

*Canadian Flag*

adopt that design but to adopt that design in preference to two other designs.

**Mr. Godin:** As the best design.

**Mr. Slogan:** Therefore he is under a very grave misapprehension if he thinks the committee was unanimous. The hon. member says that the vote of 14 to nothing was a unanimous vote by that committee approving that design as the flag of Canada, but that is not so. It was a preferential vote in which the members of the committee were expressing their preference with regard to three designs. That was the basis of the unanimous vote which the hon. member is now trying to use to mislead the people of Canada.

In further answer to the hon. member may I say I have here one of his fine campaign advertisements and I see nothing here about a Canadian flag. The hon. member says that the solution of the eastern farmers' number one problem, the cost-price squeeze—

**Mr. Godin:** On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. Is the hon. member raising a point of order or a question of privilege?

**Mr. Lambert:** Make sure it is privilege.

**Mr. Godin:** On a question of privilege, the hon. member has just read from an advertisement pertaining to my campaign in the last election. He said there was nothing in my platform about a distinctive Canadian flag. I request that the hon. member read the relevant paragraph in my publicity, which is in both English and French and which he has in his hands, in which I advocated a distinctive Canadian flag as part of my program.

**Mr. Slogan:** Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member's point is very well taken. In fact, he got me so off guard that I never did get the last sentence. At the bottom of his list of priorities that he was suggesting—he did not put it in the top line but in the bottom line—he did refer to a distinctive Canadian flag. He did not say one without the union jack. In any event, I think we are getting away from the point. I should like to debate this matter if Mr. Speaker would permit me, but I am sure he would rule I should not. If the hon. member had remained quiet I could have continued with my speech with the result that the time of the house would not have been wasted and we could have proceeded a little farther with the debate.

To come back to the question of a plebiscite, Mr. Speaker, as has been suggested in many

[Mr. Slogan.]

newspaper articles I think that the debate in the House of Commons has often laid the house open to ridicule. It has resulted not only in ridicule in Canada, in fact, but Canada is being held up to ridicule abroad. For this reason I think this question should be removed from the house by the government approving our amendment and holding a national plebiscite at the next general election.

In support of this view may I say I had the privilege recently of being a member of the NATO delegation which visited Germany and France. We visited our air division and army brigade at Soest and Zweibrücken and it was interesting to note the reactions of our servicemen to what is going on in the House of Commons regarding the flag. Those of us who made that trip recall meeting Mr. Bernard Kaplan at a reception held by our NATO ambassador in Paris, and I should like to refer to an editorial in the *Edmonton Journal* of June 26 last in which Mr. Bernard Kaplan, Paris correspondent for the North American newspaper alliance, is quoted as referring to the flag question in this way:

He says the affair is regarded by western Europeans as "a kind of political curiosity in the middle of the twentieth century."

The editorial quotes the Paris newspaper, *Liberation*, as saying:

It is a fortunate nation that is able to quarrel over such an issue.

The editorial is entitled "Laugh or Cry?" This shows how the ridiculous stubbornness of the Prime Minister is regarded. He has forced the house to debate an issue that would be far better removed from the house. I might also refer to another newspaper dispatch from Washington in which there is the following:

But Americans continue to view our predicament with a certain amount of inner amusement. "Canada is considering a maple leaf flag design," reports the *Washington Daily News*. "Now how about the 'Maple Leaf Rag' as a national anthem?"

This is the type of reaction abroad and I think it certainly adds nothing to the prestige of Canada that our neighbours in Europe and the United States are looking at us in this light. If we were to remove this question from the house and leave it until the next general election when tempers and emotions would have cooled down, the people of Canada could then be asked to determine the matter by a plebiscite, which is the proper way to bring this question to a logical conclusion.