

in the question as to whether the British North America Act is a statute, a contract or a pact, but on the other hand there is one thing which nobody can deny, namely, that that part of the British North America Act is based on an agreement, an agreement which is found in the Quebec Resolutions and the London Resolutions, and I say that that agreement, so far as representation is concerned, has not been complied with in the British North America Act. That is the reason why I say that since our constitution has to be amended with respect to representation, we should do so in a spirit of justice and equity, in the spirit of the confederative pact, a true pact if there ever was one, which gave birth to the Quebec Resolutions and to the London Resolutions, and that the government should have subsection 4 of section 51 struck out, or at least amended within the meaning of the Quebec Resolutions and of the London Resolutions. Then we could say that we have a resolution based on a spirit of understanding and equity, based on that spirit which actuated the fathers of confederation to whom the Minister of Justice so eloquently referred this afternoon.

One last point, Mr. Speaker. As other speakers have pointed out before me, our behaviour is again that of a colony. We are applying to another legislative body to have our constitution amended. On this point, many criticisms have been expressed by competent authorities and I only wish to say a few words on this matter and point to the fact that we have to apply to another parliament, to the British parliament for the amendment of our own constitution.

First allow me to quote the words spoken in this house by the Prime Minister on the 1st of July, 1943. Like many other Canadians, I was proud to hear the Prime Minister say the following, as reported at page 4226 of *Hansard*:

In the course of the last great war, we saw general recognition given to Canada's status as a nation; a status later accorded full recognition at the imperial conference of 1926, and still later confirmed by the parliament of the United Kingdom in the statute of Westminster. In the course of the present war, we have seen Canada emerge from nationhood into a position generally recognized as that of a world power.

In the greetings which have come to the government from many parts of the British commonwealth, and from foreign countries, this note has been predominant. The consensus is summed up, I believe, in the following paragraphs, which, according to a Canadian Press cable, appeared to-day in a leading London newspaper:

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Britain and the empire join in a salutation on the dominion's 76th birthday.

They hail her not only as a member of our group of peoples, but as a world power in her own right.

Such is the energy of her people that industrially, and by measure of armed power, Canada ranks fourth in all the company of the united nations.

And to-day, a few days only after the utterance of such a statement which, as I said a few moments ago, could inspire many Canadians with pride, a bill is brought down in this parliament, by which we are requested to ask another parliament, supposedly of the same rank, to be kind enough to amend our constitution. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that this is such an abnormality that, to be logical, we should not be content with denouncing it, but rather we should take a strong stand against it and oppose this resolution.

And that is not all, Mr. Speaker. A short while ago, I called your attention to steps taken by various provinces, but something of greater importance still has happened in the country and this fact should appeal to the spirit of justice and fairness which should guide us in proceeding with any proposed amendments to the British North America Act. One province protests officially against this amendment. Here is a Quebec newspaper, *Le Soleil*—and I might say in passing that *Le Soleil* is, according to its own word, the Liberal mouthpiece and consequently friendly to the Prime Minister and Mr. Godbout. I quote the following from the third page of *Le Soleil*, of June 23, 1943:

Godbout Sends to Ottawa a Protest Against a Breach of the Constitution

Hon. Adélard Godbout, prime minister of the province of Quebec officially protested yesterday against the desire on the part of the dominion government to override the Canadian constitution in order to postpone until the end of the war the redistribution of Canadian constituencies. The prime minister made that important announcement yesterday afternoon, in the course of a discussion raised on that matter by the leader of the opposition, Hon. Maurice Duplessis.

The leader of the opposition stated in the house that the dominion government have decided to request the Westminster parliament to override the Canadian constitution so that the dominion government may not be compelled at this time to redistribute the constituencies according to the 1941 federal census.

Mr. Duplessis said that such a precedent would be detrimental to the province of Quebec and that it was an infringement upon the confederation agreement. According to the leader of the opposition, the Westminster parliament does not attach enough importance to provincial rights, and the confederation agreement is a