

Canadian Flag

the matter under discussion. I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to be stricter and to call them to order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Tardif): Order. The fact that only 10 Conservative members are present does not mean that the rules are violated.

However, I may add that the hon. member who has the floor is out of order because he is not talking about the matter before us at this moment.

[Text]

I will repeat that in English, if I may. The fact that there are only ten members of the Conservative party in the house does not make the hon. member in order or out of order. The fact that the hon. member is not speaking to the question before the house for consideration does, however, make him out of order. The amendment having to do with a plebiscite is the subject now before this house for study.

Mr. Bell: Mr. Speaker, on this point of order, I should like to point out that the attendance of the Conservative members in this house this afternoon has been as good as, if not better than that of the members of any other party.

[Translation]

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege.

[Text]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Tardif): Order, please.

[Translation]

Mr. Balcer: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

[Text]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Tardif): Order, order. I do not think the question raised by the hon. member as to members' attendance in this house has any relation to the subject now under study. The hon. member who made reference to attendance was himself out of order. The hon. member for Okanagan Boundary has the floor.

[Translation]

Mr. Balcer: Mr. Speaker, I simply wish to point out to the Chair that 10 Conservative members are worth at least 150 members of the other parties.

Mr. Choquette: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I must point out to the Chair that the hon. member for Three Rivers is

[Mr. Grégoire.]

not at the present time in his seat and that he should not be recognized.

Mr. Grégoire: Yes, it is true that the hon. member for Three Rivers is not in his seat.

[Text]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Tardif): Order, please. The hon. member for Okanagan Boundary has the floor.

[Translation]

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I should like to point out to the Chair that the hon. member for Three Rivers was not in his seat when he spoke.

There are six members of our party in the house now, that is 50 per cent, and they are worth at least 95 Conservatives.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Tardif): Order. The fact that the hon. member for Three Rivers was not speaking from his seat was taken into consideration by the Chair. Now we will listen to the hon. member for Okanagan Boundary.

[Text]

Mr. Skoreyko: I should like to speak to the question of privilege, or on the point of order, raised by the hon. member for Lapointe, Mr. Speaker, and his reference to the number of Conservative members in the House of Commons. I want to put on record the fact that the Conservative party has never abdicated its role in this house on the flag debate, as has the Creditiste party on a number of occasions when none of their members were in their seats.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Tardif): Order, please. I think the Chair has received sufficient advice as to which members are in their seats and which are not in their seats, and as to how many members are in the house, and as to how many are absent. Perhaps now we can have a little order so that we can listen to the rest of the hon. member's words of wisdom that are going to be placed on record.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Knowles: The Speaker is not supposed to comment on the debate.

Mr. Pugh: Mr. Speaker, apparently I have been ruled out of order because I have not been referring to the plebiscite. I suggest with the greatest respect that about every 15th word I have used has been the word "plebiscite".

I know, Mr. Speaker, that the substitution in the Speaker's chair will make no difference with regard to any remarks that have been