

Canadian Commonwealth Flag

ber for Brome-Missisquoi (Mr. Graftey) says, "No, no, no, no", and I agree with him. I know he objects to my association with him as much as the reverse applies.

Mr. Graftey: Politically.

Mr. Howard: Yes; not with him personally, but with the party. So, Mr. Speaker, the views I want to express and make clear are my own and I am sure each hon. member has approached this question in the same way. I start off in that way because I intend to take a particular course with respect to the report of the committee.

Mr. Woolliams: Don't you think we should vote on it tonight?

Mr. Howard: That was an inane question from the hon. member for Bow River (Mr. Woolliams), who asked, "Don't you think we should vote on it tonight?" He, of all people, is attempting to rush to a conclusion a debate of this sort. It may be that he has worn out his filibustering techniques; I do not know. However, I think we should look at the report of the committee from the point of view of its original birthplace, which was in the devious mind of the member who was then the member for Bonavista-Twillingate (Mr. Pickersgill) when he sat on this side of the house in opposition and when the Liberal party were groping desperately for all sorts of appealing ideas to place before anybody who would listen to them, in the hope of gaining some political support in the country and getting back into the seats of government, which they obviously accomplished. At that time the then member for Bonavista-Twillingate came up with the nightmarish idea that we should not have a distinctive national flag but that we should have two flags. This two flag policy was quickly dubbed the two-faced policy, which I think was the more appropriate designation for it then and is now, because the basis of it was not particularly to develop some sort of symbolic banner for Canada as much as it was to appeal to different sections of the nation, to different ethnic groups within the nation. I think we have to look at it in that light. This was the birthplace of the so-called distinctive national flag, namely the appeal that flag would have within the borders of only one of the provinces, the province of Quebec.

On the other hand, the other half of this two-faced flag policy, namely the part relating to the union jack, was designed, again, to cater to and appeal to one particular province initially, and latterly to other people

who are pro-British in extraction. The province I am talking about is the province of Newfoundland. The only ethnic group of people who were not considered by the government—perhaps I should put it more strongly and say the only ethnic group of people in Canada that was completely disregarded by the government in their preparation of these flag designs was the group to which we should be paying the greatest amount of attention in regard to anything symbolic, namely the people who were here a long, long time before the Europeans came over.

Mr. Matheson: It's a red flag for the red man.

Mr. Howard: I refer to our native Indian people. Some smart character on the other side said something about a red flag for the red man. That indicates to me the degree of ignorance he has or his degree of disdain for the native Indian people, to classify them in the vernacular of Hollywood movie-makers.

Mr. Graftey: A typical Liberal approach.

Mr. Howard: In any event, Mr. Speaker, with all that as a background I cannot for the life of me see the logic of this parliament embarking upon a course of adopting a flag that belongs to another country. Stretching this idea a little further, one might ask the government to bring in a motion indicating that we should fly the stars and stripes, old glory, because of our association with NORAD. What is the difference in that? Would they think of such a course? Would they think of proposing that idea because we happen to be associates on the North American continent? It is just the same. They sell wheat, following the example set by the Tories, to the People's Republic of China. Why not fly their flag, commemorating the fact that China has bailed us out of our difficult position in regard to our balance of international payments? That is equally logical. We belong to the United Nations, and I think that if we are going to fly any other flag commemorating our association with other countries of the world it should be the United Nations flag above all else. Why don't we approach it on that basis? In any event, Mr. Speaker, with that as an introduction I would say that I have no intention of voting to endorse the union jack being flown in this nation for any purpose, because it is a flag that belongs to another country