

be debating the question this afternoon. The article goes on to say:

It is doubtful whether any of them anticipated the "hard" news they got—that Mr. Pearson had personally chosen a flag design; that he had sent a telegram to the Queen informing her; that the red ensign would not be on a new Canadian flag, and that he was going to lay the whole matter before the Royal Canadian Legion convention in Winnipeg the next Sunday.

What a Sunday, Mr. Speaker, to bring such news to veterans. I referred a moment ago to those wives, those mothers, those sons, those daughters, whose husbands and fathers lie on their backs in institutions today and may never walk again. It was to these people that the Prime Minister chose to break the news on that fatal Sunday. There was an editorial in one of the newspapers in the west hoping that the flag issue would not be pursued because it might turn out to be a drape for Mr. Pearson's political bier. I can assure you that editorial writer was not a veteran of the last war. He is much too young for that, but that was his feeling in this regard.

The other question that bothers me in relation to the flag resolution is that a normal resolution in the House of Commons will read along these lines: "That it is expedient that the houses of parliament do approve". But the flag resolution reads in this way:

That the government be authorized to take such steps as may be necessary to establish officially as the flag of Canada—

And so on. What the resolution in fact says is that if anyone said no the government, if parliament approves the resolution as it reads at the moment, would have the power to declare war on anybody who might object to the flying of this flag. I think the motives behind such a resolution are worth considerable research.

Why do I suggest that a plebiscite or referendum is probably the solution to this dilemma? First of all, I think every individual as a Canadian citizen in a democratic country is entitled to express a point of view in a matter as emotionally charged as the flag issue. We must remember that the younger groups, particularly the school age children, have no historic attachment to the red ensign, but their fathers and mothers certainly have. I do not suggest for one moment that my boy, who is quite young now, is going to be particularly worried 20 years from now about what happens in the House of Commons today or whether it should or should not happen again. But I can tell you that even at his young age he knows and understands

something about the red ensign and loves it dearly.

I should like to bring to your attention in this connection, Mr. Speaker, that the other day when I was walking from this building to my office in the west block I met a little boy carrying a red ensign. Two other little boys were walking toward him and I asked them what they thought of that flag. They said "Oh, it is beautiful; we love it". The mother said "Now, now, Tommy, you know you should not say that". So the young are being told how they should feel and what they should say when they are asked questions with respect to the new flag.

With regard to a referendum, which I say is the only solution to our dilemma, the *Gazette* of August 5 suggested that there should be some sort of compromise. I intend to deal with this editorial more fully, but it suggested that the leaders of all parties in the House of Commons should get together and arrive at an acceptable design. I do not need to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that such a procedure is probably one of the most unlikely to succeed. They say that the prime consideration so far as the government is concerned should be to unite the country and keep it from dividing further. With regard to a compromise the editorial goes on to say:

The first of these is the objection to the flag in its present design. Even many of those who would favour a distinctive flag for the country have felt that the design offered—a design produced in conspicuous haste—falls below the standard of what might reasonably be expected. A more attractive flag—

They are suggesting other designs, but they are also suggesting that in the end surely there must be some way whereby all the parties, if they wanted to be reasonable, could decide on a modification of the red ensign to suit everybody no matter what their feelings on the matter. If we do not succeed in having our amendment asking for a referendum adopted, what is going to happen? Yesterday the hon. member for Lisgar spoke quite eloquently about what he thought would happen if we do not get a referendum. He made particular reference to an editorial in the *Globe and Mail* entitled "A Collision Course". It reads in part as follows:

In his haste to give Canada a distinctive national flag Prime Minister Lester Pearson has set his government and the nation itself on a collision course. There is still time for him to alter it. But there is not very much time.

I suggest that is right, Mr. Speaker. There is not very much time. They go on to say that this is the time for statesmanship, and