

Honourable senators, as I said, I would have liked to spend a little more time on this, but the honourable Leader of the Government presented this resolution so soon, and since we did not get a stay of execution for a day I did not have time to prepare anything more lengthy than this. Nevertheless, I was happy to be able to voice my opinion in respect of the new flag and the amendment to the main motion. I can only say I am heartily in support of the amendment. Thank you.

**Hon. Malcolm Hollett:** Honourable senators, I have had no time to prepare a speech for tonight, having arrived back from Newfoundland late last evening. Let me first of all extend my congratulations to honourable senators who spoke yesterday; although I did not hear them, I have read what they said. I also want to congratulate those who spoke today. Most of the speeches were on a very high level and made me feel proud to belong to a gathering such as we have in this house. I regret that my speech will not be in the same category, for I do not have the ability nor have I had the time to make adequate preparation.

We all understood we were to get a distinctive Canadian or national flag. But nobody has yet been able to explain to me what is so distinctive about the red maple leaf in Canada. Why is it distinctive in Canada? Maple leaves are to be found in many places, including Europe. I remember reading that Tennyson once said that the maple leaf will turn to blood in the fall. He was, of course, referring to the turning red of the leaf. Therefore, it follows that there must have been plenty of maples leaves in England or in Europe away back in Tennyson's time.

I do not wish to cast any aspersion on the flag, because it looks as if we will have to accept it. But will somebody tell me what is so distinctive about it? Surely in Canada we have other things more distinctive than the leaf of a tree. We do not have very many maples leaves in Newfoundland unless we import the trees and plant them in our backyards. We have quantities of spruce and birch and other trees, but no maples. I suspect that in some other provinces there is a scarcity of maple trees. It is true that maple sugar is excellent. In that sense the maple tree is distinctive, but that does not make the maple leaf so distinctive that we should have it as a national emblem. If we have it, of course we must respect it, and if it is embodied in our national flag I shall respect it in the same manner as every other Canadian. I am quite sure, however, we could have found, particularly if there had been a joint committee of both houses, other emblems to submit to the

people and then let them decide which one they liked. I think then we would have had something very distinctive as far as Canada is concerned.

Somebody has said we are a young nation. Very well. It has been said we want a flag. That may be, but we do not want any design forced down our throats by somebody who thinks that he or she can do so. Somebody thought about a red maple leaf and said "We will get them to accept that." I do not like it.

I come from Newfoundland, and therefore I am only a young Canadian. There has been talk about old Canadians and young Canadians—I am a youngster. Many of my friends from Newfoundland are also youngsters, as far as Canada is concerned. We in Newfoundland, as you know, are practically all of English, Irish, Scottish or French descent. Whenever England got into trouble we did all we could to help out. As an example, I mention the First World War.

Many of the senators here served in the First World War; there may be one or two young enough to have served in the Second World War. Are you all in favour of throwing out the Union Jack and the Red Ensign? You men who served in the First World War and those of you who lost your sons in the Second World War and who fought to preserve what the Union Jack stood for, are you going to give up the Red Ensign and the Union Jack?

I was afraid I might become emotional, because it is an emotional subject for some of us. Every one of us who fought in any war in which Canada, Newfoundland or Great Britain was involved must have respect for the Red Ensign or for the Union Jack. Whether we are of English, Irish, Scottish, French, or of any other descent, this must be true. We fought under that flag. I fought in France side by side with Frenchmen. I saw Frenchmen die alongside our own Newfoundlanders and Englishmen. What did they die for? They died to preserve that freedom which their forefathers had won and with the loss of which they were threatened.

Are the French Canadians in this country prepared to drop the fleur-de-lis? Are they prepared to drop some connection with the mother country, and are you of English, Irish and Scottish descent prepared to drop all connection with Great Britain, alongside whose people your sons, and indeed some of your daughters, probably died in the Second World War, as did your friends and relatives in the First World War? Do you want to sever all connections? Is there nothing we can put in our flag which would make it distinctive and keep it in touch with our mother countries?