

*Canadian Flag*

government stands on that report and on the flag design presented by that committee for adoption. The last occasion on which we were provided with information by the government as to its stand on a flag design was when the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) spoke in this house in favour of a three maple leaf design on a white background with blue borders. That was not the design which is proposed by the committee for adoption. It was not the flag design supported by the majority of the members of that committee. And certainly there is no assurance, and none has been given to this house, that the design to be selected by the government if the report of the flag committee is adopted is the design which the majority of that committee indicated they preferred.

Still further, we have been given no reasons by the government to explain the silence of its supporters with regard to the design recommended by the majority of the members on the flag committee. We should know the reasons why the government thinks differently today about what is desirable in a flag design—why its opinions are not the same as they were when the Prime Minister told us why he considered that the flag which should be flying from the flagpoles of this nation should have three maple leaves on a white background with blue borders. We should certainly be told why the Prime Minister believes today that a flag with one maple leaf on a white background with red borders is representative of Canada as a nation and acceptable to its people.

In addition, we would like to hear the views of various other members of the Liberal party. They should tell us why they feel today that this particular flag ought to be adopted, when not so very long ago they were telling us that a flag with three maple leaves was the only possible flag for Canada and indicating what it represented in the way of history and tradition.

I feel we should have the benefit of the views of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Favreau) who is deputy leader of the party opposite and its chief spokesman for the province of Quebec. We should know why he feels today that a red bordered flag is more appropriate than the Pearson pennant which he embraced so readily when it was proposed by the Prime Minister.

Without doubt we should hear the views of the Secretary of State (Mr. Lamontagne), the man charged with the responsibility of caring for our history and traditions, the

[Mr. Coates.]

man who is the guardian of all that is traditional in this nation. He should tell us why he feels we should embrace this one maple leaf flag which is now proposed.

We should hear, also, from the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Tremblay). After all, is he not the man who must take responsibility for removing from the citizenship courts of this nation the picture of our Queen? Let him tell us what flag he feels should be placed in these citizenship courts as a symbol of our past history and traditions. I suggest to hon. members opposite that they get out of their love seats and stand up and explain why we should now embrace a flag design which differs in such a marked way from the one they told us only a few months ago was the only flag for this Canadian nation.

In this regard I should like to read a short letter which appeared in the *Yarmouth Herald*, Nova Scotia, on September 2. It states:

If one takes a British red ensign and emblazons upon it the distinctive arms of Canada it still remains a foreign flag.

But, if one takes the national flag of Peru and emblazons upon it a maple leaf—the leaf of a tree by no means distinctively Canadian, and of which there are several different varieties across the country—

And, I may add, a leaf which does not appear in some provinces of this country:

—it immediately becomes a distinctive Canadian flag, and not foreign at all.

Being neither British nor Peruvian in origin, my mind is not closed to an explanation of this piece of baffling wizardry. But I am, at the moment, completely confused.

Yours truly,

Robert B. Blauveltd

I may say to that gentleman, he is not the only one in this nation who is confused; indeed there are many in this House of Commons, including myself, who become completely confused when they watch the footwork of this government when it comes to the means of determining what should be the flag of this nation. Not only are they unwilling to accept a flag which contains in it symbols of our past history and tradition, but they are unwilling even to provide themselves with reasons for now shifting, if they are, from a three maple leaf design to a one maple leaf design. They tell us that we should vote. What are we to vote for? Do we know what this government will do when the flag committee report is adopted by this house—if it is? Have we any assurance that the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) will not then