

*Proceedings on Adjournment Motion*

here, 58 Liberal members from Quebec who reflect the opinion of that province better than a demagogue like René Lévesque. Still, if there are problems, it is because, in fact, the Canadian ideal which should exist is sadly lacking. Indeed, there is almost a total absence of Canadian ideal. And it is so because we have neglected to Canadianize our institutions.

When the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) had a Canadian flag adopted in 1964, it was a step forward. Our institutions were then being Canadianized, our Canadian ideal was being strengthened; all Canadians were being asked to rally around a symbol in which they take pride and which flies now over the world fair. How humiliating it would have been, Mr. Chairman, if, in 1967, during the world fair, when hundreds of thousands of people visited us from abroad, we had not had that distinctive symbol as witness to Canadian unity.

Let us Canadianize our institutions. That is the purpose of my question tonight. I ask the government, or its authorized spokesman, whether it would not be advisable to convene a conference of all commonwealth countries and decide whether the term "British subject," which is there and applies to most Canadian citizens, could not be changed without prejudice to the respect for man and with the agreement of all commonwealth countries.

Canada wants to and must remain in the commonwealth, an economic and political association of nations united under the symbol of the British crown. There is nothing offensive about that, but since Canadians, proud to be Canadians, are still British subjects, we should think it over and wonder whether a conference of the commonwealth could not consider the possibility of amending such a statute and all that in effort for Canadianization, Mr. Chairman. In the past, it used to be called the British Commonwealth; today, it is called the Commonwealth of Nations. And what would prevent the British crown from presiding still over that association. But, even so, all the countries which are part of that association can also say that the citizens of those countries are no longer subjects but citizens.

That is the reason why I urge the government authorities to see to what extent they could encourage a good initiative, request or suggest the calling of such a commonwealth conference and ask all the representatives of the commonwealth countries to take action

[Mr. Choquette.]

so that we will be citizens of each of the countries which make up the commonwealth and to discard the label "subject" in order to further the spirit of Canadian unity, the reason we are willing to fight against people like René Lévesque who is only trying to create disorder to satisfy his selfish ambitions.

[English]

• (10:10 p.m.)

**Mr. J. A. Byrne (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, if I were to repeat any of the compliments I paid the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Choquette) last evening it might be assumed that we belonged to a mutual admiration society.

**Mr. Knowles:** Don't you?

**Mr. Byrne:** It goes without saying that the energetic and youthful member for Lotbinière is indeed versatile and well versed in many subjects. He has introduced a new subject this evening, one not entirely related to the question which was put by him on July 4, 1967.

Personally, I do not feel qualified to comment on the relative positions of political parties in Quebec. Specifically I am not qualified to talk about Mr. René Lévesque; nor, indeed, am I interested in what Mr. René Lévesque believes to be best for the interest of Quebec. From what I have heard, I may say that I cannot agree with him.

The hon. member raised an interesting question. The Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin) and his parliamentary assistant are attending the sessions of the United Nations; both would have been interested in hearing what the hon. member had to say, and I shall be pleased to bring the matter to their attention. I may say that, for the moment, no plans are under way for convening a commonwealth prime minister's conference in the near future.

**PUBLIC SERVICE—LEGISLATION TO INCREASE PENSIONS OF RETIRED CIVIL SERVANTS**

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, on the basis of a question which I put yesterday afternoon to the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Benson), as reported in *Hansard* on page 2431, I return once again to the matter of pensions of retired civil servants.

There must be a word which means "again for the one thousandth time". At any rate, I return to the subject tonight and as earnestly