

Canadian Flag

Mr. Matheson: May I ask the hon. gentleman a question at this point?

Mr. Kindt: Yes.

Mr. Matheson: I ask the hon. member, in fairness, if he is aware of the fact that it was a Conservative government that recommended to King George V that our national colours be argent and gules, that is white and red?

Mr. Churchill: It is not right.

Mr. Matheson: Is he aware of that fact, that the national colours are white and red?

Mr. Churchill: That is not right.

Mr. Kindt: I will say this, that if I were appointing a committee to decide on a flag I would never put anybody on it who knew anything about heraldry. I would pick some sensible, ordinary citizens who knew what the problem was and let them go to work to decide on a flag. Do you mean to say that the lady who, with her needle and thread, sewed together the flag of the United States at Boston knew anything about heraldry? She knew nothing. It is these people who think they know something about heraldry and know nothing who sit on these committees and produce the type of thing we have here.

Mr. Matheson: Does the hon. member know that Betsy Ross did receive technical advice from experts in heraldry before she sewed this flag?

Mr. Kindt: You are absolutely wrong when you say she had technical people advising her at the beginning. Be that as it may, we are not talking about technical people. I see that the time is now one o'clock.

Mr. Cowan: Will the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. member has called the attention of the Chair to the fact that it is one o'clock.

At one o'clock the house took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at 2.30 p.m.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, you may remember that when time ran out at one o'clock I wished to ask a question of the hon. member. I wish to ask the hon. member for Macleod, who was being interrupted by the hon. member for Leeds, if he does not agree

[Mr. Kindt.]

with me that this is the time when "Hark, the heraldry angels sing"?

Mr. Kindt: I agree with you very much.

In concluding my remarks I wish to say the government has no mandate to decide the flag issue and therefore that issue should be placed before the people in a plebiscite.

The government made mention of the flag in the dying days of the last election, saying that if returned to office it would try to provide a new flag, but that was not something which made it mandatory on the government to act. What was meant by that was that if it received a majority, and continued in office for four or five years, the subject of a flag could be introduced and it would do what it could do to arrive at something which would bring greater unity to Canadians and preserve the degree of unity we have now. However, as a result of the people's vote in that election we must deduct that the government is not in a position that it has a mandate to change the red ensign.

Mr. Olson: Would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Kindt: Furthermore, they are being kept in office by a group that wishes to retain their \$18,000 a year.

Mr. Olson: Would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Kindt: They are—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Would the hon. member kindly resume his seat. The suggestion which he is making now is entirely out of order and I would ask him to confine his remarks to the matter which is supposed to be discussed and considered, the necessity and advisability of holding a plebiscite.

Mr. Kindt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The next point I wish to make is that there is no urgency to the flag issue and hence, as the hon. Liberal member for York-Humber (Mr. Cowan) said, it should be withdrawn and more important and urgent business placed before the house. How can any reasonable person blame the opposition for being opposed to the proposed flag?

I say we should place the flag issue before the people in a plebiscite, and keep the red ensign flying from the peace tower, all across Canada and throughout the world until something more acceptable is found than the political monstrosity concocted by the political flag committee.