

*Canadian Flag*

**Mr. Winkler:** The President of the Privy Council has used the word "filibuster". Let me remind that hon. gentleman, whom I consider as a friend, that while I have not taken a daily count, at the last count I took of the measures dealt with by this house the number was something over 60. If my memory serves me correctly that is well beyond the number of legislative measures dealt with during any session by any parliament.

**Mr. McIlraith:** That is good government.

**Mr. Winkler:** You cannot have obstruction on the one hand and good government on the other hand. Had it not been for the opposition, where would these measures now be? In this regard I will give as much credit to my friends on our left as we take ourselves. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, let us have no more remarks from the President of the Privy Council about a filibuster.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to read to you and to the house from an article which appeared in the *Globe and Mail* of Monday, November 23 having regard to a speech made by the Prime Minister. I do not think the government or its supporters will deny these words by the right hon. Prime Minister, who said, as reported in that article:

"We have spent 23 days in the House of Commons debating the flag—which I think is too long—but those 23 days were at a time when normally we should have been having a holiday so while we may have spent a long time we have not sacrificed parliamentary business in doing it," he said.

Does that smack of obstructionism, Mr. Speaker? I now turn to the transcript of an interview of the Minister of Agriculture. It is perhaps a good thing we are having the flag debate at this time because that minister can stay away from the house now without his absence being too conspicuous.

**Mr. Moreau:** Where is Mr. Balcer?

**Mr. Winkler:** I may remind the hon. member for York-Scarborough that as I read of the situation in the newspapers these days, if it were not for certain events things would be a little different there as well.

The Minister of Agriculture had this to say on November 25 during an interview on the national broadcasting system:

—and I don't think that there has really been as much obstruction lately as we had during the summer recess—or when we should have had a summer recess.

The Minister of Agriculture says that during the summer months there was obstruction,

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yet the Prime Minister says the business of parliament was not sacrificed during the summer months.

**Mr. Hahn:** Mr. Speaker, we are not dealing with the obstruction of parliament, we are dealing with an amendment. If the hon. member is going to use the rules of this house to filibuster, he should filibuster by the rules.

**Mr. Winkler:** Mr. Speaker, I am making these remarks in an endeavour to convince this house that we should have a plebiscite. The hon. member for Broadview, like many other members on that side, should make some contribution to this debate instead of remaining in his seat interrupting. If he signifies that he will do so I am prepared to resume my seat and listen to him. The hon. members can continue this program of interference but they will not bother me, because I know their minds are closed on this issue.

Let me say to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the members of this house that I have one more reason for advocating a plebiscite. We now have one flag design before us, of a basically red colour. Such a design has no appeal whatever in many parts of the country. I have the privilege of returning to my constituency each week end, and since this design has been presented to the house I have observed a tremendous amount of displeasure on the part of my constituents.

**Miss LaMarsh:** Then vote against it.

**Mr. Winkler:** I believe the people of Canada are beyond this now. Although they dislike it and find it is not desirable, I think they are beyond it. But the government does not seem to be interested in the lunch pail men of this country. I believe that the people who carry lunch pails in the province of Quebec are a little different from the people who carry lunch pails in the province of Ontario, but regardless of their province, their aims and objectives in life are very similar. This matter is of little significance to them. What is of significance to them is a brighter and better future for their families, and if they were called upon to make this decision it would be a very simple one for them to make. I believe the government would be very surprised to find that the red ensign would receive a tremendous amount of support from all these people.

To remove every vestige of our history from the design we are going to have to accept if we do not have a plebiscite to determine what the people desire is in my estimation a retrograde step. It is well known in the history of