Opposition Leader's Speech "I was glad to note, Mr. Speaker, that my honorable friend disclamed any intention of making the subject of better terms for British Columbia ence to the political aspect of the case, and did claim that certain Liberal newspapers in this province made ref-erence to his mission and to his conerences were made to his conduct there by the Liberal press, his own press correcpondent whom he had taken to Ottawa with him, had sent

When I say mistakes I mean I regard it as a mistake that either one party or the other should make refbers of this House, and upon my hon-orable friend the premier to bear me out when I say that by our actions as well as by our words the Liberal party in this House, and the Liberal party with better terms an attitreatment from the Dominion of tude which is purely provincial and purely in the interest of the province purely in the interest of the province Speaker, with that declaration. of British cludes altogether any party interest. We did that a year ago when the resolution which has been referred to by my honorable friend was before this House, a resolution which was prepared by the members on this side of the House, accepted by my learned friend and received the unanimous assent of and received the unanimous assent of the great costs of public works in this province. And not only that, but we have a moral, and I believe we have a sound constitutional claim for increased subsidies arising out of our peculiar geographical position, and the great costs of public works in this province. And not only that, but we have a claim upon a ground which I always made directly to the Dominion for better terms, of one kind or another. Those applications were always made directly to the Dominion along the province of the applications for better terms, by the difference out of our peculiar geographical position, and the great costs of public works in this province. And not only that, but we and received the unanimous assent of every Liberal member. If any better evidence were required of the non-partizan attitude of the members on this side of the House I do not know partizan attitude of the members on this side of the House I do not know where it could be got, and se far as what took place during the time my honorable friend was at the conference and after the close of that conference and after the close of that conference based upon criticisms of our public always made directly to the Dominion government, and always dealt with by the Dominion government, and always dealt with by the Dominion government, and always made directly to the Dominion government, and alway and after the close of that conference, and during the recent campaign which the Liberals can claim so far as they are concerned that we did not make friend? It practically amounts to this, this a party issue. But I think that that in 1871 we had a set of public it can hardly be claimed that the men in office in this province who speech which my honorable friend could not foresee what has happened speech to see from beginning to end a studied effort to make it appear that the treatment which the people of British Columbia had received at Otnecessary, Mr. Speaker, to read that

Cites "Unfortunate Feature." ture of that speech, and I believe that gain. But there is a far stronger plea same attitude—which was not always to make on behalf of the province of a frank and sincere attitude—was as-umed by my honorable friend, and frankness and sincerity were not always shown by my honorable friend was s the premier in dealing with this quesof better terms. Because on every platform on which he spoke during the campaign while it was not, in fact reasonably in the he took care to point out that the am-ount which had been suggested by the conference as sufficient to meet British bia, of those terms of Union, that a Columbia's special claims was a pal-try sum of \$100,000 a year for a period laws of Canada which would double of ten years, but he said nothing ab ut the amount that we were at that time the fact that the subsidy for which paying into the Dominion treasury. we had agreed at the time of the union And yet this came, about. It came subsidy of \$35,000 a year for about within seven or eight years after government and legislation had been the terms of union—we find that while

was to remain as part and my honorable friend-the premier. He Speaker, that had that b

special terms, but we say 'your solution two years ago. He had forgotten that the matter rests now, we would be provision to be made because we had put aside party politics and paying six millions a year, surely that vince since that time in accordance better terms as a weapon to strike the special case which my honorable with the instruction of the legislature those who had loyally stood by him,

Corrects Mis-statements. I was criticized for a statement made in Vancouver during the election of better terms for British Columbia that British Columbia had no legal a party question. I could not but help claim against the Dominion of Canada. noting that towards the close of his very able address he did make referage upon by the people of this province through their representatives had been substantially carried out that so far as that conduct was con- or speech that he did not take the po cerned, a contract which we have em-bodied in a statute of the United the conference; that is to say, if I un

