

Canadian Flag

the world that those who forget their past may well have greater difficulties in the future. I do not know whether all hon. members have had the time to read the column by Bruce West in this morning's *Globe and Mail*, but I believe they will find that it expresses the thinking of most people. Let us not deny, Mr. Speaker, let not one member of the house deny, that there will be a tremendous number of members on the government side of the house who will vote for this particular design knowing full well—

Miss Jewett: That the committee recommended it.

Mr. Winkler:—that they are voting against the desires of their people. I will tell the hon. member for Northumberland—

Miss Jewett: That the committee recommended it.

Mr. Winkler:—that the Liberals on the committee, in a final act of desperation, found themselves in the position of not being able to accept anything else.

Miss Jewett: What about the 14 to 0 vote?

Mr. Winkler: If you want to make a contribution, madam, rise in your place and make your own speech. Don't bother me.

Miss Jewett: May I ask the hon. member a question?

Mr. Winkler: I will accept questions when I am finished.

Miss Jewett: I just want to ask about the 14 to 0 vote.

Mr. Winkler: I would be glad to accept that question.

Miss Jewett: Fine. I have already asked it. What about the 14 to 0 vote?

Mr. Winkler: I should like to comment on the 14 to 0 vote. It is a very simple thing.

Miss Jewett: Good.

Mr. Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): Don't use big words, because she can't understand them.

Mr. Winkler: It was a Liberal trick within the committee.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Winkler: I do not care what the reaction to that remark is; I tell you that is what it was. If you are faced with a decision involving an apple which is perfect and another apple which is imperfect, which one are you going to choose?

An hon. Member: The perfect one.

Mr. Winkler: Absolutely; and if you make this decision preferring pears and there are no pears, then you have no alternative. That is the truth. You know it and every member of the committee knows it. Let us be truthful about this matter. Members on the other side of the house do not like this thing and do not want it, but they are forced to take it. I am not going to ridicule it because I might find myself standing up before it some day. I am that honourable, as I think every member on this side of the house is. Nevertheless, when we are faced with something that is second rate, for goodness sake let us give the people of the country, 64 per cent of whom have now stated they want a poll, the opportunity to vote in a plebiscite, or let the government say they will put something on this flag representing our past. This design is bland. It has no crown, not a single point of association with our past.

Mr. Munro: You are ridiculing it.

Mr. Winkler: Maybe that will be all right for you, but there will be a few members from Toronto who will rue the day they supported this flag. Make no mistake about that. As I approach the end of my remarks I should like to refer to this article by Bruce West which I feel is an honest and sincere effort to set the situation straight, as it should be. I say, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. West in his article this morning reconciles the situation that exists between our two great provinces, and I think he does it very well. He indicates that the flag debate is becoming very wearisome to him.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Winkler: He goes on to say:

Believe me, I do not enter into this argument in this space merely to fill up some blank paper.

Do not believe either that the opposition is acting from any such motive.

The words which have already been written and spoken on this matter would, if compiled in book form, probably provide enough volumes to build a modern great wall of China along the entire length of the Quebec-Ontario border. However, in spite of my best intentions, I often find it difficult to just sit here saying nothing while the battle ebbs and flows. I consider it to be not only my right to comment on it but my obligation. For one thing, I believe that the wishes of a great and extremely important segment of our people on this matter are not only being ignored but disdainfully and even contemptuously ignored. This, I think, is a shameful thing, and if I can help express their side of the argument I intend to do so. One particular puzzling aspect of the long flag debate, both in parliament and on the streets, is