

Canadian Flag

there. I talked with one man in particular, an average, good, solid Canadian citizen who asked me, "Have you fellows nothing better to discuss than the flag?" I told him we had, but that it was the government which introduced legislation which we have to pass or oppose. He said, "Well, in that case you fellows are doing the right thing. I think the Prime Minister is a fairly clever man but I think he should know we would like to have a say on what flag we want." I went to a polling and I overheard a man saying to the returning officer: If they would just let us do this on the flag question we could settle it in a day. The deputy returning officer agreed with him, and I could not agree with him more.

I know that members opposite are annoyed because this debate is continuing. That is because it has aroused the people of this country. I should like to hear members opposite speak up. I should like to hear what the hon. members for the city of Halifax have to say about this. I should like to hear from the members who represent Newfoundland. I should like to hear from some of the members from Ontario, from those who represent Toronto ridings in this house. I should like to hear the views of the members who come from British Columbia, especially the opinions of the hon. member for Victoria (Mr. Groos). There is only one member on that side who has had the courage of his convictions, the courage to stand up and say what he thinks.

An hon. Member: What about Kootenay East?

Mr. Horner (The Battlefords): Oh yes, the hon. member for Kootenay East (Mr. Byrne). He feels very badly because he had aspirations to become minister of labour. But since that failed he has taken to reading *Beauchesne*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. member knows the question before the house and he should relate his remarks to it.

Mr. Horner (The Battlefords): That is right, Mr. Speaker, but hon. members opposite are leading me away from it.

About ten days ago the Prime Minister was speaking to a federal convention in Saskatchewan and he told this convention we were going to have a flag. But I do not think he placed a time limit on it this time, October or Christmas. He said the government had prepared legislation dealing with agriculture.

Mr. Winkler: Where is it?
[Mr. Horner (The Battlefords).]

Mr. Horner (The Battlefords): He made it known that we in the opposition were the ones who were obstructing this program. But we are interested in seeing this legislation, particularly if it affects eastern agriculture. If members opposite will agree to drop this subject and let us get on with these other important matters no one would be better pleased than ourselves. I know a flag is a symbol, but you cannot eat it and you cannot educate a family on it.

We are being very reasonable in asking for a plebiscite. We heard about a free vote in this house. What a joke. First, the Prime Minister said: We will have a free vote. But I suppose that after hearing the opinions of their supporters they found that the flag proposal was not likely to carry. So they said: You can still have a free vote, but if the government loses there will be an election. With an election gun at their heads, some of the members had to swallow themselves—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. Would the hon. member restrict his remarks to the subject under discussion?

Mr. Horner (The Battlefords): I am doing my best and I think I will get there but I believe hon. members opposite must be answered.

Other members, I know, have been reading articles in the course of their speeches. Here is one from the *Sudbury Daily Star*. It concerns a plebiscite and it states this under the heading "Fear Plebiscite on Flag?":

There is a growing suspicion in the minds of Canadians that Prime Minister Pearson and his government supporters are now afraid to submit the "flag issue" to the people as a plebiscite—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I must interrupt the hon. member. Although he is correct in saying that a number of articles and editorials have been read into the record there is a distinction which has to be made somewhere, and I can assure him it is not easy to make that distinction. But the rules clearly prevent the reading of articles or editorials which comment on a debate which is actually going on in the house or which reflects on such a debate. The editorial which the hon. member has begun to read is, surely, in this category because the very first sentence clearly reflects on this particular debate. I think the hon. member would be out of order in reading it.

Mr. Horner (The Battlefords): This editorial was printed before the present debate started.