

Canadian Flag

things under control, and such incidents as this do not help the Chair. Therefore I suggest that the flag be taken down.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Caouette: When I make my speech, will you let me use this flag to explain what it means and let me show it to all the house?

[*Text*]

Mr. Speaker: The answer to that question is no. An opportunity has been given to display other flags on the front lawn of the parliament buildings and perhaps this could be displayed there. Once more I appeal to all hon. members. There is enough emotion generated by this type of debate and we do not need any outside assistance. Therefore I would suggest that the flag be taken down out of respect for the sensibilities of other members in the house.

Mr. Caouette: I will comply with your ruling, Mr. Speaker. I am not going to take it down, but I will take it off.

Mr. Choquette: On a question of privilege—

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege.

A while ago the hon. member accused me of showing off, and yet I have always been polite with him. I hope that he went further than he intended to, because I had no such intention when I raised a point of order.

I have always been very polite and I would like him to be also with all hon. members.

Mr. Caouette: I am always more polite than the hon. member.

[*Text*]

Mr. Speaker: Now that both members are recorded on *Hansard* I think we can leave it at that.

Mr. Bert Leboe (Cariboo): Mr. Speaker, first of all it is my privilege to say that the views I will express, and those of other members in the Social Credit party, will be expressed on an individual basis.

Mr. Caouette: Which party?

Mr. Leboe: The Social Credit party.

Mr. Caouette: Are you sure?

Mr. Leboe: The views that I express will be entirely my own and certainly will not involve concurrence by any other member of this group. As found on page 4319 of *Hansard* for yesterday the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) said:

Mr. Speaker, in taking this position I know there are others who are as patriotic and as Canadian as I am or can ever hope to be, who disagree honestly and deeply. I respect that kind of honest disagreement.

I hope that when I deal with some of the remarks of the Prime Minister he will regard me as one of those to whom he referred in using those words. Before I proceed with that part of my remarks I should like to refer to something said by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Douglas). He suggested that a plebiscite should not be held, and that the parties should have been brought together to discuss this matter. I wish to say that I do not believe this is a party matter in any way, shape or form. I do not think it would have been right for the parties in the house to get together behind closed doors in some smoke filled room and decide what kind of flag Canada should have. He has said that the matter has polarized itself around two designs. This again I do not believe. My correspondence tells me that there is a great deal of latitude in respect of a Canadian flag. I will deal with this matter a little later, but I think I can show there is every reason to believe that this problem can be solved very easily without taking up very much time of the house.

The hon. member also mentioned that the other ethnic groups would want a flag with nothing on it having to do with the two founding races. Here again I disagree wholeheartedly. On the basis of my contacts with the people of the country, my contacts with other members of parliament and the letters I have been receiving, it is my belief that there are just as many people in the ethnic groups who would have us retain something of the red ensign, not necessarily the whole of it, as there are people who would want a completely new Canadian flag. I fully concur in what the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam said in respect of the order of business. As a matter of fact, after we had discussed interim supply last Friday for five minutes I rose in my place and said that I wanted to discuss this very matter on interim supply, and if I am in the house when interim supply is called again I hope to do that very thing; so I do not need to go into the matter here.

I should like to deal very briefly with the speech made by the Prime Minister in introducing the resolution. As found on page 4308 of *Hansard*, the Prime Minister quoted this statement of his party's policy:

A Liberal government will establish a distinctive Canadian flag within two years of taking office.