

National Flag

Why, even the Toronto *Daily Star* voiced strong protests against certain ambitions of the Ontario premier, Mr. Frost, who wanted to suggest a Canadian flag bearing the Red Ensign. The said article reads as follows:

The Red Ensign should be eliminated as a national emblem on two grounds. French Canadians, who make up one third of the Canadian population, will never accept it. They demand a flag devoid of any sign of allegiance to another country. Moreover, the Red Ensign looks so much like the flag of the British Navy that in other countries one is often mistaken for the other.

And the Toronto paper went on to say in a vein which hardly leaves any room for doubt:

Canada must have her own flag. But it must be a flag recognized and respected by all Canadians, irrespective of their race or origin. In addition, it must be a wholly Canadian flag. The Red Ensign, even when adorned with a maple leaf would not meet these requirements.

Mr. Speaker, I should like also to read into the record some excerpts of letters written to me by many people, over the last month especially, to the effect that we should have our own distinctive national flag. Such excerpts are fairly indicative of the frame of mind prevailing among younger people, and more especially among the veterans of the last two wars and the Korean war.

A letter signed by Mr. Katch of Oshawa, Ontario, says:

(Text):

As a native and ex-R.C.A.F. veteran, and as one who loves his country and enjoys democratic freedom, I am convinced that our demand for a purely Canadian flag is justified. I also believe that our flag must not contain any racial emblems on it at all. The only emblem on it should be our own maple leaf. Under this emblem, and it alone, we can unite as one nation and one Canadian people.

Sir, I must say that I am not anti-British but on the contrary I have and will always respect the British, their institutions, their flag, the Union Jack, the Queen and commonwealth.

But I also have deep affection for my country and I pledge my duty and loyalty to Canada first. Canada being an independent commonwealth nation therefore should have her own flag and anthem.

(Translation):

I have here an article signed by Mr. Cameron of Bridgeville, Nova Scotia, which reads in part as follows:

(Text):

Regarding the Union Jack, it's a grand old flag, but there is nothing Canadian about it. It was all right in the days when we were a colony. But we are a nation today. We want an all-Canadian flag. The maple leaf should be the most prominent part of it. I think everyone agrees with that statement. And no union jack in our flag. The only fair way to settle the question is by a

plebiscite. The members of parliament won't settle the question. They're afraid of it. In Nova Scotia we sing "O Canada" at the beginning of a meeting and "The Queen" at the conclusion.

(Translation):

I have here the evidence given by a person who did not sign his name, but I should like just the same to quote part of it in this house—

(Text):

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, may I point out that unsigned letters cannot be read into *Hansard*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It is quite true that unsigned letters cannot be put into the record. It would be preferable if the hon. member were to describe what he has seen in these letters in his own words. He should not read verbatim from an anonymous letter.

(Translation):

Mr. Boulanger: Mr. Speaker, the opinion of that person reflects the feeling expressed by others who have written to me, and whose letters I have just quoted in part. Out of some 30 letters, only one expressed an opinion unfavourable to the adoption of a distinctive national flag.

With such evidence, one can say that the French Canadians are not the only ones to ask for the adoption of a distinctive flag. The unanimity which exists on the question of a distinctive flag is a perfect indication of political maturity and a guarantee of unity between the different ethnic groups which form our nation.

The absence of a real Canadian flag has also its international implications.

Several examples could be given in this connection. Allow me to remind you that, in the last few years, Canadian soldiers have been assimilated to British soldiers, when we took part in patrolling duties in Egypt on behalf of the United Nations.

Canada took one of the greatest steps of its history when it introduced in the United Nations a resolution whose adoption allowed the cessation of hostilities in the Middle East. Canada was invited to provide important elements of the international police force for the maintenance of order in the Suez canal area.

This conciliating and courageous attitude, which was initiated by our secretary of state for external affairs at the time, the Hon. Lester Pearson, and for which he received the Nobel prize for peace, increased Canada's prestige all over the world.