

been a united empire it would have been different, because a united empire of Britain is stronger in natural resources than either Russia or the United States. If we do not hang together as dominions with the mother country we are going to hang separately, because none of the dominions is able to go it alone.

No doubt later on there will be another opportunity to discuss these matters, but I thank the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) and the government for having given this period of time to the private members, who are the connecting link between the government of the day and the electorate. When they cease to function, all parliamentary government will be at an end. I believe this house should devote more time to these very important questions. I am one of those who hold the view that the opposition should give the government substantial support, not only in time of war but in the troublesome program that is facing us at the present time. I believe the government can always count on the support of this opposition when they are right, though not when they are wrong; and, after all is said and done, I believe on some things, such as Geneva, Bretton Woods and exchange, they have

Right Hon. L. S. ST. LAURENT (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if hon. members would permit me to state a few facts which are pertinent to the question of the effect of the decision of the privy council in 1927 on the Labrador boundary. When the matter of union between Newfoundland and Canada was being discussed in Newfoundland, some question arose there as to the possibility of union depriving Newfoundland of the rights which had been recognized by the privy council in the decision of 1927, and there seems to be some confusion as to what were the facts and what is the nature and effect of the decision rendered at that time. This afternoon the hon. member for Charlevoix-Saguenay (Mr. Dorion) cast some doubts in this house as to the effect of the decision of 1927, and I believe it would not be in the public interest if something were not said at this time to put the facts before the public so they may realize that in the terms of union which were proposed, or which were at least stated by the government of Canada as being terms it would regard as fair, there was no offer to make a contract about that but merely a statement of something which was regarded as a fact at that time. In the negotiations between the representatives of the Newfoundland national advisory council and a committee of cabinet appointed here

in Canada the question was raised as to what would be the effect of Newfoundland joining Canada, with respect to Labrador. The question was in the following form:

If Newfoundland joined Canada, would Labrador remain a part of the province of Newfoundland?

The answer given, not as an offer or as a statement of something we would contract about, but as a statement of fact, was this:

The Canadian government has accepted the award made by the judicial committee of the privy council in 1927 with respect to the Labrador boundary. The Canadian government assumes that, if Newfoundland became a province of Canada, Newfoundland Labrador would be a part of that province. It may be noted that the British North America Act provides that the boundary of a province may be altered only with the consent of the legislature of the province.

When the formal terms were submitted by the Prime Minister to the governor of Newfoundland, the first term stated was that if Newfoundland joined Canada it would have, as from the date of union, the status of a province of Canada, with all the rights, powers, privileges and responsibilities of a province and, as number two, that the province would include the territory of Labrador defined by the award of the judicial committee of the privy council in 1927 as Newfoundland territory.

There seems to be some misunderstanding or misapprehension as to how that award came about. The hon. member for Charlevoix-Saguenay seemed to suggest this afternoon that both a Conservative government in 1920 and a Liberal government in 1922 had gone ahead without any reference to the province of Quebec within whose territorial boundaries the disputed area was to be found. That is quite wrong.

The matter arose out of a communication in December, 1902, from the lieutenant governor of Quebec to the secretary of state of Canada. On that date a memorandum of Hon. S. N. Parent, minister of lands, mines and fisheries, which appears as Quebec P.C. 1369, in which the province of Quebec disputed the right of Newfoundland to grant certain timber cutting licences, was forwarded to Ottawa. That was submitted to the Department of Justice, and the Department of Justice came to the conclusion that the complaint raised by the government of Quebec appeared to it to be well founded. Thereupon there was passed an order in council asking the governor general to communicate that complaint to the government of Newfoundland. The governor general, Lord Minto, on March 18, 1903, transmitted that complaint to the colonial secre-