

*Canadian Flag*

Relevancy is not easy to define. A wrong comprehension of it may have a serious effect on the freedom of speech. Members are often deprived of their right to speak on the pretext that their remarks are irrelevant when as a matter of fact they refer to matters perhaps remote but yet related, even indirectly, to the question under debate. In borderline cases the member should be given the benefit of the doubt. A great deal of latitude must be allowed in the House of Commons which is a forum where every phase of public affairs can be discussed and every member has the right to be heard, even if in doing so he sometimes disregards the rigidity of procedure.

Finally, may I say that yesterday Mr. Speaker dealt with the subject of relevancy as recorded on page 4307 of *Hansard*. You can read there where he said it was difficult to—

**An hon. Member:** Read it all.

**Mr. Churchill:** Shall I read it all?

**An hon. Member:** Yes.

**Mr. Churchill:** The Prime Minister was mixing up the two resolutions, (a) and (b) and a point was raised. Then, Mr. Speaker said this:

The point before the house is a flag for Canada. The second resolution deals with the union jack, and I have suggested to the house that the joint resolution, if you want to call it that, be separated. We are now dealing with the first part, the flag for Canada, I admit that in dealing with this subject it is very difficult to rule out any reference to the past history of this country. You cannot just automatically forget the stirring years of the past history of our country, and therefore it seems to me that the Prime Minister, within reasonable limits and within the rule of relevancy, is entitled to make reference to things that have gone on in the past, which I presume might involve a reference to the union jack and what it stands for.

Yesterday, sir, the Speaker allowed freedom of discussion and a wide ranging debate, such as was allowed today, by those who have taken part in the debate up to this point. I believe that is where the matter should stand for the future.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I should like to say a word on the very point that has been raised by hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre. Yesterday, we had a most unusual procedure adopted of having a motion made by the government divided so that the house could express itself clearly on each half of that proposition. The right hon. gentleman who leads the opposition, and who is not here tonight, took exception—

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Where is your leader?

**Mr. Pickersgill:** It is quite evident he is not here today and he said he was not going to be

here. The right hon. gentleman I am sure would agree with me if he were here—

**Mr. Pugh:** I rise on a point of privilege.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Am I not allowed freedom of speech in this house, about which we just heard?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please; I understand the Minister of Transport is now on a point of order. Perhaps he might be allowed to finish his point, then I will be glad to hear the hon. member on his point of privilege.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I understand that while a point of order can be raised about a question of privilege, a question of privilege cannot be raised about a point of order. There have been many decisions to that effect.

Yesterday the right hon. gentleman opposite objected to my right hon. friend, the Prime Minister, making any reference to the question which was separated from the question which we originally started to debate. He got up immediately and sought to circumscribe the Prime Minister's speech in that way. While the Speaker did say that there might be some little latitude allowed in making casual references, the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre read only that part which suited him. The Speaker made it quite clear the Prime Minister could not go on and debate the second part of the motion, I think it was called.

**An hon. Member:** Who is debating it?

**Mr. Pickersgill:** The Leader of the Opposition moved an amendment which struck out the whole of the motion that was then before the house and substituted an entirely different question. Surely, sir, what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. If we cannot be permitted to debate these two closely inter-related propositions that were originally put on the order paper by the Prime Minister, then surely when a motion that is clearly different and distinct from the motion which was moved by the Prime Minister is before the house, on the very basis on which the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre asked for a division, this proposition should be debated and decided. After it has been decided, if it is decided in the negative, we will have an opportunity to debate the other questions without having the two intermingled and confused. This, I understood was the purpose of the original division which His Honour made yesterday. It seems to me that if His Honour, the Speaker, be right in the decision