

Canadian Flag

leaves. He said this was a flag on which our young men would see visions and our old men would dream dreams. This was the hon. member for Leeds dreaming in June, and forsaking in September the principles for which he then stood. This shows the fast change in thinking of those who dream dreams in June and have nightmares in July and August.

I say to the hon. gentleman opposite and those associated with him that we believe this matter should be submitted to the people. I believe the Prime Minister would take the greatest step forward if, knowing the division within the country, he were to announce that this matter should be given what is sometimes described as a hoist. It should be given time. Place it before the Canadian people at an election and let the people decide. I say to them, to the majority, you may trample on our viewpoint; you may ridicule the stand we take; you may decry; you may, when you vote on the question of a plebiscite, possibly boast that you have triumphed if our request is turned down. However, it will be no triumph for Canadian unity. I am not interested in party triumphs on this question.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am interested in my fellow Canadians. I hope this applies to those sitting on the opposite side of the house, and I am not speaking for those who would tear the flag down, as they have said over and over again.

An hon. Member: That is a lie.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I think I heard a word, but in fact I am not at all sure. In fact I might say that I did not hear it and I hope I will not hear it.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am one of those, Mr. Speaker, who are fortunate in that I cannot hear all interruptions.

I should like to see action taken that would bring about unity. However, we have stood, we have fought, we have upheld what we believe to be an important matter of principle. There is another report of the committee, No. 7. I should like to ask the Prime Minister, in that connection, whether in the event this question is voted upon by this house, the other resolution will come up immediately; with this proviso, that we should have our question period restored by the consent of the house. Many questions have arisen in the last ten days which demand answers and which I know the government is desirous of answering. What does the government intend

to do? Does it intend to proceed with the motion to concur in that other report? I hope the Prime Minister, when he replies, will let the house know.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, if the right hon. gentleman would like a reply at once—because it may be that we will have a vote after his statement and I might not have an opportunity then—I should like to tell him that it is the intention of the government to ask the chairman of the flag committee to move concurrence in the final report as soon as this debate concludes. Whether that can be done immediately after the conclusion of this debate will depend, of course, on the time of day this debate ends.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Will the Prime Minister say whether it is the intention of the government to have the second motion for concurrence passed by the house?

Mr. Pearson: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I think there should be provision made between the two debates for a question period. We have already made a proposal to that effect, and I hope we can get unanimous agreement to provide for a question period between the two debates. If that can be done, we have no other item of business to put before the house, to give precedence to that order over the one I have just mentioned, the seventh report of the committee. Perhaps the right hon. gentleman would allow me to ask him a question at this moment; that is, if he is agreeable now that we should have a vote immediately on the amendment and on the main motion for concurrence.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I recognize the desire of the right hon. gentleman to be fully advised, but the course we will take will be determined in the light of the circumstances.

Mr. Knowles: That sounds like Mackenzie King.

Mr. Diefenbaker: There are two or three matters of legislation upon which we have been pressing for the consideration of the house. Indeed, we have moved the adjournment of the debate in order to permit of these matters being considered. We also joined with our colleagues to the left in the house in the vote in favour of calling orders of the day so that all these matters should receive the consideration of parliament.

Now, sir, I summarize my views and those of the party I have the honour to lead. I know that what I say will have no effect on the thinking of hon. members opposite or of