

Canadian Flag

going to yield to the crack of the party whip no matter what happens to the country.

An hon. Member: They do what the whip tells them. Trained seals.

Mr. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton): I ask the question, who brought this design to parliament? Who made the decision?

Mr. Diefenbaker: The hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Choquette).

Mr. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton): Was it the government or the caucus of the Liberal party? That is the question which I think the people of Canada will want to have answered in no uncertain terms and at the proper time.

Mr. Deschatelets: It is already answered.

Mr. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton): The ministers do not consider it important enough even to get up and try to justify—they could not, of course, but they do not even try to justify—their attitude. They make no attempt. All they say is that they are going to be counted and that they are going to count for one. That is wonderful. We cannot reconcile such an attitude in this parliament.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Cameron (High Park)): Order. I regret to inform the hon. member that his time has expired, although I know we all regret that we will not be able to hear the rest of his speech.

Mr. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I lost about five minutes by the interjections which were made.

Some hon. Members: Carry on.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Cameron (High Park)): Has the hon. member unanimous consent to proceed?

Some hon. Members: Yes.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Flemming (Victoria-Carleton): All right. They just cannot take the truth. They do not want to hear the truth.

Mr. Deschatelets: Mr. Speaker—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Cameron (High Park)): Is the hon. member rising on a question of privilege or point of order?

Mr. Deschatelets: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member had not resumed his seat. I was about to ask him to resume his seat because his time had expired and he was still speaking.

Some hon. Members: Closure.

Mr. Monteith: Why? Do you want the floor?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Cameron (High Park)): I was under the impression, when I asked whether the hon. member has unanimous consent to proceed, that he had it.

Some hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Cameron (High Park)): If he has not I will have to ask him to resume his seat. Has the hon. member unanimous consent to proceed?

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Churchill: Refused by the Liberals.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Cameron (High Park)): I regret I hear a few noes, so I will have to ask the hon. member to resume his seat.

Mr. William Skoreyko (Edmonton East): Mr. Speaker, I find it very difficult to rise and follow an hon. member who has pleaded so eloquently with the Prime Minister to reconsider a problem of his own creation.

I must at the outset, Mr. Speaker, express my amazement at your most recent ruling, when Your Honour stood in your place and informed the hon. gentleman that his time had expired and he would not be heard further, without first asking the house whether they agreed to let him go on. It is a precedent that I am sure will be used in the future.

I rise to speak because the Prime Minister has again extended to all members of this house an invitation to participate in this debate. Some of the questions that I propose to deal with today are my views on how this matter could be settled without very much difficulty. First of all, I think we should try to understand that there are those for and those against the red ensign and the new flag. When we talk about the red ensign I think it has, more than any other emblematic device in Canada, an emotional and historic sentiment attached to it. I am speaking specifically of wives who lost their husbands in the last war, of mothers who lost their sons and daughters, of children who lost their fathers, and of those children whose fathers lie in our veteran institutions today, some crippled for life and others who will never again see the outside world. When you talk to these people, as I have on a number of occasions, you find that the red ensign is something very, very dear to their hearts.

I intend to quote from some letters I have received from veterans in the last week