

*Canadian Flag*

did his party not agree to the proposition for a question period put forward by the Prime Minister?

**Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson):** The hon. gentleman, of course, is in charge of the business of the house and he could have arranged this very easily.

**Mr. McIlraith:** I asked why your party would not agree to the proposition put forward by the Prime Minister.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. May I suggest to both hon. members that the subject matter the house is supposed to be considering now is not the order of business but the question of an amendment to a motion having reference to the holding of a plebiscite.

**Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson):** I agree with that, Mr. Speaker. I want to deal with the other aspect of why the Liberal government refuses to give the people of Canada the opportunity to decide on their flag by a plebiscite. Over the years the Liberals have ruled this country by dividing it. In my opinion the basic principle of Liberalism is that the country has to be divided and in political chaos and then they can rule. This arrogant bunch think that only they have any ability or should be allowed to rule in Canada. I suggest that these people have deliberately created some of the political chaos in Canada by perpetuating the flag debate and refusing to accede to our request for a plebiscite. They have done this deliberately because they think they can get away with the same old Liberal tactics of dividing the country. "Divide and rule; keep the people upset and we will rule." This has been the Liberal attitude for a long, long time. But I think that the people of Canada will have another decision to make about what the government has been doing over the past 18 months, about their many failures.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. It seems to me that the hon. member's speech is not relevant in any way to the question before the house.

**Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson):** With respect, Your Honour, what I am saying, and I can put it in very simple language, is that the Liberals have refused our request for a plebiscite because they would like to create political chaos in this country and portray us as obstructionists, as the people who are filibustering the flag debate. I say that we need a plebiscite on the flag to take the issue out of parliament so that the people of Can-

ada can decide on what their national emblem shall be, without any of these side issues coming into the picture. I say to you very respectfully, sir, that this has an important bearing on the whole question of a national flag and whether or not we should have a plebiscite. I say this is the meat of the problem. Why do they refuse us a plebiscite? They have no answer other than to say, "You are the elected representatives and you should decide."

I disagree with that on a number of counts. The first is that this House of Commons is not truly representative. Redistribution has not taken place and therefore it is not a question we should decide, but one that should be decided by a plebiscite. My second reason for disagreeing is that the Liberal party has created so much political chaos that the people of Canada have no idea what the true situation is. A situation which is so highly emotionally charged should not be decided here.

This is a minority government. This is a government of regionalization. This is a government which does not have a mandate to make this kind of decision. They have not made any other decisions—why should they make this one?

The roving Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Hays) is not in his place at the moment.

**Miss LaMarsh:** You have not been here for a month.

**Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson):** The Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss LaMarsh) keeps interrupting. Perhaps we should see about some of the things that the truth squad should have been investigating. The first point I am making is that this is a minority government, and the second concerns the political chaos which has been stirred up by the Liberal party and the Liberal press.

**An hon. Member:** Order.

**Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson):** Somebody says order. I am suggesting the people of Canada do not have a true appreciation of what is going on or of why we want a plebiscite. All this is relevant to the question now before us. I suggest one of the things we should endeavour to accept in public life is responsibility, and I suggest the press has lain down on its responsibility in reporting the flag debate. I suggest further that the press is a bought press, that there is not any freedom in it any more. There certainly is not any freedom in the press which serves my area, especially on this particular question of