

Canadian Flag

in the last couple of years he has made very few of them. I am ready to permit him to continue to read the text of a speech which has been prepared by some other member—I don't know who.

[Translation]

Mr. Pigeon: Could the hon. member for Villeneuve tell us whether his speech was written by Mrs. Gilberte Côté-Mercier?

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I am just consulting my notes, but the hon. member for Three Rivers would not understand, since he does not know how to read. In fact, he is afraid that I might quote from the speech made by his leader yesterday evening, because it would be embarrassing for him to hear a rerun of such an anti-Canadian speech, which was so detrimental to national unity.

When the Conservative leader spoke yesterday evening, the hon. member for Three Rivers was sitting behind the hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm and both were white in the face while listening to his remarks.

And now, the hon. member for Three Rivers is telling me tonight that I am reading my speech.

Mr. Balcer: It would be better for you if you read it.

Mr. Caouette: Should the hon. member for Three Rivers be aware of the situation, I can meet him anywhere in the province of Quebec. He is the deputy leader, no, not the deputy leader but perhaps the deputy leader of the Conservative party in Quebec, and I am ready to meet him anywhere in the province.

[Text]

Mr. MacInnis: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. It has been brought to the hon. member's attention that he should deal with the matter before the house. Whether he wishes to treat this as a serious problem or whether the members of the Liberal party who are laughing at the antics going on in the corner, wish to treat this as a serious matter, that is for them to decide. However, we should not be wasting our time listening to what is going on now. Your Honour should press the ruling you have just made that the hon. member should stick to the point before the house.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order; the point raised by the hon. member is of course well taken. As he has mentioned, the Chair has brought to the attention of the hon. member

[Mr. Balcer.]

for Villeneuve the fact that he should limit his remarks to the subject matter before the house at this time.

[Translation]

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I am ready to agree that I should limit my remarks to the resolution presently under consideration, but I would ask the hon. member who just rose on a point of order to inform his colleagues of his own political party to sit still and quiet and be at least polite in this house.

[Text]

Mr. Winkler: I have yet to hear you say anything relevant.

[Translation]

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I hear the whip (Mr. Winkler) of the Conservative party objecting to our remarks. Let me finish my speech on the resolution, and I wish the Conservatives would shut up.

Mr. Speaker, according to the Leader of the Opposition, the people have to be consulted through a referendum. In view of that suggestion, I shall ask the Leader of the Opposition and the members of his party, those for Three Rivers (Mr. Balcer) and Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm (Mr. Pigeon) included, why they did not resort to that referendum when they were in power in Ottawa and free to do so, while they enjoyed the greatest majority a political party has ever had in the federal parliament? Why did they not resort to that referendum or plebiscite that the Leader of the Opposition now asks of the party in office?

Mr. Pigeon: You defeated us, with the Liberals.

Mr. Caouette: Today, the Conservatives come up with proposals they never had the courage to introduce themselves while they could—

[Text]

Mr. Starr: I wonder if the hon. member for Villeneuve would allow a question?

Mr. Caouette: If you want to ask me a question right after my speech, you will have one half hour to ask me questions.

It is not because the hon. member is not my friend, he is one of my best friends and I am one of his.

Mr. Starr: I object; it is the worst thing that could happen to me.