

*Canadian Flag*

that flag to the commander of the division as it embarked for overseas. The basic feature of its design was three red maple leaves on a white background.

Then in 1962 the Queen adopted as a personal flag for Canada one which had in its design the three red maple leaves, joined, on a white background. This flag, which flies only over the place where the Queen is actually in residence in Canada and is not used or authorized to be used for any other purpose, was announced from the palace in London and government house in Ottawa as a "flag of the arms of Canada charged in the centre with Her Majesty's own device." This of course, was done after consultation with and agreement from the Canadian government.

In the light of this, Mr. Speaker, can there be any doubt that the design recommended in the resolution is a proper one; with Canadian history, Canadian tradition and official sanction on the highest levels behind it?

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Pearson:** It is because this design has such a history and because, with the blue sea-to-sea border, it makes a striking and beautiful flag, that the government is putting it before parliament in this resolution. The single maple leaf, I repeat, has not the same historical and heraldic significance even though it also, with the blue borders, I am told makes a very attractive flag.

Mr. Speaker, there was a second part to this resolution which, by your ruling, will now be considered separately, and of course I naturally accept that ruling. However, I think no one in the house will object to my making now just one point about the other part of the flag proposal which the government hopes the house will in due course consider and accept.

We are now considering the adoption of a national flag. In my view we would not contradict or weaken in any way the creation and the acceptance of that new flag if the house should also decide to recognize our historic past and our commonwealth presence by continuing to honour the flag which is particularly the flag of the monarch who is now the head, and the only head, of the commonwealth. We will be returning to that subject shortly.

My colleague, the hon. member for Leeds, (Mr. Matheson) recently put in essence the case for a national distinctive flag in these words:

A flag sends a message. The question is what message do you wish to send?

Then he added:

—It's time Canada had a flag that sent the message "Canada".

This, Mr. Speaker, is the reason why there is such strong support, I believe in this house, and I believe in this country, for the flag embodied in this resolution.

I have received a great many written and oral opinions about the flag in recent weeks. Most of the letters and telegrams I have received are in favour of what the government proposes. Many are opposed. Much of the opposition, I believe, is based on a misconception of the purpose and the meaning of our proposal. Much of it is due to a sincere, and indeed at times a passionate refusal to drop the union jack in any design of a national flag. I can sympathize with that feeling even if I do not agree with it.

This resolution does indeed mark a break with the past, as every accepted stage in the evolution of men and nations must mark a break with the past. But this break does not dishonour or repudiate the past, or the flag symbols of that past under which many of us have served and lived. I for one, and there are a great many others in this house who will support this resolution and who will join with me in this, honour those flag symbols, and I proudly acknowledge what they stand for in justice, freedom and human rights. I pay my tribute to the British people whom this flag particularly symbolizes and from whom we have inherited so much—a people whose courage and service to mankind has not been excelled by any other people in history. I have seen the union jack carried doggedly and heroically in combat; I have seen it flying defiantly over the fires caused by the bombing of London; I know something of the decency, the goodness and the fortitude of the British people. All this is part of our tradition, too—a proud part; it will not be betrayed in any way by the proposals in this resolution. None of these things will be altered in our minds and in our hearts when we support this resolution. We support it as Canadians, because the stand it takes is Canadian and because it marks another stage in the growth of Canada.

As I have said, I have had many letters stating that this is why the resolution is getting support from people of all races and walks of life and from every part of the country.

One distinguished Canadian citizen and soldier who has given me a very warm and