

*Canadian Flag*

ment proposes. Speaking for myself, I have no confidence whatever that this government is able to handle a matter so important as the choosing of a flag. The government has been unable to handle anything else.

There are no specialists when it comes to deciding upon a flag. Each one of us has to decide for himself on this particular emotional question. I will say this to the house: If people were to come in from outside Canada and try to tear down our red ensign and trample it in the mud we would resist them, we would fight them. But here we find the Liberal party doing the same thing from inside Canada, yet they want us to accept it lying down.

**Some hon. Members:** Shame.

**Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson):** We have no confidence in this government. The people of Canada generally have no confidence in this government. We are getting less confident every day. As new revelations come out we are more sure than ever that this government should not be allowed to decide what our flag should be, but that we should put the question to the people and let them decide the issue.

[Translation]

**Mr. Dupuis:** Mr. Speaker, may I put a question to the hon. member.

[Text]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Does the hon. member wish to receive and answer a question from the minister?

**Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson):** Certainly.

[Translation]

**Mr. Dupuis:** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member said a moment ago that the Liberal party had chosen a flag in 1945. Is he not aware that, when making this decision the government said that the red ensign could be used until parliament decided to select a new flag? Why did the hon. member conceal this fact, when he is or should be aware of it?

[Text]

**Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson):** I am not hiding any facts. Of course, the very terms of the order in council were "until parliament should decide otherwise".

**Mr. Dupuis:** You should have said that.

**Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson):** I am saying it now for your benefit. I am also saying to the hon. member that it was his parliament and his Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) who brought this flag debate before the House

[Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson).]

of Commons, in place of legislation which would be of benefit to this country. It is his Prime Minister who is running around the country with a flag kit. It is his party which has made parliament the shambles it is today.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Horner (Jasper-Edson):** The seals laugh. This country is governed by an executive council or the cabinet. For heaven's sake let us have some leadership out of them, something more than a complete shambles on the treasury benches.

**Mr. R. E. Forbes (Dauphin):** I am taking part in this flag debate because I think this is one of the most important issues to be decided in this country in a long time and I believe it should be decided by the people of Canada by a plebiscite and not by the members of a minority government.

Naturally, as a descendant of United Empire Loyalist stock, I feel that I should participate because my forebears played an important part in the history and development of this country. Further, I think it is important that any design chosen as a flag for Canada should embody a symbol of our sovereignty and I believe the Canadian red ensign is a symbol of the united effort of the English and French settlers which made Canada the great country it is today. I have a right to express my own beliefs and I feel it is only fair that the Canadian people should have a right to express theirs through a plebiscite.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) has stated that he introduced the flag resolution in fulfilment of an election promise. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that no mention of a flag was made in the federal constituency of Dauphin during the election campaigns of either 1962 or 1963. However, I can point out that the Liberal candidate in the Dauphin constituency and others who spoke on behalf of the Liberal party promised, among other things, a two price system for wheat, and a support price for beef, hogs, eggs and other farm products to be based on regional averages, and calculated quarterly; they promised also they would study the rough fish problems of commercial fishermen and that they would launch a program to provide free milk to school children across the country.

I can assure the Prime Minister that if he would bring forward this legislation which would mean something to the farmers of Canada and to our economy, we in the official opposition would give our full support without a prolonged debate. Since this legislation has