

has been receiving the attention of Parliament, provincial governments and people all over Canada for some time. We do hope that something realistic will be brought before Parliament before the end of this year.

I note that the Prime Minister said, as reported at page 7943:

A careful review of every single clause of this legislation is essential, and careful consultation with the provinces in respect of all these clauses is going on—

That statement shows just how important is this legislation.

The Prime Minister mentioned other legislation, and, as the Leader of the Government has just advised us, explained that there would be supply motions. We know it is necessary to have supply motions in the House of Commons so that the estimates may be dealt with by Parliament before the year has ended.

All this work has been piling up and is ahead of Parliament but, unfortunately, as our leader has told us, we must go home for three weeks and wait for it to be dealt with by the House of Commons. I rather hesitate to say this, but in my experience in Parliament over a great many years I think this has been one of the most frustrating sessions I have ever experienced, and I do hope we will get down to business very soon.

We know why most of this business has been held up, and I am not going to interject any debate on a flag or anything of that nature at the present time. But we do know that the legislative business has been held up because there was injected into Parliament at this session a resolution for the adoption of a flag. After many weeks of debate, a suggestion, which had been made a long time ago, to set up a committee to study the question, has now been adopted by Parliament. I personally did not see the necessity for this question being brought up at the present session and frankly I do not see the necessity now. However a committee has been appointed, and in that connection I would like to ask the honourable Leader of the Government a question.

I remember that in 1946 a joint committee of Parliament was set up to deal with the question of a flag. It was made up of members of the House of Commons and of the Senate. I wish to ask the honourable Leader of the Government why we do not have such a committee at this time? I remember the splendid work done by that committee, and I remember the long sessions held and the valuable contributions made by members of the Senate on it. Because of that, I think the

Senate should be represented on the committee which is now being set up to deal with the matter.

Members of the Senate can make a great contribution to a committee of this kind. The members of this chamber have not been subjected, in this instance, to long debates; they have not been subjected to bitter criticism from the press, radio and television. Therefore, the members of the Senate could bring a fresh point of view to a committee of this kind. I think it was an oversight, and a very serious one, on the part of the Government not to have invited members of the Senate to sit on a committee of this kind. I make no further comment on this point. Perhaps some other honourable senators would like to comment on it.

I would ask the honourable Leader of the Government if any request was made to have members of the Senate included on this committee, or whether any representations were made, and if so, what reception was given to such representations by the Government.

Hon. Mr. Connolly (Ottawa West): Honourable senators, I think the answer to the question posed by honourable Senator Brooks can be a very straightforward one, and I hope that I am not oversimplifying it.

The resolution to deal with the question of a distinctive national flag for Canada was originally introduced in the House of Commons. It seemed to me to be the better part of wisdom, because of the character of the debate that was likely to occur and indeed did occur, to wait until the House of Commons finished consideration of this matter. In my view the Senate should not discuss this very important piece of business before it has been concluded in the Commons. I think the Senate will be in a better position to consider the issue when the Commons has completed its deliberation. At the moment it is purely a Commons resolution and we have no resolution on the matter on our Order Paper. Therefore I think it is primarily a matter for them to set up their own committee to deal with it.

If at the time the matter is to be considered here it is considered desirable from the point of view of the Senate that there should be a committee to study the question, I think the Senate will decide to do so at that time. In my view it would meet with the agreement of most honourable senators if we proceeded in that way.

What was done on the flag question in 1945 and 1946 may have been done in a different context, but the procedure the House of Commons have adopted is the procedure they themselves decided upon in the existing circumstances and on their own responsibility. Frankly, I do not like to consider the pros