

*Canadian Flag*

spoken to Churchill about flying the three flags side by side and had then given directions that this should be done. "I can now say," he wrote, "that this was done with agreement between the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the Prime Minister of Canada." He added that both of them agreed that "the Canadian flag should come in the centre".

On that occasion he approved the flag which was approved by order in council. I say that Canadians are entitled to express their viewpoint. When the leader of the Liberals went out electioneering in Ontario he described a distinctive flag, and he described the kind of flag that would contain some of the elements of the Canadian ensign, particularly the union jack. I am sure that to be fair with the French Canadians, and I want to be fair, when he spoke about a distinctive flag in Quebec he left the impression that the union jack would be off that flag. I say that is the kind of impression, that is the kind of attitude which disunites this country and does not unify us.

I suppose we always quote from those people in other parties whom we respect. What about Right Hon. Louis St. Laurent, what did he say? This is what he said when dealing with this subject. He had great influence in Canada and I am sure no one would deny that fact in this house, particularly those who come from Quebec. He was steeped in French culture, understood their problems and understood the province and its relation to the rest of the country. I do not know of any leader in my time who had more respect from the country. This is what he said and these words are as true tonight as they were then when he uttered them.

We hear the uproar when one of us raises his voice with regard to our flag. There is no unity in this parliament on this subject. There is a sham unity in the Liberal party. I say this, if you fellows would get up and speak your mind, you might possibly say something about what goes on in your caucus. This is what right hon. Mr. St. Laurent, a former prime minister said, that as long as a new flag divided Canadians rather than uniting them there should be no change in the flag. I endorse that stand tonight. I would say that 70 per cent of the people in the riding of Bow River and the people of western Canada endorse that stand. I think they are entitled to express their views by means of a plebiscite.

**Mr. Choquette:** When did he say that?

**Mr. Woolliams:** My friend does not know when he said anything because all he does

is mumble from his seat. He never makes a speech in this house that is worth while, and I am tired of that kind of hoodlumism.

I say that this matter should be put to a vote for another reason. Many of us in parliament are more serious than we have ever been before with regard to national unity and confederation. People in western Canada were asleep on this subject, and perhaps in other parts of Canada as well. They are awake today, and they are worried. I say that the responsibility for the delay in this House of Commons rests with the Liberal government because they are the ones who brought in this problem at a time when there is sensitivity about confederation, when every Canadian—French Canadian, English Canadian and every other Canadian—wanted to unify this country, to keep this country together as it was created in 1867. We realize that French Canada and English Canada were one at the time of confederation and then they brought in one province from the maritimes. Canada then grew to ten provinces. We are only going to keep confederation healthy when we take the kind of responsible action that does not erode confederation, particularly at a time when there appears to be some sensitivity about it. This sensitivity has been aggravated because of the political expediency of those people who would like to put in their pocket one group of votes.

I ask this question: How much can the bosom of a nation stand? This is not unifying this country. How much can we stand at this time?

**An hon. Member:** Carried.

**Mr. Woolliams:** Let me just have one word about the committee itself. My friend has said "Carried" again. Again, I say to him that is the kind of nonsense we hear. This is the place where free speech is made possible. When we cease to have free speech—

**Mr. McIlraith:** Let us have a vote.

**Mr. Woolliams:** I know the hon. member for Ottawa West (Mr. McIlraith) will be fair. He knows that when he sat in opposition they debated issues on many occasions to the extent that there appeared to be a filibuster.

**Mr. McIlraith:** We always let them come to a vote.

**Mr. Woolliams:** I think he stood on his rights and had a sense of responsibility, and I suggest to him that I stand on my rights tonight with that same sense of responsibility.

**Mr. McIlraith:** Will the hon. member permit a question? Will he not agree that other