

Canadian Flag

In making my case for why I think there should be a plebiscite I want to refer to the speech of my colleague, the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Girouard). I want to quote some of his words as found on page 10731 of *Hansard*.

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. More: I am always glad to have evidence of the sort of attention being paid to my remarks by those who most of the time make remarks while seated, and who I think must be handicapped and are probably drawing the disabled allowance. When I have something to say I choose to stand on my feet and to say it in the proper, responsible manner. My colleague from Labelle uttered these words:

We Quebeckers want to keep jealously our traditions and our civil law. And yet, on the flag issue, when the Conservative party from our leader down want to give us a flag establishing exactly this ethnic, historic and cultural duality we say: No. We want one flag for one Canada.

Just as astonishing is the reaction of our English speaking colleagues who always showed a preference for Canadian standardization and who, all of a sudden, offer us half of the flag to put the French fact on it.

He went on to make a decision that I regret because I cannot accept it as a positive decision in the climate of this country today. I do want to say though that in his remarks there were words that gave me much to consider, words that I think were clear in trying to explain why we have a difference of view on this matter. I think he dealt with the subject very well and had he been able to accept the statements I read and on that basis have reached some degree of conciliation I believe that both of us could have had a part in doing something of great service to our country.

One of the finest speeches I have heard in all the time that this issue has been before the house was made this afternoon by my colleague, the hon. member for Kent (Ont.) (Mr. Danforth). I do not have the ability to speak in the same fashion as he did because he approached the status of an outstanding orator in the way he made his remarks this afternoon, and his evident sincerity could not be denied by anyone. I think his remarks put the case for a plebiscite clearly and distinctly and, as I say, I am sorry that minds seem to be closed to doing anything or considering any course that might accomplish what we want to accomplish and would overcome the difficulties and the results that we now face.

[Mr. More.]

I am not one who appreciates levity when we are speaking about serious matters and I do not appreciate interjections that do not really bear on the subject which comes from the other side of the house. I often regret that remarks made in this way get into *Hansard*. I regret that in a debate of this kind a minister of the crown should be on *Hansard* as having told a member to shut up.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. More: I think it is a shame. I remember that when the hon. lady first entered the house she sat on this side and one day I introduced myself to her in what I thought was a very friendly fashion. She said to me: "I have got a sharp tongue. I am glad you did it today because after I speak you might not feel that way." I said then that if she wanted to be treated like a lady all she had to do was act like one.

I do not challenge that those who were members of the committee were diligent and worked hard at their task. I am not, however, able to agree with the result of that dedication and effort. It has not been what I expected or what the country expected. As I say, without any question they worked extremely long hours and held many meetings. I do not want to make exceptions, but I do want to say that from what I have learned I think the chairman of this committee acted properly at all times. I think we owe it to a chairman in a difficult position like that, when he comes out with completely clean colours, to express our sentiments publicly and give him credit for it. I want to join with all those who have, by their remarks, honoured him. The first time any member of the committee said anything or did anything the chairman felt was not true or was not fair, he immediately stopped him.

The flag this committee brought forward may well become the flag of Canada. At this stage I am not prepared to forecast. I do say that if it does, then the years ahead will be most difficult. I say this, sir, because we have evidence from the polls that have been conducted from time to time that this is an emotional issue charged with the memories of sacrifices that a great many of our people hold dear. We should recognize this fact sincerely and not demean those memories. There will be bitterness if this flag is adopted. I believe all serious minded members of parliament should seek to avoid this at all costs. On the basis of polls conducted in the area, I believe that the overwhelming majority of