

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, December 11, 1964

The house met at 11 a.m.

PRIVILEGE

**MR. WOOLLIAMS—LETTER TO BANFF
ADVISORY COUNCIL FROM NORTHERN
AFFAIRS MINISTER**

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Bow River): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. I think when you hear my question of privilege you will find my argument irrefragable. It arises out of a letter written on September 19, 1964 by a minister of the crown. My question of privilege affects my personal responsibilities to my constituency; and when I read the last paragraph of the letter, which as I say was written by a minister of the crown, I think, Mr. Speaker, you will also find it not only affects my responsibility as a member of this house but also the responsibility of any other person serving his constituency as a member of parliament.

This letter was addressed to the Banff advisory council, Banff, Alberta and was written by the minister of northern affairs. I should like to quote from the last two paragraphs. The letter is lengthy and I do not want to take up a lot of time. If any hon. member wants the whole letter read I am prepared to read it, but my question of privilege involves the last two paragraphs, which I am sure the house will find interesting and I trust, Mr. Speaker, you will even find shocking. The second last paragraph reads:

I was most interested in Mr. Woolliams' reference on page 10040 of the debate to my letter to council of November 4, 1964. I am curious to know by what means Mr. Woolliams received a copy of that letter which he has subsequently used for partisan purposes which I do not think are in keeping with the kind of relations which I would like to have with the Banff advisory council.

Now we come to the crux and the meat of it.

If the council would like me to send copies of all my correspondence with them, I would be glad to have that advice from you, and act accordingly.

The last paragraph is what I find shocking, Mr. Speaker, which I say affects my responsibility to my constituency and the responsibility of other members. It reads:

I sincerely hope that Mr. Woolliams' remarks were not requested by the Banff advisory council or by any member of the council.

It is the last sentence with which I come to grips. This is it:

I would hope that the council will conduct its relations directly with me at all times.

What this minister has done on this occasion, and what he did when he met that council, was threaten it. He said "You have to deal with me or I will not consider any of the suggestions made by you". I suggest that is irresponsible and an erosion of the responsibility of any member. This is a shocking letter, and I am sure the Prime Minister is shocked to know that one of his ministers has written in this manner to the people of the constituency of Bow River.

CANADIAN FLAG

**MOTION FOR CONCURRENCE IN SIXTH REPORT
OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE**

The house resumed, from Thursday, December 10, consideration of the motion of Mr. Batten that the sixth report of the special committee on a Canadian flag presented to the house on Thursday, October 29, 1964, be now concurred in.

Mr. W. H. A. Thomas (Middlesex West): Mr. Speaker, in the very limited time remaining at my disposal I should like to continue the promotion I put forth last night for a genuine compromise flag, which would be something that all Canadians could support, ending this contest without winners or losers.

Reaching a compromise is similar to horse trading. The seller starts with his top price and the buyer starts with his bottom price, and then a step by step process takes place to reach an agreement. After conferring with some of my colleagues I have decided to move the following amendment, seconded by the hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Mandziuk). This amendment is designed to clear away the brush, leaving the way open for a real compromise flag. I move:

That the sixth report of the special committee be not now adopted but that it be referred back to the committee with instructions to strike out in paragraph 7 all the words after "Canada" and substitute "be the Canadian red ensign."