

in human history. If by these actions Canada has not become known as a full and independent state then I for one am very doubtful that this proposed new flag or, indeed, any flag will ever make our status clear.

Honourable senators, I realize, of course, there are other reasons why a new flag is proposed. For example, it is said we should have a flag which cannot be confused with the flag of any other nation and, in particular, which cannot be confused with that of the British merchant marine. I can accept that argument and go along with it, but I do think this argument has been greatly over-emphasized. Apparently we borrowed that flag—with or without permission, I do not know—added to it the Canadian Coat of Arms and used it as the Canadian flag for years. Long before an order in council was passed it was made the Canadian flag. It was used as the Canadian flag, and apparently it had general acceptance. If some confusion now exists, then it should be corrected. Certainly it would give a completely wrong picture of our merchant marine if those thousand ships at sea mentioned yesterday were thought by any person to be Canadian ships, and I would certainly hate to think that any visitor to Ottawa, upon seeing the Canadian Red Ensign flying from the Peace Tower, would mistake this historic building for a British ship at sea, or even wonder why a British flag was flying there.

I have but one reservation as to abandoning the Canadian Red Ensign at this time, and that is a sincere and earnest desire of the Royal Canadian Legion to retain it. I shall have something further to say in this connection in a few moments.

I have also heard it claimed that a new flag would promote national unity, that it would give us all a new sense of national dedication, of national understanding and good will. Of course, we all want national unity. We all want to work with our fellow-Canadians for the greater benefit of our country. But is a new flag necessary? Is a new flag the cure for any disunity that may exist? To my mind a flag follows the attaining of unity; it does not precede it.

Yes, I believe a flag should show that unity and vision, and a purpose in the future, have been achieved in this land. It should be a constant reminder that we are all part of a great country—a country which long ago decided it would show the world it was possible to create a new nation by peaceful means and peaceful progress; to show the world it was unnecessary to use violence and revolution in order to attain independence.

Already, I would think, too many emotions have been aroused to hope that this proposed

flag could be used in the foreseeable future to promote a crusade for national unity, if, indeed, any flag could be used for that purpose at any time.

Honourable senators, if any threat to our national unity is so slight that a new flag can overcome it, then we are indeed a fortunate people. On the other hand, if there is a serious threat to our unity then we should forget about a flag and devote our time, our effort, our abilities and our energies to seeking the real causes of it and removing or overcoming them, to the end that we can live in a country where all the citizens have good will, understanding and respect for each other.

Another point of disagreement on this resolution is that there is one school of thought which wishes to retain on any new flag some symbol or emblem of the past of each of its two founding races or peoples, and the other school of thought does not want such symbols. Of course, there is room here for sincere and honest differences of opinion. I happen to be one of those who believe that such symbols should be retained. I will not go into my reasons for my belief at this time. I simply state that I am wholly in agreement with the views expressed, and expressed so well, by Senator Grattan O'Leary on this subject. Those of us whose ancestors came from the British Isles wish to retain on a new flag some symbol of our heritage from that source, and it has been no mean heritage. For those who feel as I do, a generally acceptable symbol would be the Union Jack. We had hoped that those of French descent would accept the suggestion that a new flag should contain some emblem of each of our two founding peoples—ours would be the Union Jack, theirs whatever they wished to have on it. I believe this would have been acceptable to those not of the founding races. Indeed, some people believe a flag containing something to indicate our past might very well serve to remind Canadians, as well as others, that this is a land of two languages, it is a land of two races, it is a land of two cultures, and that it is going to remain that way forever.

I regret such a plan was not acceptable. I regret that our plea for what we considered a reasonable request was rejected—or will be rejected in the course of a few minutes. Many people find it difficult to understand why so little attention was paid to their feelings, why so little attention was paid to their sentiments, why so little attention was paid to their views and to their deep and sincere convictions.

I mentioned earlier the stand taken on this matter by the Royal Canadian Legion. I do not want to interject anything of a personal nature in this debate, but as a member