

vote for this flag which that committee recommended. I think it should have been a joint committee; that this house should not have been snubbed by having been left out entirely; and that the Government used bad judgment in the way they handled the matter.

Now, honourable senators, I do not want anybody to think that I do not like the maple leaf. I said I was born in Ontario, and as a boy we used to go out in the spring and would tap these lovely maple trees by boring a hole in the trunk, putting in a spile and hanging a tin can on the trunk. Every day we would go out and gather sap which we sometimes boiled down to make it a little sweeter than it was when it came from the tree.

I love a tree; I love the maple tree and the beautiful leaves that grow on it. But I am not entirely enamoured of a foliage flag. We have green maple trees and we have some red maple trees; we see them here on the parliamentary lawn in the spring. Some of the leaves come out with a distinctive red tinge to them. These trees, honourable senators, are found in eastern Canada, in Ontario and Quebec and part of the Maritimes, but we do not have anything in the nature of a maple tree such as you know it, in western Canada, in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta or British Columbia. The people out there do not think as much about maple leaves as do those of us who live in Ontario or who visit Ontario frequently and become acquainted with this lovely tree and its beautiful leaves.

I have nothing against the maple leaf and, as I have said, I want it to appear on our flag. But because of my background, which I mentioned briefly a short while ago, and because of the hundreds and thousands of letters and resolutions which have come to my attention, many of them directed to me personally, I have decided I want something more than a maple leaf on the flag. I want something to indicate our past history and our founding nations, and if we had the crosses as well, then we would have something on it which was of a religious nature.

Honourable senators, I like the Red Ensign very much, but I do not hold out for it entirely. What I would like to see is a small Union Jack at the pole, maybe in the centre of the flag where it joins the pole, and then a lovely gold maple leaf in the centre and some other emblems on the right-hand side—the fleur-de-lis or something to show the connection of the French race—and then perhaps some bars at the top and the bottom to show that the flag is flying from sea to sea. As I have said before I shall not vote for the single maple leaf.

You will gather, honourable senators, that I do not like the flag that has been presented to us by the other place and which we are being asked to rubber-stamp. We have not had anything to do with the design of that flag; we think we should have been consulted and our advice should have been sought. The only way this could have been done properly was by setting up a joint committee of both Houses of Parliament, I, for one, do not intend to rubber-stamp the flag resolution as presented to us by the other place.

I have other reasons. In the first place, this is a flag by closure, which I do not like at all, and I do not like the look of it. It is a dish-raggy, anaemic-looking flag. I come from Saskatchewan where we have dust storms in the spring. Can you imagine, honourable senators, that flag hanging up in a dust storm for two or three days over a public building and getting a shower of rain on it? Why, in my opinion, it would have the appearance of a soiled diaper, and I cannot warm up to anything like that—I have had some experience with those things too.

Another reason why I do not like the flag is because it is a political flag and will divide this country right down the middle. That is the last thing I want to see. In my view it is a strange Christmas present which is being forced upon us. We are being given a flag born in a manger of tumult and frustration, a forced birth so to speak, and we are being asked to thank "Santa Claus Pearson" for it.

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Halifax North): Do not forget the wise men dealt with it.

Hon. Mr. Aseltine: The former Premier of Saskatchewan said the other day that the Government should put aside this flag until a greater consensus can be obtained. I never agreed very much with the policies or accomplishments of this gentleman, who was Premier of our province at one time, but I do agree with him on this point. This is exactly what the O'Leary amendment asks for, and I intend to vote for it.

Hon. Allister Grosart: Honourable senators, in rising to speak at this late after-dinner hour, I feel rather like that service club luncheon speaker who, as he rose to speak, asked the chairman how long his speech should last, and the chairman replied "Mister, you can speak as long as you like, but the rest of us are getting out of here at two o'clock." I do not know what the plans of the honourable Leader of the Government (Hon. Mr. Connolly, Ottawa West) are regarding hours of sitting, but I shall do my best to finish saying what I have to say before he empties the chamber.