

*Canadian Flag*

people want the Canadian red ensign maintained as our flag.

However, I have no doubts whatever that they are prepared to conciliate and to try to reach common ground with those in Canada who do not agree, on the basis that they would be allowed to participate in this decision. I think they would accept the result, and this would remove the bitterness and bring us all together. Each of us, in our way, would have played a part in solving this problem in our country. The other day I picked up the *Gazette*, I think it was, and found a little poem by Christine L. Henderson entitled "(Don't) Rally Round the Flag!". This refers to the committee report, and reads as follows:

Fifteen learned men for 40 days  
They thought and thought,  
But alas, why think  
When Learned Thought arrives at naught!  
Yet for their Nation and with great elation  
At 2,000 flags they gaze in a maze  
At the wealth of knowledge these displayed!  
—Tradition, history, symbols pied,  
And heraldry and what else beside!  
—Now they come to the Head and present  
A Flag, (yes, a flag of sorts) with good intent—  
—One leaf and two red blobs, there's nothing  
in it!  
(A child could have done it in a minute.)

Feelings such as these are not confined to one who writes poetry, and I say that knowingly. When large numbers of our Canadian population have sacrifices made on the field of battle which they wish to remember, this parliament is not doing its duty when, for the sake of trying to be on the winning team or to achieve political advantage and become known in history as those who did it, they seek to rush us to this inevitable solution.

Last year I had the privilege of spending a month in Europe. There were some 80 of us, because I joined a tour who went from country to country. Most of us were Canadians. There were Canadians from Quebec and from every part of Canada. We started off by meeting what we felt were some rebuffs as we went along. Finally we discovered we were being mistaken for tourists from another country. We got a Canadian red ensign and put it on our bus. From that time forward our reception was different. It was one that we welcomed because it indicated that everywhere we went this flag was recognized and we were treated as Canadians.

I recall well that our tour did not include Vimy. We were in Brussels at night and we were supposed to head for Paris. There were arrangements that we were going to be pressured to keep. However we said we did not care; we were willing to miss lunch if necessary in order to go to Vimy. We went to

Vimy. It was a windy day. We got out of that bus, and there was this beautiful monument to the sacrifices of thousands of Canadians. If I remember correctly there were 6,000 marked graves and about 12,000 names of those who were never found, never identified. The Canadian red ensign was flying in that brisk breeze. I stood there with my Canadian friends from Quebec, and I am telling you that after three weeks on the road in that bus, most of us felt we were home. When you pull that flag down around this world, as you seem set to do now regardless of the consequences, something is going to be lost, and lost forever. I for one, sir, have to make a contribution, regardless of the criticism, to try to wake up the members of this parliament to a situation that, to say the least is dangerous to the future of this country.

I know of no other way, Mr. Speaker, now that we have reached this stage, than to forget that we are on different teams, to forget that we represent different parties, and to conclude that we are all Canadians; that we have one duty in this regard and that is to get politics out of this question in order to give people a chance to play a role in making a choice and contributing toward a better and more united Canada.

**Mr. C. S. Smallwood (Battle River-Camrose):** Mr. Speaker, I had not expected to speak on this amendment. However, in the last few days I have seen some actions on the part of some hon. members opposite, a very few in number, and especially those in the small group in the corner who have been doing nothing during this flag debate except interjecting, raising phony points of privilege and contributing nothing to the debate.

I support wholeheartedly the request for a plebiscite in this flag issue. This party has fought for the retention of the red ensign, or a modification of it. We have fought for the retention of the symbols which are so dear to many of us in this country—the union jack and the fleur-de-lis. But we have seen our efforts failing. They have failed because the minor parties have co-operated with the government in making agreements behind the curtains, and have left us to fight this issue alone. We had hoped some time ago to get the support of the minor parties, because in 1963 the present Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill) said of the N.D.P. that they had received the embrace, if unwelcome, of the communist party of Canada. In the absence of this support of the minor parties we are endeavouring to put the issue before the people on a plebiscite. The Minister of Trans-