

Crown of France in the Treaty of Cession of 1763 which guarantees the legality of British rule in Canada. After 1763 the first Seigneurial Council was held at Montreal in 1764 under presidency of the Chevalier d'Ailleboust. In 1773 the Baron de Longueuil summoned the Noblesse to meet at Montreal to send an envoy to King and Parliament in England to demand a reaffirmation of its treaty-rights on threat of withdrawing allegiance to the British crown. The Seigneur Chârtier de Lotbinière was commissioned Envoy of the Seigneurial Council of the Noblesse and his powers to treat for Canada were recognized by the Crown and Parliament of Great Britain. Vol. I. Const. Doc. p. 370, his demand reads: "Property, rights and privileges are accorded Canadians in so far as is in accordance with their allegiance to the Crown of Great Britain. *Is it to be understood by this condition, expressed in terms so general, that they may be deprived of a part of their rights and privileges? That is not a reasonable supposition since the whole is assured from the moment when they become British subjects.*"

Solicitor-General Norton of England also declared that "*The definite treaty which has been signed by the King and approved by both Houses of Parliament cannot have such construction put on it that would dishonor the Crown and the national faith.*"

#### REAFFIRMATION OF CONSTITUTION ESTABLISHED BY TREATY

The King and Parliament thus challenged by the above Envoy of the Seigneurial Council of the Noblesse and sustained by Solicitor General Norton hastened to acknowledge in the Quebec-Canada Act of 1774 which was virtually a treaty between the British government and the Noblesse exercising sovereign authority in Canada, that the ancient constitution and the orders which it contained should be the supreme law of the land in the following agreement:—"The people of the province, living under a constitution which has protected their property, privileges and rights for a long series of years since the first establishment of said province—anything found contrary to said custom established under the Kings of France, guaranteed by the Treaty of 1763 and reaffirmed by this Act are hereby revoked, annulled and made void after the first day of May, 1775."