Have Sound Claim. based upon criticisms of our public men in 1871. What is our claim at the present time as set forth in the mem-erandum submitted by my honorable ment to be accorded to each province on his return from Ottawa in since that time with regard to the opening up of the resources of this since that time with regard to the opening up of the resources of this province, who could not see the great cost of the construction of public works the cost of administration, and

British Columnia and received at a cation of this provided is made tawa was unfair, and that that uncharge, principally, which is made fair treatment came not from the conagainst our representatives in 1871. ference but from the Dominion gov- We go down there asking for better men in 1871 did not know what they I say that was the unfortunate fea- were about, and made a very bad barmake on behalf of the province of British Columbia. In 1871 when we entered the union, the average customs duties exacted from the people was some seventeen and a half per The Fiscal Laws.

There was no reason to suppo

government and legislation had been the terms of union—we find that while increased by seven hundred per cent we were paying seventeen and a half processors. The first that it was granted to styre to the province of British Columbia, and find-the special distinction of a continue, because there and continue, because there are find the other provinces and the continue, because the self and Conservative speakers during expected to continue, because there are find the other provinces and the continue, because there are find the other provinces and the continue are finded in the special distinue of the province of British Columbia is by that might reasonably have been that all the other provinces and the law of the province of British Columbia is by the said request for such completent tribunal was refused by the public accounts and being the said of their support. Bethat all the other provinces and the law of the province of British Columbia, writing to the chairman of the province of British Columbia is by the said request for such completent tribunal was refused by the public accounts and being the said of their support. Bethat all the other provinces and the law of the province of British Columbia, writing to the chairman of the province of British Columbia for a refused to the system of the province of British Columbia for a refused by the public accounts and by the public accounts and being the said of the province of British Columbia, writing to the chairman of the province of British Columbia, writing to the chairman of the content of the province of British Columbia, writing to the chairman of the content of the province of British Columbia is by the said request to such completent tribunal was refused by the public accounts and by the said request to such completent tribunal was refused by the public accounts and by the said request to such completent the said request to such completent tribunal was refused by the public accounts and by the said request to such completent tribunal was refused by the publi

al readjustment.
First Sitting of the Conference.

of the provision to be made because of these special circumstances is not correct—is not true. We assert that the only way a true and correct solution can be had would be through the agency of a board of arbitration or a commission of enquiry. Now, this aftrnoon all that is asked of the legislature of British Columbia is to stand by the different steps which have been taken by the government of the province since that time in accordance with the instruction of the legislature. those who had loyally stood by him, friend submitted to the House two years, there is not a word along that question and discuss this question on line in the special memoranda which the merits. nor is there a line in the letter which claim which was the claim of Britisl Columbia and the grounds upon which these claims were based.

Charges Inconsistency. Now, Mr. Speaker, I was glad to bodied in a statute of the United Kingdom, there is no assertion that there has been any failure on the part of the Dominion in carrying out its legal obligations. It has never been maintained that we have a tenable legal claim against the Dominion for attitude taken in his speech seems highly inconsistant with the resolution. taken to Ottawa with him, had sent our reports reflecting on the Liberal members of the inter-provincial conference, and it was but natural that the Liberal newspapers should have taken occasion to comment on what was said by that correspondent, and should have taken occasion to comment on my honorable friend's withdrawal from the conference. The very nature of our demands, Mr. Speaker, ment on my honorable friend's withdrawal from the conference. The very nature of our demands, Mr. Speaker, then it was the duty of this wormment to bring that claim into the country and the Empire, and obtain justice for the province of British Columbia.

I only mention this question of the house of the foundation of the nature of the demands which we are making on the Dominion of the House may make in reference to a question of this kind.

Not a Partizan Question.

