

*Canadian Flag*

graceful that in the 20th century such a company could have so much control.

In Montreal, for instance, there is no competition against the Bell Telephone Company of Canada. The people are at the mercy of a single company.

I feel that it is abnormal in a democratic country for the Canadian people to put up with a trust of that kind.

I hope that Mr. René Lévesque will follow his convictions in a positive way by introducing at the next session of the provincial legislature a bill to nationalize that company. I am convinced that the province of Ontario will follow suit as well as the other provinces.

**Mr. Béchard:** Will the hon. member permit a question?

Did the hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm advocate the same thing about nationalizing electricity during the 1962 provincial election campaign?

**Mr. Pigeon:** Mr. Chairman, first of all, I did not take part in the 1962 election campaign.

It is a matter of principle. The arguments put forward by the hon. member for Verdun are, in my opinion, out of date. They do not stand up in 1964.

[Text]

**Mr. Peters:** I rise to ask through you, Mr. Chairman, whether in view of the number of inquiries which have been raised with regard to this bill the sponsor would be willing to withdraw it?

**Some hon. Members:** Six o'clock.

Progress reported.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

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### AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at 8 p.m.

### CANADIAN FLAG

#### MOTION FOR CONCURRENCE IN SIXTH REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE

The house resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Batten that the sixth report of the special committee on a Canadian flag presented to the house on Thursday, October 29, 1964, be now concurred in, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Monteith.

**Mr. Gene Rhéaume (Northwest Territories):** Mr. Speaker, when we interrupted the debate

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at five o'clock to go into private members' hour I had been describing what seemed to me to be an obsession of the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) to push the report of the special flag committee through the house as quickly as possible to avoid letting the people of this country have a say in whether or not they wanted a new flag at all, and I remain unconvinced that the government has any evidence whatsoever that the majority of the people of this country find the Canadian red ensign offensive.

You will recall, Mr. Speaker, no sooner had this special committee been set up than the Prime Minister took to the press, in keeping with what I call his pathetic obsession, and said, "We shall have a flag by Christmas that will be based on the maple leaf design." I ask you, are these the actions of a responsible person in touch with reality?

I asked about this strange compulsion of his and I wondered if in fact a commitment was being pursued, not a commitment to the people of Canada as a group, but to people within his own party within regions of this country, a commitment to the effect that he would wipe out the traditional symbols of this country before the end of 1964.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. The hon. member may remember that before five o'clock the Chair enjoined him to limit his remarks to the matter before the house at the moment. Perhaps his remarks at this point are introductory, but I would ask him to revert as quickly as possible to the particular point we have to consider at the moment.

**Mr. Pugh:** If I might speak on the point of order raised by Your Honour, may I say I think the hon. member is speaking on the necessity for a plebiscite. When he says the people of Canada want this opportunity rather than be at the mercy of the strange compulsion of one who wanted to thrust the flag on us, two things bear relation to the fact that the people of Canada do want a plebiscite—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. This is not a point of order at all.

**Mr. Rhéaume:** Mr. Speaker, with deference I shall accept your advice. I believe myself to be in order, but in view of the fact that this is the second time the Chair has brought it to my attention I shall discuss specifically the need for a plebiscite.

I shall close my statement with words to the effect that I shall be voting in favour of