

Canadian Flag

Mr. Fane: What about yours? I think my hon. friend from Lotbinière should join his pals down in the corner and eat thistles with them.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Fane: Why, Mr. Speaker, they get so impatient that they begrudge me even a drink of water. As I was saying, the unity of Canada is something for which everybody in Canada should strive.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Fane: I am very glad to have approval from all quarters of the house for that statement, because I think everybody should be prepared for a little give and take if it will provide the unity that is required in this country. All the give should not be—

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Speaker, may I ask a question?

Mr. Fane: You sit down, and I will answer a question when I have finished.

Mr. Grégoire: Then I rise on a point of order.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Lapointe (Mr. Grégoire) is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Grégoire: Actually, it is a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker; I would like to call it a question of privilege. Could the hon. member sometimes change the tone of his voice a little?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. MacEwan: If you had half the guts that man has, you wouldn't say that.

An hon. Member: More fascist behaviour.

Mr. Fane: I was saying, Mr. Speaker, that the unity of Canada is something that is paramount in this country of ours and there should be no question about that. Why cannot everybody get together properly? I said there must be give and take on all sides, from all parts. It should not be expected that one side will do all the giving and the other all the taking. The sacrifice has to be equal, and until people are prepared to make an equal sacrifice in this country Canada can never hope to be united. I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that in the constituency from which I come the people are united. I have told the house there are people of 40 different national origins there, and we are united.

[Mr. Choquette.]

We figure that we are Canadians. We have intermarried; we have joined together. Our customs were all different, but we have joined together and made one culture in the area in which I live. Why cannot Canada as a whole, as a nation, do that? It is just a case of listening to some mountebanks, demagogues who would endeavour to destroy our nation. Whether they have taken the cue from people within this country or from without, I do not know; but I hope to heaven it did not originate within this country. It must be from without, and somebody fell for a smooth, fast talker. That is where the difficulty started in this country.

I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that I stand for unity in this country and I will never stir up national animosity in any part of Canada. Personally I will never do that; I never have and I never will. If I can display feelings like that, why cannot all the people in this parliament get together and arrive at a proper flag—not just a flag, any old thing, because any old rag just will not do for this nation of Canada, I assure you, Mr. Speaker. A flag should provide unity. If we can get some togetherness, some give and take on all sides, from all parties, we would be a lot better off. Then we might get together and develop a flag—but not this one. I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that is how the people I represent feel also. Again I must say that it is an insult to parliament, it is an insult to the people of Canada that the Prime Minister has not seen fit to take part in this debate. Preferably he should have started the debate off, but he should come into the house and make a statement as to what he thinks about it. Is he scared that his party will repudiate him again? They should not, if he does that.

I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that the majority of the provinces in our nation have spoken out definitely and decisively against this flag. So far as my area is concerned my constituents wish me to support the red ensign. As I have remarked several times before, we are prepared to give up part of our red ensign. We would wish to have some of the symbols of our heritage, the heritage of Canada, on our flag. This is a very serious time in the life of our nation and I think the Prime Minister should be here to make his statement.

Mr. W. H. A. Thomas (Middlesex West): Mr. Speaker, there appears to be in this chamber considerable hurry to get along with the business of choosing a national flag. This