

to us in this form and that it would come to us today. I had a hope—a vagrant hope, I discovered—that the Leader of the Government would permit me to adjourn the debate. I must say, however, in fairness to him, that he gave a very good reason for not doing so, when he explained to me that Senator Crerar—who, I expect, will support me—is leaving for the west this afternoon and would not have an opportunity to speak if the debate were adjourned today.

Now, as to the speech we have just heard from Senator Connolly (Ottawa West), I must say that he spoke to us with all the moderation, restraint and scholarship which we have learned to expect from him in this house. I hope he will not think me offensive if I add that a great deal of what he said seemed to have little or no relevance to the character of the flag which his motion proposes.

I think it was Voltaire who once said, "If you would converse with me, define your terms." I hope, therefore, in what I have to say here today, that I will stick as strictly as possible to the specifics. It was, I think, on May 27, though I may be a day or two out, that the Prime Minister introduced in the other place a resolution for this flag. As I read what he said on that occasion, I could not help thinking of the lines of Wendell Phillips:

We feel the thing we ought to be  
beating beneath the thing we are.

The Prime Minister opened his speech on that occasion by appealing to the Right Honourable Mr. Diefenbaker and to the leaders of the other parties, that they might now bury their prejudices and their differences and unite with him in support of this flag. Well, honourable senators, exactly 100 years before, give a day or two one way or the other, George Brown, that old antagonist of John A. Macdonald, forgot his old enmities, forgot his grudges, and for the sake of a Canada whose unity was vexed at that time, for a Canada in a state of torment, approached his old enemy and said in effect, "Canada is bigger than we are; we have a common love for Canada, we want Canada to survive, and because of that, let us forget our differences and unite to work out something of strength and unity for our common land."

Alas, honourable senators, the Prime Minister did not follow that noble historic example. He did not come to the house and take advantage of the wonderful opportunity that was his. Here you had the position where two of our historic parties had declared in their conventions, in their annual meetings, that they were in fact in favour of a distinctive Canadian flag. That was established. Now

we are approaching the Canadian centennial, Canada's 100th birthday. What a wonderful opportunity for the Right Honourable Mr. Pearson to have said to the other leaders: "On an occasion such as this, what finer birthday for Canada than that we should sit down together as Canadians, think of our common country, and in some way, by God's grace and in God's name, work out a flag that will be acceptable to all our people."

I am not sure that a greater opportunity in statesmanship has ever been missed in this country. As I listened to Senator Connolly (Ottawa West) a while ago, when he retraced all those steps taken by Canada on her path to nationhood, I could not help thinking how much greater statesmanship was shown to bring about those steps than has been shown in trying to bring about a national flag.

I said a moment ago that before discussing a flag we should try to define it. What is, what should be, a national flag? One of the best definitions I could find was given by a man who was not only a great president of the United States but who was in fact a great historian. Woodrow Wilson, speaking in 1915, laid down these conditions, these essentials of a national flag. He said:

The things that the flag stands for were created by the experiences of a great people. Everything that it stands for was written by their lives. The flag is the embodiment, not of sentiment, but of history. It represents the experiences made by men and women, the experiences of those who do and live under that flag.

Honourable senators, I hope to speak here today with whatever restraint is permitted by my Celtic blood, but I submit to you, sir, in all sincerity, that the flag which was presented to us by the motion before this house today is not an embodiment of our history.

In the House of Commons last week I listened to two splendid speeches, one by the Leader of Her Majesty's loyal Opposition and the other by the Prime Minister.

I am proud to say that from listening to these two speeches I was given a new pride about the Parliament of Canada. I was proud that we had two leaders who would speak in such a way in our Parliament. But, honourable senators, in one of his passages, the Prime Minister spoke of a flag which he said would neither dishonour nor betray the past, but which would look at the future, a flag which would look forward and not backward, and which would salute the future.

I must say that I was astonished to hear a man who at one time was a teacher of history make a statement of that kind. Surely the Prime Minister must know that without veneration for the past you cannot effectively