

a distinctive national flag." The terms of the resolution, under which this committee functions, differ from some previous resolutions introduced in parliament, which merely urged the desirability of giving consideration to the matter. This committee, therefore, is not called upon to decide whether or not we should have a distinctive Canadian flag but rather to report on a suitable design for such a flag.

This committee is an important one. Its importance is attested to by the fact that it is made up of members of the two houses of parliament. The personnel of the committee, representing as it does all shades of political opinion, reflects the determination of all of us to do a good job. Undoubtedly there is a determination that our deliberations will be above the level of partisan politics. Love of country is way beyond party interests. The government is deeply conscious of the fact it is this interest which will actuate the committee in its deliberations. "Our aim in this committee will, undoubtedly, be to create a flag that all can see and look to with pride, as the symbol of this great nation of ours, to which affection and loyalty can be attached and which can become the sign of unity and purpose that make Canada great", as the Minister of Justice stated in the House of Commons recently.

Our task may not be an easy one. Designs have come in to the office of the prime minister and that of the secretary of state from many organizations and more particularly from many individuals, throughout Canada. This is as it should be. Members of the committee will, I know, agree that it is a heartening sign to find so many Canadians manifesting their love of Canada by sending on for this committee's consideration their ideas as to design for a Canadian flag. The committee, I know, will want to give these designs fullest attention and consideration. In acknowledging these designs I have pointed out to the senders that their proposals will be laid before this committee and I anticipated the committee's wishes in the matter by expressing thanks for the effort and initiative displayed. The government joins with the committee in indicating that it is open to Canadians who have not done so to submit their ideas for the consideration of this committee and parliament of the kind of flag they wish to see Canada adopt.

In our deliberations we will undoubtedly want to take into consideration flags of the past and of the present, and their origin and significance, the uses to which they are put and the circumstances under which they are flown. The committee is free to make any recommendations it sees fit but it may be that it will be recognized that there are now existing certain definite yardsticks, conditions, practices and methods of procedure which the committee will want to bear in mind before a decision is reached.

I might here review briefly the French and British flags that have been flown in Canada in the past, the flags of royal France and the union flag, or union jack, in various forms.

- (a) The flags of royal France flew in Canada from Cartier's first landing until the cession—a period of over 200 years. Gold fleurs-de-lis on a red, white or blue background, each colour having its own significance. In 1760 the coat of arms of King Louis was three gold fleurs-de-lis on a blue field; at that date the British royal arms of King George II also displayed the same gold fleurs-de-lis on a blue field, which had been there for 400 years.

On the institution of the French republic, the fleurs-de-lis ceased to be the emblem of France, and the national colours ceased to be blue and gold and became blue, white and red, the tricolour.

The fleurs-de-lis were dropped from the British royal arms in 1801 and the device thereafter ceased to be used by any country until 21 Nov. 1921 when, by royal proclamation, it was authorized among other honourable augmentations for the use of Canada.