

Parliament an opportunity to tackle this problem. Surely it could be tackled at a meeting between representatives of the federal and provincial governments. I would even go so far as to say that the help of our wise and weighty minds, the Royal Society of Canada, the National Gallery—because of its specific interest—the Canada Council, and others, might well be put to work on this problem, and that if this were done somebody would be able to come back to Parliament with a new design which would have more prestige to commend itself to Parliament than the present design.

Under the present circumstances, if we were now to go ahead and impose this flag, I shudder to think of the predicament in which it would place an honest teacher in one of our schools a few years from now, who had to meet the question posed, with child-like innocence and curiosity: "Teacher, how did we get our flag?"

I tried to put down objectively what an honest answer would be in terms of the present history. It seems to me that it would go something like this:

"Well, my dear, there was an election, and the leader of one of the parties, hoping to be elected, promised that he would introduce a new flag within two years. He was elected. After a while, he felt that he had to keep his promise, so he introduced a design for a flag into the House of Commons. Unfortunately, some mistakes were made, and the idea got around that it was his personal choice. The other major party opposed the suggested flag for this and other reasons, stating that all Canadians should have a direct voice in the choice of their flag. So a long and bitter discussion began, and the question of the design of the flag became a struggle between the two major parties. After a while, the Prime Minister reconsidered his first decision, and had a committee of the House of Commons set up. Unfortunately, its decision turned out to be just as partisan as the bitter discussion that had taken place in the Commons. It recommended a design against the judgment of the members of the official opposition on that committee. So the whole bitter row started again. The opposition members did compromise, just as the Government had done; but they kept on talking and talking, trying to prevent adoption of a flag that offended the feelings of many of their supporters.

Then Christmas was approaching, and instead of leaving the matter over for a while, the Government decided not to do it by agreement, but to bring in a motion called 'closure' whose purpose is to shut the mouths of the people opposed. That, my dear, is how we got our flag."

Honourable senators, the purpose of Senator O'Leary's amendment is to write into that story a better closing paragraph than the one I have just read. If adopted, our history books might be able to add the following:

"However, the problem then came to the Senate, where on the Government side of the house there was a group of wise, tolerant and understanding men, whose judgments and decisions in those days were always above partisanship. So they thought about the effects of a decision reached in this way, and of the feelings of those who were in the minority. Wisely and generously, they agreed that there should be a little more time and effort devoted to further compromise and agreement. That was done, and the Government gave in a little more, and the opposition gave in a little more, and when a new design was introduced into the House of Commons, almost everybody agreed that it was the best possible flag under all the circumstances. That, my dear, is how we got our flag."

A dream, perhaps, honourable senators, but surely one worth dreaming—a dream that I for one believe can be made come true.

Honourable senators, that is why I support this amendment, and make a last plea to the Leader of the Government and his colleagues here, and elsewhere, to give it a last chance, a last try, a last noble effort.

**Hon. M. Graftan O'Leary:** Honourable senators—

**The Hon. the Speaker:** Do honourable senators agree that the honourable Senator O'Leary shall now speak to close the debate on the amendment?

**Some Hon. Senators:** Agreed.

**Hon. Mr. O'Leary (Carleton):** Honourable senators, in taking my leave of this amendment, I shall not detain you for more than a moment.

First of all, I must thank honourable senators for the kindly, flattering inaccuracies of the praise they have given my speech presenting this amendment. But I am sorry to have to add that though I won the cheers of Tuscany, apparently I have not succeeded in winning their votes. This does seem strange to me. I did make my appeal two days ago with a deep, heart-felt sincerity, and it is difficult for me to understand how gentlemen in this house who a week or two ago would, I am sure, have supported completely and with great tenacity a flag design that was before the other place at that time, can now come and with the same great tenacity give the same stubborn support to a flag completely different. I do not like to say this.

Honourable gentlemen opposite have attacked my amendment, have criticized it—I