

*Canadian Flag*

the flag in order to hold up other business. The effort is being made to have the people of the country believe that we are to blame because we wish to debate the flag issue. It might be that the best thing to do would be to dump the whole matter into the lap of the Liberal government and let them fight about it. The Liberal members are already divided on the question. They are already voting like seals—

**An hon. Member:** Flattery will get you nowhere.

**Mr. Kindt:** —but when they go back to their constituencies they will see what their people have to say about the matter.

There are one or two other matters that have come to my attention. I come from Alberta where maple trees do not grow so there is nothing in the maple leaf design that thrills me one bit. I would vote against it on the ground that it contains the maple leaf. I want something on the flag that depicts my province. I do not believe the people of eastern Canada should force this particular design down the throats of other people in Canada, particularly in those parts of the country where maple trees do not grow.

There is no urgency about the flag. We have had the union jack for 100 years. I should like to tell you a story about what a French waiter in the dining car said to me the last time I came east.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. I wonder whether the story the hon. member is about to relate refers to a plebiscite.

**Mr. Kindt:** It is 100 per cent related to the plebiscite that we are proposing in the amendment. He knew I was a member of parliament and he asked me what I thought of the flag. He said that he thought the people should have a vote on the flag. He went on to say that we have had the union jack for 100 years and that he was not too much interested in whether we had another flag or whether we had the union jack. He said "What difference is it going to make to me? What I want is security." In other words, what he wanted was a pension. He was thinking about a pension and those other things which would give him security, and he went on to talk about them.

So if you go out and talk to the man on the street you will find he is not worked up about this flag issue. There is no urgency, therefore, and the taking of a plebiscite to decide a flag might just as well be deferred

for the time being. Let us get on with other matters that are more important and are needed to a greater extent by the people of this dominion.

As the hon. member for York-Humber has said, we have a flag. I look out my apartment window at about five minutes to eight in the morning and see the red ensign being unfurled above the peace tower. It is a great thrill to see that flag go up and unfurl; the wind catches it and then it floats in the breeze. It is now floating above the peace tower, and it is there every day. Let us keep it flying. The people of my riding are saying, what is wrong with the flag we now have? Give us a chance to vote on it and get on with the business of the country, but do not let that fellow Pearson take away our red ensign. This is the mandate I have; it is what my people are saying.

The other day I attended a meeting put on by the Legion at Barons, in Alberta; about 400 or 500 people were there. They talked in a jocular way about everything in connection with the flag issue and the question of a plebiscite. They were all in favour of a plebiscite. I have come to the conclusion, for my own part, that the only method by which unity in Canada can be maintained is to have this flag question decided by a plebiscite. The people you approach in your constituency know just about as much about the flag of a nation and have as much ability to decide what position to take with regard to a flag as any member of parliament. In other words there are some issues that come before the House of Commons that lend themselves to a decision by the voters. They should be given an opportunity to vote on this issue before we adopt an official flag for Canada.

A vote in this house based on a political report and a political flag will never preserve the unity of this nation. I feel just as the hon. member for York-Humber felt, that unless there is a plebiscite this assembly is not in the position to take a vote on this particular flag and thrust it down the throats of the people.

I have letters referring to such matters as the fact that this is a red flag. I do not say this is something that was taken into consideration by the committee, but people say that red is the Liberal colour. Blue is the Conservative colour. I know that every party has a particular colour. Here are the Liberals coming in with a 100 per cent red flag. According to the letters I receive, people from one end of the country to the other are drawing attention to this.