

*Canadian Flag*

minority of minorities, because most members who sit in this house are here on minority votes.

As I said before, I do not want a flag that is the laughingstock of the country, or one that was brought about by tactics. I want a flag that I can look at, just as I look at our Canadian flag today, a flag that has my respect, a flag which I know has the respect of the nations around the world.

**Mr. F. J. W. Fane (Vegreville):** Mr. Speaker, I had hoped I would not have found it necessary to make a second speech on the flag issue and make it today. I say that I had hoped I would not have been called upon to make a speech at this time because it was my hope, my vain hope, that the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) would have smartened up to some extent by this time and would have seen the handwriting on the wall or listened to the voice of the people of Canada demanding that the flag issue be settled by a plebiscite. Either that, or it should be dropped entirely because we want to continue with the flag that has been Canada's for so many years, at least until it becomes possible to choose a flag that will represent the wishes of the vast majority of the people of Canada.

It is amazing that in their wisdom the Prime Minister and the government have not seen fit to call this debate off. It is not the opposition that is continuing the debate; it is the government. The majority of the people of Canada wish to have a chance to say what flag shall be Canada's for all time to come. This is not a today, tomorrow or next year deal. When the flag is chosen it will be forever.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. There are conversations going on across the aisle, something which is highly reprehensible and which makes it difficult for the Chair to follow the speech being made. If hon. members wish to continue their conversations I invite them to do so outside the chamber.

**Mr. Fane:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, although I must say it does not worry me because I have been interrupted many times from the people on my left. As I was saying, the vast majority of the people of Canada—

**Mr. Grégoire:** Only six now, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Fane:** As I remarked, Mr. Speaker, the leader of "la canaille à gauche", that is the rabble to the left does not worry me a bit, but

[Mr. Pugh.]

I can tell you that whenever he carries on in this way he is degrading the house.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order please. May I invite the hon. member to return to the subject of his speech. I realize the hon. member was interrupted and I have tried to co-operate with him, but I would ask him to co-operate with the Chair and deal with the subject matter of the debate.

**Mr. Fane:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, the people of Canada should have a chance to say whether they favour a new flag or not. They should have a chance to choose a flag which they can respect and, if necessary, fight for. It should be a flag worth that. The choice of a flag is for keeps and the majority of the people realize this.

The action of the Prime Minister makes me wonder who is blackmailing him and why he must pass on this blackmailing to parliament and the people of Canada. We are being presented with a flag that the majority of the people do not want pushed down their throats. I do not need to tell you where I stand, Mr. Speaker, because I am sure everybody in the country knows that the hon. member for Vegreville, Alberta, stands for a plebiscite on the flag issue. I also stand for the continuation of the Canadian red ensign as the flag of Canada, at least until we get something else that is worth standing for, looking up to and fighting for, and we sure have not got anything like that brought before us yet.

It has been suggested that the flag was the subject of an election promise in the 1962 and 1963 elections, but I can assure you it was not an issue in my constituency. I have told you previously that whenever I was asked about the flag I made it perfectly clear what flag I stood for, and why. In fact I got a standing ovation at each one of my meetings where I was asked about the flag. There were six candidates in my constituency and none of them mentioned the flag at any of the 12 joint meetings we had, and in addition to those meetings I had 45 meetings of my own. I believe 86 per cent of the eligible voters in my constituency voted and I got approximately 70 per cent of their votes. For that reason I believe I have a mandate to continue the attitude I have towards a plebiscite and a flag for Canada.

I know that the flag committee worked assiduously. It held 45 meetings in six weeks. Its members were chosen from all parties in the house and I know they were most fortunate in having such an estimable member