

Canadian Flag

generous assurance of support for the Canadian flag of this resolution with a maple leaf design is Colonel Keiller Mackay, former lieutenant governor of Ontario, one of the founders of the Royal Canadian Legion and at the present time grand commander for Ontario. There are many others. I received this letter from a lady who signs herself as a member of the I.O.D.E. She wrote:

Speaking only for myself I feel that anything and everything which will unite Canada from coast to coast is good. I want my children and my grandchildren to be glad and proud they are Canadians—not because their forebears came from England or France or any other part of the world but because they are part of one unique country, united from sea to sea.

I received the letter which follows from another lady, from Camp Valcartier, perhaps she is the wife of a soldier. In any event she writes from an army camp:

Canada is a marvellous meld of many people with a wonderful mosaic of colourful backgrounds bound together with a common love of freedom and equality. We are grateful for a national flag which is, for many of us, the culmination of Canada's birth as a nation. Today, everywhere, Canadians must stand taller and prouder—for here at least is a flag that truly belongs to us.

Now is the time for all of us regardless of race, creed or party, to unfurl the new flag with a new pride and happiness in our hearts and, please God, with charity in our hearts too, that will ensure the promise that the future holds.

I was also very interested to read the script of a broadcast delivered on May 29 by a former Conservative member and parliamentary assistant from Halifax, Mr. Edmund Morris. This is what he said in his broadcast:

No flag design will satisfy everyone at the time of its inception. Once having determined that there should now be a designation of a national flag, it followed inescapably that some one design would have to be chosen by Canada in preference to the many hundred alternative suggestions. It has been said that if the United States were now to be choosing a national flag, there would doubtless be those who would oppose the stars and stripes.

The challenge to opposition M.P.'s is to perceive that no single act could do more at this juncture for much-praised national unity that for them to close ranks with other M.P.'s and to make the adoption of the flag unanimous.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Nowlan: Which Halifax member is going to retire to provide a senatorial vacancy so that this man can be appointed?

Mr. Pearson: The hon. gentleman is too cynical.

Here is another very interesting letter from Mr. John J. Hogan, Q.C. of Bathurst, New Brunswick. He writes:

[Mr. Pearson.]

A Canadian flag, distinctively Canadian is a standard long ignored, now desperately needed and an absolute "must" if we are to achieve our destiny.

We all respect the threefold cross of Britain; the tricolour of France; the flags of those countries in which so many new Canadians had their origin, but we will love our own flag, and the sooner we can demonstrate that love, the better for all of us.

One of Canada's most distinguished soldiers, Major General R. R. Keebler, speaking on June 2, had this to say:

I have been a member, in good standing, of the Canadian Legion, and I completely disagree with their present public attitude concerning the red ensign. In the first place, being a modification of the British merchant marine flag, it is by no stretch of the imagination distinctive or even identifiable by foreigners as Canadian.

I suspect that the majority of Canadians would accept gladly one flag that is simply and uniquely Canadian. Whether the national symbol turns out to be one maple leaf or three maple leaves, is not so important. It is important, in my opinion, that the flag be distinctively Canadian.

There are those who say that this proposed flag does not portray Canada's history.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pearson: I hear hon. gentlemen opposite saying "hear, hear".

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pearson: I hear them say it even more loudly.

In fact, it does more than that. It portrays the proud result of that history—one nation, independent, united and strong. It tells the result of our march to independence. It will portray our confederation fortified and united. In doing this, in symbolizing the end rather than the means, it recognizes all that our past has achieved. But it does more than look to the past, wherein lies our most vivid memory; it looks to the years ahead—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pearson: It is the goal, not just the dream, of the millions who sought here new horizons of hope and happiness.

An hon. Member: Hallelujah!

Mr. Pearson: I am sorry hon. gentlemen opposite can mock this kind of debate and this kind of discussion. A member said "hallelujah" and I agree. Hallelujah, that we can have a flag which will symbolize this.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

An hon. Member: That was the hallelujah chorus.