

Further on he said:

Power must be exercised by another body, and whenever power has to be exercised by another body to effectuate a purpose that this state proposes, then that state and this one are not on an equality of status.

So there is no doubt in the mind of my right hon. friend that in order to put into effect the decisions arrived at unanimously at the conference of 1926, and I might add at the conferences of 1929 and 1930, in order to give effect to the principles there enunciated and accepted by all, he must see to it, if he is still of the same mind, that Canada secures the right and the power to amend its own constitution.

Mr. BENNETT: Perhaps the hon. gentleman knows that it was suggested that there should be a conference with the provinces at a later date, to which all the representatives of the provinces who were here in April were agreeable, and we said that later we would call a conference.

Mr. LAPOINTE: I knew that, and I am pleased that such a conference was then suggested and is to be held.

Mr. CAHAN: In the meantime the hon. gentleman might exercise his talents in educating our own province of Quebec.

Mr. LAPOINTE: I thank my hon. friend for his complimentary suggestion, and if I have the same success there that I have had elsewhere it is possible that we may come to a happy conclusion. As far as the suggestion of my hon. friend is concerned, I have this to say. I have read many articles and many books on the question we are now discussing, both by authors who favour the changes that have taken place and by others who are not so enthusiastic about them, and I have always noticed that when it comes to a question of securing the right to amend the constitution of the Dominion of Canada, and perhaps also when the question of appeals to the privy council is being discussed, the opponents of change always bring in the name of Quebec as their last bulwark and safeguard against change and innovation. May I repeat what I have already stated in this parliament? I do not believe that the rights of the minorities in this country are linked with the legal situation as it exists now. Our ancestors fought for responsible government in this country. They tried to develop Canada as a nation under the British flag, and I do not think they ever contemplated that a status of colonial inferiority was necessary for the safeguarding of their rights. I do not believe that, and I was pleased the other day,

Mr. Speaker, when I said that you agreed with me on this, that the best safeguard which the minority has to protect their rights lies in themselves, rather than in some outside authority. I am of the opinion that Canadians as a whole, in Quebec as well as in the other provinces, would not permanently be satisfied with a condition under which they would be subordinated to another power outside the territory of Canada. It is not a new idea which I am expressing. I have already in this house and in the province of Quebec stated my views in that regard. I remember addressing a large audience in Montreal, at the Cercle Universitaire, at which a large number of the professional men and university students of Montreal were present, and there I expressed exactly the same views that I am expressing now, and I may add that those views were endorsed and supported by that audience without any restriction. So I think there is a possibility of reaching an agreement in that matter. It will be difficult work, I am quite willing to agree with my hon. friend the Secretary of State (Mr. Cahan), that this conference will have before it, but I believe there is a possibility of coming to an agreement and of devising safeguards just as strong as those which now exist in order to allay the fears which the minorities might have in regard to their rights.

Mr. CAHAN: If my hon. friend will allow me to say so, I have read many times his address before the Cercle Universitaire, and from inquiries I made I was under the impression that the audience by their applause expressed their enthusiasm rather in respect to the hon. gentleman's fervor and eloquence than in approval of the ideas he propounded on that occasion.

Mr. LAPOINTE: I am grateful to my hon. friend for his kind words, but I assure him that the audience was rather supporting the substance of and the ideas embodied in my remarks, because the rhetoric was very poor indeed.

As I just said, it will be difficult work, and I think to-day, as I did when my hon. friend from Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth) moved his resolution, that I might well appeal to all those who are interested in such matters to study and consider the subjects which are to be submitted to that conference. They are questions of great interest to all Canadians, and all Canadians should express in one way or another what they feel about them, and do what they can to help my right hon. friend the Prime Minister and his