country and get a majority.

Mr. Sharp: It has split your party, though.

[Mr. Dinsdale.]

Mr. Dinsdale: The Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Sharp) talks about splitting parties. He and his friends have been trying to split the Conservative party, east against west, using divide and rule methods.

My time is running short and I must bring these remarks to a conclusion. The Liberal party has talked about a new approach to politics, one without partisanship and all the other nasty things which are identified with our political system in Canada. I say that in their approach to this issue they are attempting to re-open all the old divisions. They are playing party politics with a vengeance. Ramsey Cook, who gave the public a little book last year entitled "John W. Daffoe and the Politics of the Manitoba Free Press" had this to say:

Based on the careers of Arthur Meighen and Mackenzie King it would appear that something other than honesty and integrity is required for success in Canadian politics.

An hon. Member: Agreed.

Mr. Dinsdale: I agree wholeheartedly with that. As a westerner, I know what the Right Hon. Mackenzie King did to divide that part of Canada.

It is not good enough to deal with this matter from a narrow, partisan standpoint. You may win Quebec, but you divide the rest of the country. That is obvious, so why proceed on a collision course, on a headstrong, partisan course which will have such a divisive effect on the progress Canada has made toward national unity? Our traditions and our history are not a private preserve for the Prime Minister and the Liberal party to exploit or repudiate as their whim or fancy may dictate.

Mr. J. C. Munro (Hamilton East): In one sense this seemingly interminable debate on the question of a distinctive Canadian flag possesses pathetic undertones. That this question could and does engender such seeming fervor can only be interpreted as a manifestation of our frustrations as a nation. As a nation, in recent years, we seem to be floundering. We have not found a sense of direction.

This observation would not, I think, apply to our French Canadian compatriots. One often hears of the so-called mistrust of English speaking Canadians towards the new ideas, aims and aspirations of the Quebec renaissance, of Quebec revolution, if you like. I believe all too often this mistrust is mistaken for simply envy. Quebec seems to have emerged from the morass. They seem to have acquired a sense of direction. They seem