

Canadian Flag

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Grégoire:—by constant repetitions, by saying one ridiculous thing after another and by attempting to throw a monkey wrench in the works.

If the Canadian people has no confidence in parliament, the responsibility rests with the Conservatives and the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre.

Mr. Plourde: That is right.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Grégoire: To satisfy their own pride and ambition, the Conservatives are holding up the business of the country, and I strongly protest against such an attitude. They will bear the responsibility and the consequences of this state of affairs.

[Text]

Mr. Smallwood: Mr. Speaker, the point I drew to your attention was that the hon. member for Lapointe was standing on the other side of the house with his back to Your Honour, and he has been doing that continuously. That is what I was drawing to Your Honour's attention, regardless of what the house leader had to say.

Mr. Speaker: I am glad to say that it is almost four o'clock and I am sure we can start a new regime immediately. I should add that the point raised is reasonable and well taken. Standing order 12 (1) says:

Mr. Speaker shall preserve order and decorum, and shall decide questions of order, subject to an appeal to the house without debate.

The house is nice and quiet at the moment, and I do hope we can continue in that vein.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pugh: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all hon. gentlemen who have contributed to my speech. I am sure that when I send the one copy home it will be read with very great interest.

As I was saying, one of the reasons for my believing there should be a plebiscite is that there was no proper mandate, certainly not from my constituency. As I said, news finally sifted down to the province of British Columbia that there might be some question of a flag raised in the last election, and it was a question put to all four candidates when they were attending four-party meetings. Those four candidates represented the Conservatives, the New Democratic party, the Liberal party and the Social Credit party. When the question was put to them as to

[Mr. Grégoire.]

what they would do about changing our Canadian flag, their answer in each case was specific and without qualification: "We will not change the present Canadian flag. It is our flag, and we will fight for it". I say this, Mr. Speaker, because it has been leaked all over the place exactly how the voting went in the committee. There is no question about it, the Liberals, the members of the New Democratic party, the Creditistes and the Social Crediters all voted against our Canadian flag, the red ensign. This has been leaked out by the press. I will not mention any names, but that was the result of the vote. It was leaked out, incidentally, by a Liberal.

Mr. Bell: Mr. "Leakman".

Mr. Pugh: In any event, to go back to the question of mandate, no one wishing to come to Ottawa and represent Okanagan Boundary heard anything about this, nor did they receive a request that the flag should be changed in any way, shape or form. This was the voice of the people. They elected me, but they also voted for the other candidates all down the line. I am wondering whether this did not happen in a great many more constituencies. I know that it certainly happened in the province of British Columbia. Therefore I wonder, just as the hon. member for York-Humber (Mr. Cowan) did this morning—another Liberal—what mandate we do have. The member for York-Humber made no bones about it; he pointed out that numerically he was here after having received a minority of the votes cast. He pointed out that numerically many, many of those members sitting on the government side of the chamber and in other parties, including our party, were here without receiving 50 per cent of the votes of their constituents. In fact very, very few members of parliament are here today with a majority vote from their constituencies. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, one asks, has there been a mandate? Then one asks, is there not a great deal of truth in that which the member for York-Humber brought forward this morning? It is true that people are sent here from everywhere in Canada, but it is an extraordinary thing that only one Liberal feels the government did not have a mandate. This is an extraordinary thing. Were the Liberals elected as Liberal members, or were they elected to come down here and throw Canada's flag into the ash can, and that is about what their action amounts to?

I do not think there is any clear mandate which can be relied upon. There has been a small amount of party literature circulated. I was very careful to watch for literature of