

*Canadian Flag*

tics Fell Through", or something like that. It does not really matter. The point is that people asked me about this.

One member went on to say that there was a tremendous amount of laughter, that the Tories in the committee were completely baffled, that they were apparently taken off base and so on. When I discussed the matter with my constituents they told me in no uncertain terms that for this very reason they would like to have a vote on the flag. They want a vote and they should get it. If there was any laughter in that committee or any amazement on Tory faces it was due to one thing, that when the Pearson flag with three maple leaves and blue borders was being considered not one Liberal voted for it. Every Liberal voted against it. To me this means one thing, and it means one thing to the people of my constituency and to many more in British Columbia and elsewhere. It is why they are asking for a plebiscite. They are asking for a very good reason. They do not want a laughingstock flag. They do not want a tactical advantage flag. They do not want a strategic retreat flag or anything like that. They want to be able to look at the flags and decide for themselves.

I could quote the rather blatant language that the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra used. If the laughter meant anything to the Tory members of the committee it meant just three things. The Liberal members were laughing at their leader and their cabinet. They had said they were going to stand or fall on the three maple leaf flag and they made it a matter of confidence. They bedevilled parliament with it all the way through. The second reason why they were laughing was that they had kept all of us here throughout the spring and all during the summer and fall by shooting the flag at us, instead of dealing with important business. They tried to make out it was an important issue. The third thing they were laughing at was the people of Canada themselves. That laughter was hollow. Let us not produce a hollow flag as a result of it. That laughter was based on those three things, and by producing this flag at this time they have kept everybody in the country in an uproar and a state of unrest.

The Liberals have said to the people all across Canada that we are not getting along with the business of the house. What utter balderdash. That is not true. I think we have made a fair go at things in this session of parliament and it is time the people knew it.

[Mr. Pugh.]

If we have spent 23 days on the flag the people should realize that we have been here for nearly 10 months. The people should realize that we were here all summer and that 23 days does not add up to much compared with ten months.

My people are annoyed about this matter. They say they have been bamboozled on the flag question from the beginning. We know the truth now and they jolly well should know the truth. I am not going to say any more now, although I have quite a bit more additional material. The people are annoyed at various things that have appeared in newspaper articles, one of which, as I say, was published prior to the committee presenting its report to the house. This was a most disgraceful thing. There was no reason for it whatsoever. The time of publication might have been an error on the part of that hon. member, but as the chairman of the committee knows I objected strongly to him at the time. I wonder how he feels? I wonder why he has not made a speech condemning this man, not because he allowed the article to be published prior to the presentation of the report but because of the misinformation he tried to feed the people of Canada. My people are annoyed about this and this is one of the reasons why they want to have a voice in the choosing of their own flag. They want to have a plebiscite. They want to be able to talk and make a decision outside of this flag committee. I was proud of this flag committee up until the very last morning. I was proud of it because I thought the members made an honest effort to get together. Certainly many of the members had fixed opinions at the start. There was no question about it. The Liberal members had a flag, and perhaps they bent over backwards when they voted for another flag. I think the other parties tried to be considerate.

When you look at the background of some of these members who were on that committee, you could not expect anything else. They were fixed in their determination to bring in a flag. I do not believe, for instance, that all members of the New Democratic party would agree with what their member finally decided. They have expressed this view in the House of Commons. In fact, the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge) said that a plebiscite is necessary. I agree with him 100 per cent. I only heard part of the speech delivered this morning by the hon. member for York-Humber (Mr. Cowan). When I left I thought rather deeply about this speech and I asked myself, in demanding a plebiscite is this man a radical? I asked myself, is he a