

*Canadian Flag*

**Mr. MacLean (Queens):** The question is, where is this pressure coming from? I would be very surprised if it is coming from the province of Newfoundland, for example. I see no great body of public opinion there that is intent on banishing the union jack, for example, or the red ensign. I am sure this pressure does not come from Nova Scotia, from Prince Edward Island or from British Columbia; nor does it come from Alberta or Saskatchewan. There is not one member in this House of Commons—if we are the ones to decide—from the province of Saskatchewan that favours doing away with the union jack as one of our historic symbols. The pressure does not come from Manitoba, and I am sure it does not come in any great measure from the province of Ontario. I am logically forced to conclude—

**An hon. Member:** That it comes from Quebec.

**Mr. MacLean (Queens):**—that it certainly does not come from the province of Quebec. I will explain why.

**Mr. Ricard:** That disappoints you over there.

**An hon. Member:** All that are left now are the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

**Mr. MacLean (Queens):** I say that, Mr. Speaker, because the only argument I have heard the government or any spokesman for it advance as to why these symbols should be eradicated from our national flag is that they are archaic vestiges of a long dead, long past, colonialism. If that is the reason, it does not jibe with the reasoning of the province of Quebec—at least the province as a province—because as I recall it, their provincial flag, which I presume has the affection of all citizens of that province, consists of a white cross and four fleur-de-lis on a blue background, the symbols of old France. I think that is a very attractive flag and I respect the viewpoint and the good taste of the people of the province of Quebec who hold this flag in high esteem. I know that even if they did not do this, and felt that these symbols were an anachronism, they would surely not expect Canadians generally to eliminate from the national flag the symbols they love, before they had put their own house in order and eliminated from their own flag these equally archaic symbols of dead colonialism. I know Quebec people; many of them are among my closest friends, and I know they would not advance such a preposterous suggestion as that.

Where does this leave us? There is still some group that is pressuring the government to eliminate these symbols from our flag. I do not know who they are; but the government is obviously committed to this program and are embarrassed by the fact that they were not able to do it quickly. I suppose they took a straw vote of the membership of the house and found there were more people, collectively, in the other parties that would vote for them than there were in their own party that would vote against such a proposition, and they snatched at it to cause embarrassment and division in all parties in this house. Here was an opportunity to shove something through parliament quickly, and they were pressured in this way. As a result of that course of action, they have been saying ever since, with various degrees of politeness, "Stop talking. Bring this matter to a vote".

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

**Mr. MacLean (Queens):** They say, "Sit down and vote". The Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss LaMarsh) puts it in slightly different terminology. I believe she said to an hon. member, "Shut up, sit down and vote". But anyway, Mr. Speaker, this is what they advance. There is a reason why this course is not acceptable at the present time, and I will come to this point in a moment. In making this point they have practised the ruse that is as old as time itself. I am rather amused by the fact that one or two gentlemen of the fourth estate, the press gallery—and these men look upon themselves as people who are objective, incisive, shrewd and worldly-wise; and they are, with perhaps one or two exceptions—have fallen for the ruse the government has used, which was old when Ali Baba and the 40 thieves were around. One or two of the gentlemen of the press have been taken in by this ruse. It is an old trick of pickpockets, from time immemorial, that when their victims begin to get suspicious, they point at some innocent bystander down the way and scream "Thief", and everybody goes after him and the pickpocket disappears up the alley. This is what the government has been doing all summer; they have been saying, "The terrible opposition are preventing parliament from getting on with the country's business". I want to point out that it is not the opposition that is holding up government business. The opposition has no choice as to the program of business which is laid before parliament. This is the 27th day the government has taken