



Canada's oldest college newspaper.
Member of Canadian University
Press. Published at Dalhousie Uni-
versity, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

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our flagless fatherland

Perhaps the oddest feature of the national flag debate is that people who speak out in favor of a flag distinctively and exclusively Canadian are sometimes accused of being "disloyal" or "anti-British."

Unfortunately, those who insist the British flag is inadequate for Canada must still face the fire of those whose political outlook has not matured. Canada's constitutional growth has been too undramatic, almost too subtle, to forestall a good deal of haziness in the understanding of her changed conditions. That is why even the most wholesome Canadian nationalism can hardly escape this pernicious and senseless "anti-British" label. Some Canadians have not awakened to the fact that their greatest obligation of loyalty as a people is now to Canada herself.

If the matter is considered in the light of that obligation, there can be no argument against a distinctive national flag for Canada. The purpose of this flag would be to stand for the sovereignty of the Canadian nation, to proclaim that she in no respect of law or international rights occupies an inferior or subordinate position in the world of nation-states.

It is a commonplace that nations have distinctive flags for such a reason. The flag is a focus for the loyalties of the people, and a material representation of the fact that they are conscious of themselves as a nation. Not by virtue of its design, but by reason of its exclusiveness, it is the depiction in one single, simple image of the greatness and grandeur to which a nation aspires: the greatness and grandeur of being itself, a body of people sharing a common allegiance in which no other people participate, sharing a common pride, and possessing a unifying force for their collective actions and ambitions. National integrity simply demands a national flag.

The present Canadian Ensign cannot meet that demand, for it is a colonial flag. It was designed to distinguish Canada only as part of the British Empire. Denying Canada's autonomy it has been since 1931 an anomaly. Hardly anyone tries to pretend it is a national flag. On Canadian territory not it, but the Union Jack is placed in the position of honour.

Nor will the British flag, however, do for Canada. It stands for British sovereignty. To suggest that it could also stand for an autonomous Canadian nation is to deny either the distinctive and exclusive character of a national flag or the reality of Canadian sovereignty. Neither denial could stand attest based on universally accepted criteria.

It would be unhistorical to argue that the Union Jack is a Commonwealth symbol. Its design evolved with the fitting together of the United Kingdom and it took its place as the British national flag 130 years before the Statute of Westminster. There is nothing even imperial, let alone of the Commonwealth, in its conception. It has always been meant to stand for the authority of the British Parliament.

To argue that the Union Jack represents individual liberty and dignity would be irrelevant. Just as much do the Tricolors, the Scandinavian flags, the Stars and Stripes and the Schwarz-Rot-Gold of German liberalism stand for these things. Besides, who is suggesting that a Canadian flag wouldn't?

A. F.

bilingualism advocated

viceregal support

MONTREAL.—Governor-General Vincent Massey voiced the belief that all Canadian should be bilingual when he officially opened a new school in the English-speaking suburb of Westmount in January.

He praised the school, St. George's, for the inclusion in its curriculum "of subjects that have been pretty well abandoned in some of our provincial systems, such as Latin."

Mr. Massey said French should be an essential part of the school curriculum "at all stages."

that culture business

In Fredericton the Brunswickan, undergraduate journal of the University of New Brunswick, writes: "Canadians are privileged to be able to share in one of the world's oldest cultures—the French. There are very few other countries in the world today who can boast of two separate and distinct cultures and languages within their boundaries. All this up-roar about "no Canadian Culture" is perfect nonsense. If English Canadians (an odious distinction) are convinced that their's is a heritage "sans culture", then they should take comfort in, and try to enrich, the French Canadian culture. French Canada is rich in history, tradition and Romance — how

many people outside Quebec know that? Not very many, we'll warrant.

Canadians are dimly aware that there are two official languages, but how many speak two? And this brings up an important point. There are tens of thousands of Canadians who are bi-lingual. Who are they? For the most part they are natives of the Province of Quebec whose mother tongue is French. It would be over-generous to estimate the bi-lingual English Canadian at 2%. The reason? Indifference. The school systems of this country are as much at fault as anyone else. French and English should be taught concurrently from the earliest grades. They are not. The most value one can hope to get from "school French" is a vague knowledge of grammar. Universities aren't much better.

There is so much raving about Canada's deplorable lack of culture that one begins to wonder if the critics aren't rather glad that Canadians distinguish themselves in this way. Culture is not something which lends itself to the drafting board or the planning table. It is unconsciously nurtured and like good wine, mellow with age. After all, we are a young country. Our future is bright (read the ads) and Canada's glorious days are still in the future. So it is "distinct Canadian culture" in the sense that it is used today.

So let these tireless "exponents of culture" remember that Rome was not built in a day, and neither is a mature national individuality.

letter to the editor

Dear Sir:

I wish to sincerely thank the Gazette Staff for its co-operation in publicizing the Dalhousie Blood Drive. Although the turnout was only 60%, the drive this year can be termed successful considering the time of year and the circumstances.

I also wish to thank Elizabeth Dustan, Barb Miller, the Faculty Committees, and all the volunteers who played a large part in the success of the drive.

The biggest improvement this year was the 78% turnout of the Engineering Society. This is indicative of attitude and feeling which can be created for a worthwhile function

on the Dalhousie campus. It is hoped that this type of improvement, along with the consistency exemplified by Pharmacy students and the Tau Epsilon Phi Fraternity are indicative of a record breaking turnout for the Blood Drive next year.

The trophies to be awarded and the date of the awards will be given in the next issue of the Gazette.

Again, I sincerely thank the Gazette, the committees, the volunteers and above all, the donors for the part they played in this year's Blood Drive.

Yours truly,

David Matheson.

through the keyhole

by Pat McDonald

From the Muse, student paper of Memorial University, comes the story that 40 students were asked to leave Memorial and 225 were placed on probation as a result of Christmas exams. The overall picture of the outcome of the December testing has been termed "from poor to outrageous" by the professors. Students, after the initial shock are bewildered as to the cause.

A student from the University of Alberta last week defended his honour by eating a copy of the campus newspaper. This action was instigated by a wager made several weeks ago over the outcome of the Model Parliament elections which were yet to be contested. Participants in the bargain were the Social Credit Leader and the Conservatives' top dog. As the Conservatives won the election, the loser acquired a new staple diet. The slight consolation to the loser was the decision of the Conservatives to allow him to consume pickles, buttermilk, ketchup, or water with his tasty nemesis.

Canadian University Post, a bi-weekly national newspaper aimed at the Canadian college student, has died after 16 months of publication. Earlier this month, in a front page story, the Post announced that it would suspend publication. A last ditch appeal to advertisers and students was to decide whether the suspension would be permanent. The appeal has failed.

The editorial staff of the Silhouette has returned to its typewriters. For the first issue of this term all the editors except Doug Parkinson, editor-in-chief, came back to the fold. On the strength of a large turnout for this issue Mr. Parkinson decided to cancel his resignation. The staff has resigned last term following what they termed "lack of interest in the school paper by the students".

Customer: Could I have a pound of kidleys, please?

Grocer: You must mean kidneys, ma'am.

Customer: I said a pound kidleys, diddle I?

GOOD NIGHT, ONE AND ALL.