

*Canadian Flag*

intention of trying to prolong this debate, but I would like to look back on what I said. It is very seldom that a member of this house has the chance to read over what he said the previous evening. However, I would like to restate my basic position as an individual and as a member who I think can speak for a fair number of his constituents. I object to the way the flag problem has been brought in; I object to the design; I object to the way we have been told "Accept it or have it shoved down your throat."

Before two o'clock I met a group of young people travelling through Canada; I rushed down to the court house to watch some new Canadians receiving their citizenship. These people who became Canadians today at 3.30 are just as good Canadians as I am, because the number of generations does not mean anything. What in the world have we got today? Why would the government bring up something that is going to split the nation wide open? I did not believe what my grandfather told me and I do not expect my grandsons to believe the prejudices I teach them, because they would be awfully stupid boys if they did. All right. We are one country. Let us face it. We have enough segregation today. We have it right across the country. There has to be a little compromise. If the Canadian people want a new flag, as a Canadian I say yes; but you show me which flag they want.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Clancy:** I am not asking you. I know you fellows are in the position where you are going to do it.

**Mr. Graftey:** Under compulsion in some cases.

**Mr. Clancy:** You are going to shove it down our throats. All I want is to be able to say to my people that I have put up my argument and have said what I think about it. I am not going to hold up the business of the house over an issue which is a disgrace to the Prime Minister. You cannot do this if you want unity. I want that fellow who became a citizen at three o'clock today to be as proud of this country as I am, and you will only do it by—

**An hon. Member:** The maple leaf.

**Mr. Clancy:** Mr. Speaker, I heard a member down at that end say to his leader "We can make some political hay out of this, all right." We are Canadians. Let us be Canadians first, last and always. If you split us

[Mr. Clancy.]

now it will take 30 years to get us back together again. You will have to start another war, and nobody wants that war.

**Mr. Douglas:** On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, the last speaker waved his arms toward this end of the house and said that some member down here had said to his leader, "We can make political hay out of this". He did not name the party. There are three parties in this corner of the house, and I want to make it perfectly clear that he was not referring to the New Democratic party.

**Hon. H. J. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak on the flag resolution submitted to the house by the Prime Minister and on the amendment now before us proposed by my leader, the Leader of the Opposition, I continue to be impressed by the wisdom of the amendment. It calls for reference of the question of an official national flag to the people of Canada by way of a plebiscite. I am impressed by its language. It is my opinion that its basic premise is very proper and very much justified, and its recommendation of appropriate action deserves and should have the utmost consideration by every member of the house.

In order that the amendment will be fresh in my mind, and I hope other hon. members feel likewise, I should like to quote it since in my opinion there are various aspects which require careful and thoughtful consideration. So, Mr. Speaker, the amendment reads as follows:

As the proposal to change Canada's national flag will affect—

I draw the attention of hon. members to the words "will affect".

—the unity and destiny of Canada now and for years to come, the government be authorized to take such steps as may be necessary to conduct a plebiscite prior to any further action being taken by the House of Commons, in order that all Canadians may be given their rightful opportunity to declare their choice concerning a national flag.

There surely is no difference of opinion in this chamber with respect to the fact that the proposal to change Canada's national flag will affect the unity and destiny of Canada now and for years to come. It is my opinion, Mr. Speaker, and I say this most advisedly, that it will adversely affect the unity of Canada. I assert here and now that it is not possible to affect the unity of Canada adversely without having the destiny of Canada adversely affected as well.

I come now to the question of the plebiscite itself. Before proceeding to discuss this