When I say mistakes I mean I redispute between the gentlemen on the of the House only a few other side of the House and the gentlemen on this side of the House with taking that position. It is quite clear Mr. Speaker, that he took occasion on the very first meeting. I believe, of the conference, on the 9th of Ocfore, our claim, as it has been put in the emorandum submitted to the left with the conference his memorandum submitted to the left with the conference his memorandum setting forth not only the just Dominion government by the recent andum setting forth not only the just Prior government, and adopted by my terms that British Columbia asked for honorable friend in the case for Brit- in the Quebec resolution, but the specish Columbia which he submitted two ial terms which we ask for owing t years ago,—the basis of our claim our exceptional position and circum is this, that we have a moral and stances. In that resolution he sets sound constitutional claim for better all these forth. He also sets forth a

propose to deal with a little later. All Provinces Clamorous. on to the present time we find that the general readjustment and the treatbeen a matter which our publi men in the Dominion and in the provinces have thought fit to refer to a conference. We cannot find in the Statutes of the Dominion, or in any ference which was held in Quebec in 1887, confirmed the principle there dis-tinctly that there should be a general re-arrangement, including all provinces, and that that general rearrangement should be final and unalterable. Following that, it seems that nothing was done upon the re-commendations which were made by that conference. And if I were desirous, Mr. Speaker, of bringing politics into this matter, I could point out that

the government which was in power in 1887 when those resolutions were adopted, and when they ought to either have been acted upon or rejected, was the Conservative, and of the premiers that were there in that con-derence, I think three or them were Conservatives. I could point this out in passing, although it has nothing really to do with the merits of the matter; but it shows that as far as dealing with provincial subsidies by a Dominion ministers having considered by the matter having been considered by vote of eight against no dissenting the matter having been considered by vote of eight against no dissenting the matter having been considered by vote of eight against no dissenting the matter having considered at that time had withdrawn from the dealing with provincial subsidies by a conference is concerned, and so far as and in the provinces.

Premier Had Precedents

to special conditions, not to the gen-eral readjustment. within the chief purpose of this con-ference. If this conference, after hearing Mr. McBride's arguments in First Sitting of the Conference.

To show that the position was distinctly taken by the premier of British Columbia, when you, sir, were attorney-general four years ago,—the position was distinctly taken then that British Columbia could only hope to secure this special recognition which she was asking for, through the cooperation of the other provinces. So that I have no criticism to offer to the course pursued by my honorable friend when on the very first day, I believe

when on the very first day, I believe the very first sitting of the provincial conference last October, he submitted the case of British Columbia to the conference and the case of the provincial to the case of British Columbia to the conference and the confere conference, and thereby invited them to deal with it as they should think that he surely will consent to strike fit. Now, surely, my honorable friend that recital out.

Question of Arbitration. Now, what was the attitude of my

he would submit his case to the conference and ask their recommenda-tions, and if those recommendations arbitration? I see his chief organ, ne would go to the Dominion authorisubmitted the question of British ties and say, I have submitted my case to the conference, I have come here the suggestion of Sir Wilfrid Laurier with their verdict in my favor and I want you to carry that out—to carry out those recommendations. That is the position I presume that my hon-of Canada. I would not expect the premier of Canada. I would not expect that unorable friend would take. That is cerless the premier stibugish that by sub entitled to take. But if that be true, is bia to the conference he was jeoparbia to the conference me was judged that if the decision of the conference were against him, if they refused to make recommendations as favorable to the proymendations as favorable to the proyment the proyment the proyment of the proyment inve of British Columbia as we could hope, then we must also accept that verdict, and he could not go to the Dominion authorities and say "I have comminion authorities and say, "I have the advice of Sir Wiltrid Laurier, or the whole of the other premiers against me, they have decided only to give the province of British Columbia one hundred thousand for ten years, I claim that I am entitled to a great at that stage to take either one stand deal more, I refuse to recognize that or the other; he was bound to elect. He had two courses open to him, either to you and ask you to act in the face terms were concerned, the Dominion has succeeded in extracting from that government alone and the Dominion which my own action he could take the other Criticizes Premier's Position. course. I do not care whether it was at Surely my honorable friend cannot the suggestion of the premier of Cantake that position. Surely, for the ada or not, or at the suggestion of any honor and dignity of British Columbia other person, he was there to pres he will not take that position. Hav- the rights of British Columbia, and ing submitted his claims to the con- if he chose to take that advice, if he ference, he was bound to take notice thought that advice good then, and of the finding of that conference, and took his chances before the conference, the Dominion government were bound then I say that he cannot in justice to to take notice of the findings of that himself, in justice to his own manhood, and in justice to the honor and mitted, as he undoubtedly did submit, dignity of the province of British Col-

