

*Canadian Flag*

a plebiscite, in favour of the amendment. There is no doubt in my mind what will be the fate of the amendment and the main motion. I expect the amendment will be defeated and the motion itself subsequently passed. I believe that the Canadian red ensign will be hauled down from the flag-staffs of this country before Christmas. I believe it will be the responsibility of the Prime Minister alone that this great UN man, this un-man and his ungovernment will be remembered in history as being in 1964 a petulant and perverse Santa Claus, the man who, as a Christmas present for his nation took away from his people their cherished national symbols and left in their place a petty division that will remain in this country for a hundred Christmases to come.

**Mr. K. H. More (Regina City):** Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak at this time about this problem before the house I must express my appreciation that I have not been greeted with the levity from the other side of this chamber that met an earlier speaker today. I only rise to speak because I think there is nothing in this debate which should give cause for levity. I speak, not because I care about the flag we might have but because I care about Canada and the unity we must achieve if we are to fulfil our destiny.

I do not speak in a happy vein because I do not feel that way about this particular issue. I had hoped I would not have to make this speech in this house, and that before now common sense would have prevailed because of the overwhelming evidence we have observed that, rather than enlarging the feeling of unity, we are destroying what unity we now have.

I remember reading something one philosophical writer wrote who put my position in words which I will have to paraphrase, as I do not have the quotation. He said, as I remember his remarks: Let us at least talk about it, you wisest of men, even though it seems bad; silence is worse because all truths suppressed become poisonous. I think talking about the issue, even though it seems bad, will in the end accomplish something.

I feel something has been accomplished since I spoke last, when I introduced a sub-amendment dealing with what I thought should be included in a plebiscite. At that time I remember saying that I did not think anyone who wished to achieve anything could build a sound and good case if he had to destroy and demean others who had other ideas. I think you will recall, as will the house, that at that time those who believed

and felt emotionally, deep in their hearts, that the Canadian red ensign represented the sacrifices of sons, daughters, mothers and husbands whom they did not wish to forget but wished to see honoured, were demeaned and scoffed at. I have not seen this take place in the debate since that time, and if I have accomplished nothing else by my efforts, I am proud that that sort of nonsense has ceased.

It was rather strange to me, having this assignment put into my hands tonight, and looking forward to carrying it out, that I received a pamphlet, which I gather is published by the C.B.C. This is not indicated, but the material appears on a C.B.C. program. It is entitled "Flanders' Fields", and on the cover it says "They are too near to be great. But our children shall understand when and how our fate was changed and by whose hand." I think those words are prophetic and in line with the reason I am speaking tonight in support of a plebiscite.

Those people can be forgotten and might well be forgotten as a result of the proposed action of an apparently inevitable decision that this house is being rushed into by those whose purposes we just do not understand. I know of no reason whatsoever to deal with the flag issue, unless it is that there are those who are completely impressed with the idea that by doing so they will bring greater unity to Canada. I could support such a move if the evidence was of such a nature, but there is no evidence of this nature.

I take it from what I have read and heard that this may satisfy a group which now has some dissatisfaction. This is not a group confined to one province, and I want to make that clear because I do not speak in that vein. This action will create another group which will not have only a problem, but deep bitterness. This will be a most unfortunate factor in the progress of our country for years to come.

To my way of thinking the amendment proposed is a sensible one, having in mind the evidence we have before us. It is an amendment which will allow the people to make the decision, rather than the decision being made by 265 of us here who, in the ordinary event, would speak convincingly, knowing what was wanted, what we were supposed to do, and what was right. In spite of the heavy mail, I would be the last one to suggest, however, that I have evidence of what all my constituents want. Certainly if my mail gives a similar indication to that given by recent polls, which today are accepted as having a margin of error not

[Mr. Rhéaume.]