

Canadian Flag

expressed to deal with it separately. There we have the same question; how do you deal separately with something that is included in something else?

It is in the record, and I invite members to look either at *Hansard* for 1883, which I have here, or the *Journals* for 1883. They will find that on that date, March 16, 1881 they got at it in this way. Sir John A. Macdonald, the prime minister of the day, made a motion that the orders of the day be read, and specifically that the paragraph from the speech from the throne relating to the sale of intoxicating liquors be read at the table. Both *Hansard* and the *Journals* indicate that this paragraph was read at the table by the Clerk of the house. When the paragraph had been read at the table of the house Sir John A. Macdonald, on the basis of its having been read, moved that it be referred to the proposed committee as I have already indicated. The motion was debatable and it was debated at great length, Sir John A. Macdonald and Hon. Edward Blake being the main contenders. Thus the matter was resolved.

I submit that unless somebody can find a better way of doing it we have, in this precedent, an answer to our problem. Standing order 44 says that when a question is under debate there are only certain kinds of motions that can be moved, and one of them is the motion to read the orders of the day. Such a motion could be moved by any member who can get the floor in the course of the debate, be he a cabinet minister, a Liberal backbencher, a member of the official opposition, or any other member. This motion having been made, if it passed then the Clerk, according to precedent, would be called upon to read at the table the orders of the day. We could dispense with all the rest but order 44, but once he had read order 44, the motion that the Clerk Assistant read just a moment ago, I submit that on the basis of what happened on March 16, 1883, it would then be in order for a member of the house—I think it should be done by a cabinet minister but it would be in order for any member of the house—to move that the question which had then been read by the Clerk at the table be divided into its two parts for the purpose of taking a vote.

If hon. members think this is a bit novel, then I say it is a novel situation to be deciding upon a flag for the people of Canada. Parliament has never dealt with this situa-

tion before, and the decision we take may last for a long time. It seems to me that in these circumstances we owe it to ourselves, but even more may I say that we owe it to the people of Canada, to try to find in our procedures a way of making this decision in a most clearcut fashion, a way of arriving at a vote that will be meaningful. As I say, Mr. Speaker, you in your research may have found some other way which seems better, and if so that is fine with me; but if no other way has been found, I suggest consideration be given to the proposals I have made.

If I may sum up, I hope I have shown by reference to the six authorities from whom I have quoted that the right to divide a complicated question is an ancient one that parliament is entitled to have observed on this occasion. I have already shown that under our standing orders there are difficulties. But I have shown by reference to what happened in 1883 that these difficulties can be overcome. I hope Your Honour will at least be prepared today, if you are not able to give a final ruling, to say that this matter is one with which the house can deal at some point in the debate that is about to commence. It is immaterial to me whether the division is made so we can debate the propositions separately or whether it is made just before the vote is taken. It seems to me that one debate ought to be enough, but I will leave that to Your Honour and to the house. Whether or not we do have separate debates, I do insist that to have a clear, meaningful decision we should have two separate votes.

I hope, therefore, that this parliament will show its respect for the things that have come down to us across the centuries by assuring in this debate the right to have separate votes, and that Your Honour will stand with those who in the past have contended that this is one of parliament's undoubted rights.

Mr. Speaker: Are there any other hon. gentlemen who care to make remarks on this point?

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Winnipeg South Centre): I would defer to anyone on the government side if he wished to deal with this matter. I have certain remarks I should like to make, but since this is a government motion I thought they would be the first to insist that it remain as it is. It represents the policy of the government, carefully considered, and the motion is carefully drawn with the two ideas put into one motion for a definite purpose. I am sure they would not want to see any change in that motion