the case to the conference, we have no criticism to offer, on this side of the House, because he had precedent for it in the action of the Prior gov-And I must confess that, speaking for myself only, I think it eminently proper that re-adjustment of provin-cial subsidies should first be discussed by provincial conferences of this kind. All the provinces are interested in Confederation. All the provwhich constitute this great Dominion of Canada; they are partners in this young nation of constitute this great Dominion of Canada; they are partners in this young nation of cours; and it is only before the conference at all, and if he reasonable and natural that they is not bound by the position taken by should be consulted in matters that fore the conference at all? We have inces or members of that great family affect the mutual interests of all mem-bers. And that seems to have been playing a farce? Was it a farce that bers. And that seems to have been the idea in the mind of our public men ever since 1887. Not Quite Sure

Now, I am not quite sure what my honorable friend wants us to do when he asks us to vote for this res sound constitutional claim for better an interest of the constitution of the constitut he wants us to affirm that he hid submit the claims of British Columbia, sition which he assumed. He says and he says very truly, that on the 21st of October, when the conference was a joint session, when Sir Wilfrid Laurier and some of the other min isters were present, took the position that the claims of British Columbia red to arbitration. And in his resoluam quite sure on re-consideration he which he makes: "And whereas in pursuance of the said resolution the said Honorable Richard McBride submitted such memorandum to the Do-minion government setting forth the recognition." Now, the proceedings of embodying the claims of British Octuber to special and distinctive before the conference. Does no wish treatment." So that before, long better treatment. So that before, long better to take the position now, that having submitted all his data, having submitted all his data, having submitted all his data, having taken the submitted all his data. Whitney, on behalf of the province of conference came to? Bound in this Ontario, did the same thing, my hon-way, that the majority, the overwhelmorable friend clearly submits and asks orandum to the conference and asks against him and the other premiers the conference to consider this question were against him; and the other preof special terms to British Columbia. Quotes Laurier's Statement.

the matter in the meantime, Sir Wil-frid Laurier makes the following state-concerned, Mr. Speaker, I do not want

and insist that so far as these special

And he took no part in the discus tion. He voted upon that question. In other words if his position-if the position of the Conservative press he was acting there, saying, if your decision is with us, I'm going to accept it, if your decision is against us, I am not going to accept it? No every gentleman of the legal profes-sion in this House will know that in would never be tolerated for a mo in the ordinary business of life the man who has two courses open to him ught face to face with the elec tion between one course and the other, concerned, and accept the one he is bound by that course, and cannot afterwards, when he receives what be the effect or what would be the efhe considers to be the worst of it, turn around and say "No, the conference had no right" to "deal" with this question at all, I repudiate its right, Now, what is there to arbitrate? notwithstanding I argued the case before it, took part myself in the proceedings, and voted upon the resolu- First, the geographical position of the tion." I do not apprehend that my province of British Columbia. Does

ance to stand before the people of out that British Columbia is situated tion of that kind. Proceedings at Ottawa. Now dealing with this question of graphical phase of British Columbrecognition." Now, the proceedings of the conference three days before this arbitration. When he was unanimous; that the arbitration to come to British Columbias to the conference. That will be question of British Columbia's claims to the conference. That will be been submitted to an that British Columbia is a mountainarbitration. When he blatthe bla. Does it require a commission of on page 19, I should not have been submitted to an hink, of the report, which was placed before this House the other day. Page honorable friend, then proceeded to lay before this House the other day. Page honorable friend, then proceeded to lay years ago at least, that British Columbia, that years ago at least, that British Columbia is a sea of mountains? Is there ence,—I am now reading from the of-ficial record, and this is what was ed before the conference and ask them it not known and admitted, and was it said: "The Hon Mr. McBride subto make some substantial grant in not admitted in the very resolution
mitted the following memorandum,
memorandum,
British Columbia's favor. He took
proposed by Mr. Whitney, that we
two or three days arguing that case were situated in a peculiar geographilumbia to special and distinctive before the conference. Does he wish carly, and that the physical features my honorable friend speaks of, lasting three or four days, took place, and at the same time, at the time that Mr. not bound himself by the decision that orable friend clearly submits his meming majority of the conference was in this province? Are those subjects miers were in favor of accepting only the resolution proposed by Mr. Whit-Ottawa.

