

Canadian Flag

every natural gift, to lift ourselves to the level of our destinies, to rise above all low limitations and narrow circumscriptions, to cultivate that true catholicity of spirit which embraces all creeds, all classes and all races, in order to make of our boundless province, so rich in known and unknown resources, a great new northern nation.

On the monument to Montcalm and Wolfe on the heights of Abraham are written these words—

Mr. MacLean (Queens): Have you put it up again?

Mr. Churchill: Is it still standing?

Mr. Pearson: That is a very unhappy intervention. "Are you going to put it up again?", my hon. friend says. On the monument to Montcalm and Wolfe on the heights near the plains of Abraham are written these words:

Valour gave them a common death
History a common fame
Posterity a common monument.

Mr. Speaker, it is for this generation, for this parliament, to give them and to give us all a common flag; a Canadian flag which, while bringing together but rising above the landmarks and milestones of the past, will say proudly to the world and to the future: "I stand for Canada".

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, as is known, I will not be in the house tomorrow and therefore I will have to restrict myself very considerably in these remarks. This evening I had hoped to be in Toronto to speak to those great lovers of freedom, the Baltic peoples—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: —but my presence was needed here. I am going to speak at limited length tonight and keep within the bounds of what I hope will be reasonable expression. I shall try not to follow the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) in some of his inflammatory remarks, although I am going to welcome the opportunity before this debate is over to answer several that he made.

However, Mr. Speaker, it is of interest to note this, that there was no mention in all of his speech of the contribution of the people of French origin in our country. There was no mention of the contribution made by Sir George Etienne Cartier, with Macdonald, to the bringing about of confederation. This was a significant omission in every part of his remarks. As he concluded by quoting Thomas D'Arcy McGee's immortal words, that our purpose in this nation should be to build unity

[Mr. Pearson.]

and to avoid dissension, I say to the Prime Minister this, "Physician, heal thyself. You have brought in, at a time when there are many other matters that ought to have received the consideration of the house, this question that cannot have any other effect than to divide this nation as it has not been divided."

The Prime Minister gave the house a roll call of anonymity coupled with a reference to two or three persons who had expressed themselves. I am going to give him an opportunity, before I conclude, to have a roll call of the people of Canada on this question; to give to the Canadian people, by the only means that can determine this question and on the basis of previous experience and precedent, to which he alluded, the opportunity to express their views on this subject. I want the government, secure in its concepts that it is right because it may be able to command a majority of the house, to give to individual Canadians everywhere the right to decide the question of the kind of flag that they believe will unify, strengthen and maintain the great traditions of our country.

The Prime Minister speaks as though he had the authority of the Canadian people. I think of some of the members from British Columbia. I see the hon. member for Victoria, British Columbia (Mr. Groos) sitting over there, representing a great constituency; I see members from Vancouver. I have before me the policies of the Liberal party as distributed throughout the length and breadth of British Columbia just prior to the general election of 1963. In them there is not one word about a distinctive flag with the union jack removed therefrom.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Indeed, I remember so well that in Amherst on December 29, 1961, when he said something about a distinctive flag and was asked what would be on the flag, he said, "Of course, I will not tell you". He was afraid to face the people of Canada on this, because when the record was produced it was found he used the same excuse that he used with respect to the "Mr. Pearson" film of the C.B.C., "I could not understand some of the things being said". The answer he gave in 1962 to a broadcast station in reference to this question was, "I shall not let you know".

When did he, across Canada at any time, say that he intended to bring in a distinctive flag that had no reference whatever to Can-