

When Baldwin was beaten in York, the great grandfather of the member for Temiscouata (Mr. Pouliot) gave up his seat in Rimouski to Robert Baldwin, who sat for it instead. I am sorry that the present member for Temiscouata does not speak for real electoral reform. This is not a system of reform; it is a scheme. Perhaps I should not even call it a scheme; it is a resolution. They are going over to beg at the foot of the throne for some further legislation to save the government. After all they said about the authorities over there, they are going back again. This is not the first time; this is not the second time; this is the third time we have sought British North America Act amendments—three strikes and they are going to be out, as it was in the ball game they played out here last night. They have had three trips over there for British North America Act amendments to beg at the foot of the throne for some other system of reform. No doubt this will please some of the newspapers. You do not read much about it in some of them because no doubt they have been putting the soft pedal on this debate and favour this resolution.

The people in the county of York and other counties of Ontario are going to object to this resolution. The province of Ontario is willing and ready to do its duty to confederation, and it wants no favours that other provinces do not get. It wants the system of confederation continued as the fathers of confederation framed it—all for each and each for all—and a fair and just representation.

Mr. SOLON E. LOW (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I think I should place on record the stand of the Social Credit group with regard to the resolution that is now before the house. I would have spoken this afternoon but I yielded my place to the hon. member for Charlevoix-Saguenay (Mr. Dorion), who wished to make his contribution before six o'clock, at which time I understand he had to leave the city.

I have given earnest consideration to the resolution and, generally speaking, I find its provisions are not at all unfair or unjust. I have debated in my own mind, of course, the wisdom of using the 1941 census as the basis for redistribution because of the dislocated population which Canada had in that year, but after careful consideration of all the facts I am convinced that we cannot use that as a successful argument for not proceeding with the redistribution. It would be better in my judgment, if it were possible, for us to withhold action until after the 1951 census, but I recognize that the constitution provides

[Mr. Chureh.]

for redistribution after each decennial census. Hence we cannot, perhaps I should say we should not, attempt to hold another election without complying with the terms of the British North America Act.

My studies have convinced me that the proposed change in the British North America Act envisaged in this resolution will remove a number of the anomalies that have existed for some years in Canada with respect to our electoral distribution. I have never favoured any province having any more members in the House of Commons than its just and proportionate share. Everyone knows, of course, that under section 51 as it has stood for some years some of the provinces have had more than their just and proportionate share. But I must criticize the arrangements set out in the resolution on the ground that they are not consistent.

It seems to me that when we set out in any action of this house to remove injustice and anomalies from our present way of allocating members to the provinces of Canada, we should do a complete job of it and not leave any province with more members than her population would entitle her to. By the proposed changes provided for in this resolution to section 51 of the British North America Act we do not do a complete job.

It is pleaded, of course, that we must not reduce the House of Commons representation for any province below the number of senators that the province enjoys at the present time. My answer to that is this. Let us then reduce the number of senators to the rightful level while we are at it. Or perhaps, on the other hand, representation by population should not be the only factor in the formula that is applied to determine representation in this house. If not, then I say, let us weigh the whole matter most carefully and it may be possible to find some other factors to be used along with representation by population in a formula, the application of which will yield fair and just results in every province. But as long as exceptions to the general rule exist we shall continue to have a source of discontent and disunity within this Canada of ours.

I am anxious to find a way to give the other provinces a more even voice in the affairs of this country with the central provinces of Ontario and Quebec. There has always been under the British North America Act as it now stands, a preponderance of voice on the part of these two central provinces, and a great many injustices have continued for many years chiefly because of that uneven distribution of voice. If it is at all possible to find a way of evening things up, then I certainly would like to find it.