

In support of his argument, he quoted the definition of the flag given in 1915 by a former president of the United States, Mr. Woodrow Wilson. In his definition, Mr. Wilson stated that a flag definitely reflects the past and should recall the past.

Yet, if we look at the American flag today, if we glance at the stars and stripes of our friends to the South who, as we did, were living at first in a colonial state and were born in the lap of England and therefore were a British colony, if we look at their banner, their national flag, we will see no sign of their past, nothing to show that the United States were once, as we were in Canada, a British possession, an English colony.

A revolution will generally bring a new flag. Yet, the American flag reflects no sign whatsoever, to the Americans or to the rest of the world—because today it is flown practically everywhere in the world—it shows no trace of the fact that the United States was once, like Canada, a British possession, in other words, belonged to another country, that it was a colony, which is tantamount to saying that they came under another nation and another government.

If we cast a glance at other flags flown around the world, we see that their designs contradict the point of view put forward by the honourable Senator O'Leary. Let us take a look, for instance, at the flag of the Soviet Socialist Republics which has not been in existence for 50 years yet. However, Russia is an old country, an old nation. At one time, for some reason which it is not my object to discuss today, that people adopted another flag, a new flag. I would say it is a little too red, because it looks like a banner often drenched in blood. Just the same, that flag has no indication of the history of that nation or of that country which is Russia.

Another example, and one closer to us, is a flag that is not yet 200 years old, the flag of France, a country that was born and organized in a splendid way, a country that gave itself political, economic and social structures even before the Christian era under Julius Caesar, a country that has existed for more than 2,000 year. By the way, the city of Paris recently celebrated the 2,000th anniversary of its foundation. Therefore, France existed even before Paris.

Now, during the eighteenth century, France experienced its revolution and after its trans-

formation, selected a flag. The French people could justly claim the honour of being one of the most refined people in the world, one of the most civilized people, one of the most intellectual. They have the true sense of history. But that people chose a new flag.

Honourable senators, that new flag carried no symbol of what France was before 1789. They thought up and made a distinctive flag. They also had their hours of hesitation, but decided to start on a new destiny by casting off their past.

As for us, Canadians, we are also looking forward to a flag of our own, a particular symbol, something really Canadian. We do not want to abandon what belongs to us personally, but we try to get rid of what is alien to us. The fleur-de-lis does not belong to us. The royal union flag, which is called Union Jack, does not belong to us. Those are imported products.

Today we want to give ourselves a pennant and a symbol which would be entirely ours.

I wonder by which feat of strength we might look for inspiration for our flag among the foreign symbols and buntings which would only help to create confusion. It is not because we have contempt for the fleur-de-lis or the royal union flag, but we merely want to be ourselves. It seems to me that we have a right to be. We have not only a right, it is even our duty. After Senator Connolly described with historic accuracy and a distinguished talent the constitutional development of Canada, especially since the first world war and since the statute of Westminster of 1931, which sanctioned legally what existed already in fact and in history, it seems to me that the history of our country is now at a stage of development where we must crown that evolution, which is normal and natural.

In the early days, it was the British empire which drew up the legislation which governed us. That was the duty of the Westminster government, namely, the British government. Thanks to the factors of development, a community was set up which is called the Commonwealth. This community is really a family of British nations which maintains itself in time and space, not through force, guns or threats, but thanks to an inner power which has freedom as its roots.

Now, like Australia, New Zealand and other Commonwealth countries, we are members, we are part and parcel of this British family.