

Canadian Flag

In fact the maple leaf does not grow in western Canada.

Mr. Mather: Yes, in B.C.

Mr. Skoreyko: You do not have the maple leaf that is known to eastern Canada. If the Minister of Forestry (Mr. Sauv ) were present he would be able to tell you there is no such thing as an eastern maple leaf west of the great lakes.

Mr. Douglas: Nobody said it had to be an eastern maple leaf.

Mr. Skoreyko: I said there was no maple leaf such as is known in eastern Canada, west of the great lakes.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Of course that is quite inaccurate.

Mr. Monteith: Get up and make your speech.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Have you made yours?

Mr. Monteith: Not yet.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Let me know when.

Mr. Skoreyko: The letter continues:

—and no one group should dictate what flag we fly as representing the whole of Canada.

We are sorry the people have no chance to decide the issue, and we hope our representative will use his vote and influence in retaining the only flag for Canada, the red ensign.

Here is one that says:

If that proposed flag of the Prime Minister's is accepted, then Canada deserves to be the wishy-washy nation that flag signifies. Canada will then deserve to be a spineless satellite of any nation on this earth. It will forfeit its heritage of being a nation. That is what absence of the union jack means.

Another one says:

God forbid that a Canadian flag should ever be designed which does not have the union jack on it somewhere.

A flag is more than a cloth waving in the breeze, with colour on it, and a design. It is a language; it stirs feeling in the hearts of men; it fosters leadership; it promotes loyalty; it engenders love; men give their lives for it; women weep and remain steadfast. A flag has no language barrier—it is understood by all.

The Edmonton Social Credit women's auxiliaries council sent the following resolution to the Prime Minister:

The Social Credit women's auxiliaries council of Edmonton, Alberta, is unanimously in favour of retaining the red ensign as our national flag; or incorporating the union jack in a new distinctive Canadian flag.

[Mr. Skoreyko.]

I can get little response from the Social Crediters here. Here is another one:

My parents are Russian born, my blood is Russian but I am a loyal Canadian Queen loving subject in spite of all that, and it breaks my heart to see Mr. Pearson giving Canada away.

Here is another:

I want to keep the red ensign as Canada's flag.

We have just returned from a trip to Europe, and it was always with pride we saw our Canadian red ensign flying alongside the flags of other countries.

What a wealth of history is told by the symbols on our flag. No one comments on the coat of arms it bears. This ties the history of our country into one. It represents England, Scotland, Ireland and France and then has the three maple leaves for the new land. The union jack in the left top corner tells the world we are a Christian nation. I don't think there is a flag anywhere with more meaning.

Please do your best to keep it flying.

Here is a man who says what he thinks:

For my own part I say, without equivocation, that whatever parliament may do I will neither recognize, acknowledge, nor pay tribute to any flag that does not bear the union jack. Moreover, while I can respect those who want to get rid of the union jack because they hate it, I can only feel unutterable contempt for those who are so flabby and limp, so devoid of manly sentiment, one way or the other, that they are willing to "go along with" anything at all that consists with what they conceive to be to their own personal advantage. And what claim has any flag—however aesthetically pleasing—to the reverence and affection of a nation, which flag is no more than the product of a transient politician's "hankering"—hankering, mark you.

Even if it had no other history, the red ensign has marked the rallying point for the men of Canada in two great wars. Not only men of British origin but Ukrainians, Norwegians, Danes and many other races because they thought it stood for those things they believed in.

It inspired men to face the test of "going over the top" in the first great war and sustained them when—stricken, grieved but proud—their sons—in many cases the only son—failed to return from some desperate sortie over enemy territory in the second.

This is what another letter to the Prime Minister says:

I do not suppose you will read the enclosed. My purpose in sending it is that you may know that I do not say things about anyone in a letter that I am not prepared to say to their face.

Your argument is completely fallacious and you know very well that it is. Your friends to the south have absorbed millions of newcomers to Canada's thousands, yet never has anyone suggested changing the stars and stripes. There is no reason why we should do away with our Canadian ensign. Add a wreath of maple leaves, yes. It would make it more distinctively Canadian. But that, Mr. Pearson, is not your real purpose.

I will not deal with any more of the correspondence I have received in connection with this matter but I should like to make