

Canadian Flag

Canada," he told 200 members of the York West Liberal association last night.

"One Conservative voice expresses its opposition to the union jack, the other to a distinctive Canadian flag. Such double talk is certainly not going to reduce tension in our country."

Mr. Lamontagne urged Liberals to work for English-French co-operation.

I am sure there are many members sitting on the other side who will agree with me when I say this is not the sort of talk that will eventually unite this country. In my opinion this is another example of the Liberal party's attempt to retain political power within our country.

My ensuing words will be the last I will say in regard to the design that has been placed before us for consideration. I do this because I believe the pattern that has been followed, the method of presentation that has been used, was entirely unauthorized; that it was organized in a political way. I believe Canadians across the country resent this type of activity. I say again that I believe if the Prime Minister had been sufficiently democratic in his view, sufficiently democratic in his presentation, we might not be standing on the brink of this debate as we are today. I think that by and large, in consideration of everything that has happened, the method that has been used—I will not say that the blame is entirely his—is most deplorable to Canadians.

We must examine what happened initially in connection with this proposal. First of all we had a stamp issued. Then we had some very valuable leaks to the press gallery. There were some profound if conflicting statements from the treasury benches. I bring to the attention of hon. members the fact it was said this design was to stand for the unity of Canada. Ministers went across the country for a very short time—and I believe they were told to stop—stating that one maple leaf stood for English speaking Canada, another maple leaf for French speaking Canada and a third maple leaf for the other ethnic groups in Canada. I will make it very clear, Mr. Speaker, that I belong to another group, and I do not know which one of the leaves stands for that group. I do not belong to either of the two founding races of this country because of the way my family arrived here many years ago.

Then there was another interesting development. We had the presentation of a card game by another department of government, and this card game was laden with the same type of symbols. Hon. members may recall that we had some very interesting displays

[Mr. Winkler.]

in some of the major cities across this country. I recall seeing some very interesting pictures. I do not believe the people want the flag they choose used in this way or referred to in this way at any time in the future. In my humble opinion this was not complimentary in any way to the design. I recall the use the Liberal party has made in the past of splinter groups in the House of Commons. One example occurred back in 1924, I believe, when positions were jockeyed to curry the support of those groups, and I believe that is the case today. I do not believe anyone can deny it. I refer, therefore, to the presentation of this design as the Liberal party's political dichotomy. I do not believe it is anything else.

When I return to my constituency and I am asked what is wrong with the House of Commons today, what is the trouble with our parliament, I think I can say that the answer is obvious. This parliament started out to be a two party house, and so far as I am concerned on this issue today it is still a two party house when the other parties bow the knee to the weight of authority. It has been pointed out to me by people in my constituency that the leaves on the design have 13 points. This is not extremely important to me, but it must have been important to somebody else. It has been pointed out to me also that three maple leaves on one stem is very uncommon, as a matter of fact it is unknown. This form of leaf design, as a matter of fact, is known only to another form of Canadian vegetation.

In this regard I must bring to the attention of the house an expression of opinion by a constituent of mine who wishes to remain anonymous. She has expressed her view in this way, referring to the design:

Mutation

Oh, tiddledy-dum and tiddledy-dee,
What is this scarlet "trilogy"?
Some kindergarten art, perchance?
Poinsettias or ivy plants?
Or does this stark and metred line
Portray a modern art design?
No self-respecting maple tree
Produced this freak of botany...
...Oh, maple leaf! Our emblem dear!
We didn't recognize you here!

That is one expression. I do not know if it will be well accepted or not, but nevertheless that is the way it is. There are other aspects to be considered, and in my view they are fundamental ones.

I know there are people in different areas of the country who would like to shed any resemblance, or connection with the British