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er? What are our claims based upon? western side of Canada? Is there any ous country, that, as was stated by one of the statesmen of Canada twenty were situated in a peculiar geographiof the country were such as we claim they were? There is nothing to arbitrate upon those subjects. Now, is ernment, the cost of education, the cost of the administration of justice, not matters of statistics which can be found right in the public accounts, from year to year, in this province? we have paid some nineteen million. They are to be found there, and to be dollars since Confederation into the brought before the attention of the have received back. No, is that a matconference,-the recent conference at have received back. Now, is that a mat-

A Matter of Statistics. This is purely a matter of statistics, already found out, or attempted to conference is concerned, and so lar as the matter in the meantline, Sir virtues the suggestion that those arrangements should be permanent and final, it eminated, not from Liberals but from nated, not from Liberals but from conservatives, both, in the Dominion government upon this conservatives, both, in the Dominion conservatives, both, in the Dominion government upon this conservatives. purely a matter of going through the find out, just exactly what the cus public accounts of this province and toms duties paid by the people of Bri ly, but to a cent, the cost of civil gov-

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there alone. And they were Dominion government more than ter of statistics? Isn't it a que of finding out, as the government ha Friday, March

What Arbitratio And see what that ncerned, while I at ing my own opinion proper way to settle better terms for Brit do think it my duty members of this Housewhich occur to me to settling the question. Before passing away tion, I want to refer which I think was ma nier in his speech, up of new sections casts upon the prov very heavy burdens, foreseen in 1871. We I do not think it is th sections of the cause I had occasio to go very carefully mts for the purp into the treasury I to 1903 by the County Vancouver Island, ortions of the provi hat a comparatively the province compris ness ten or fifteen cial treasury one-thi

county,—one-third of to the province was be the County of Kooter

Revenue From Now, what does the within a a few years a wilderness ten or and yet we find that lumbia it was contrib ly to the treasury over ount that it had r third of the amount ing in. And what County of Kootenay great portion of the if that be right, the o new sections will be into the treasury a r if a commission boa came out to this provi pose of investigating kind, I fancy they won of that case which provincial treasury by reason of the of tions of the cour out by the facts. And what do we fine number of the old country? My honor constituency, Dewdne from the public treas treasury of this pro show that the drais, which we are hearing about by the opening brought about by the and public works in portions that were opened up in 1871, of union were passe Condemns Lauri

are informed by Premier of Car the Premier of Car move in parliament

esty to amend the

erica act in accordan ings of the conference the principle of the sidies is admitted, the mitted that the Dor sense in holding c But there is particul to the words contain dress, that this rea be final and unaltera confess that we on House have the saminclusion of those with dress, or in the action those words have an cause no legislation, Speaker—no legislati unalterable, even if to be so in the act lation is amended and from year to Dominion parliam true of the Imperia that even if the act posed to pass, amer North America act clause saying that the matter, it would binding in effect, bec point, but from a cause it might be the provinces apply again, positions havi haps-it might be declaration assente ndeed before we c that kind A Strong C

And for that reaso jection to the inclus in the address and legislation as have hers on the other And while the Don are only pursuing was laid down in 1887, they have sin words that were us ence-and while they suing the course indice rect one by Mr. White orandum last October use of similar words, the strongest efforts of on the part of the govish Columbia to have able words elimina 1887, and what was Whitney at the rece

Ottawa.

The conference of I came to this conclus conference is of opin for final and unaltera for final and unaltera the amounts to be ye Dominion to the seve their local purposes of their governments