

*Canadian Flag*

**Mr. Drouin:** The hon. member for Terrebonne spoke before the amendment was proposed.

**Mr. Ricard:** Mr. Speaker, you will admit that it is difficult for a member to follow closely the text or the notes he prepared, while members from the other side of the house are continually interrupting.

With your leave, I should like to say this: "If you have the courage to stand up and give us your impressions, do so"; you will at least gain the admiration and confidence of your constituents.

**Mr. Drouin:** We are so convinced that we are ready to vote at once.

**Mr. Ricard:** Just tell the house how you will vote on the second part of the resolution. Are you going to vote for the union jack?

**Mr. Girouard:** Go on, say it.

**Mr. Ricard:** Mr. Speaker, as I said, we have nothing to conceal. We do not intend to deprive the people of anything. All we want is that the flag which will be flown throughout Canada will be acceptable to every part of the country and, in my opinion, a plebiscite is the best and the fairest way of allowing the Canadian people to vote on the flag issue.

Mr. Speaker, it is claimed that Canada must have a flag within two years because such was the promise made by the present government.

Let our hon. friends opposite tell us what their government has done about appointing a minister for eastern agriculture.

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. I must admit to the hon. member for St. Hyacinthe-Bagot that I fail to see how the comments he is now making could be truly relevant to the matter before us.

**An hon. Member:** He was out of order right from the start.

**Mr. Ricard:** Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to give an opportunity—

**An hon. Member:** He is not "pertinent"; he is "patineux"—skating.

**Mr. Ricard:** Mr. Speaker, I only wanted to give the members who are not courageous enough to speak up, the opportunity of showing that the only thing they can do is to interrupt the one who has the floor and who is making remarks of which they do not approve.

**Some hon. Members:** Question.

[Mr. Ricard.]

**Mr. Ricard:** Mr. Speaker, I can but repeat that the only purpose of the Conservative party in advocating a plebiscite is to afford the Canadian people an opportunity to express their views—

**An hon. Member:** Filibuster.

**Mr. Ricard:** Mr. Speaker, I have just heard a member on the government side shout: "Filibuster".

It must be remembered that if it had not been for this filibuster, Canada would now be endowed with the three maple leaf flag, which flag even the Grits have disavowed, after having sung its praise for at least three months.

This was the result of the attitude of our group. If, on the other hand, people were allowed to speak their minds, several would stand up and express their own aspirations and those of their constituents.

Mr. Speaker, in concluding, I repeat that I shall vote for the plebiscite, for I am convinced that it is the best way to provide the people with an opportunity to state their views.

If the plebiscite is turned down, and so that nobody will be able to say that I have opposed a distinctive flag, although this flag is not entirely to my taste, I shall vote for the recommendation of the committee.

I challenge Liberal hon. members of the province of Quebec to give their views on that matter. But, as far as I am concerned, I shall vote neither for the red ensign nor for the union jack.

Again, I ask hon. members opposite to have enough courage to rise and put their views on record.

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

A while ago the hon. member for St. Hyacinthe-Bagot imputed feelings and opinions to Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent concerning the flag issue. I would like to refer to *Hansard*—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. This is not a question of privilege but an argument. If the hon. member wants to set forth his point, he will be able to do so by taking part in the debate.

[Text]

Is the house ready for the question?

**Some hon. Members:** Question.

**Mr. Danforth:** Mr. Speaker, I should like to—