

ultimately must be decided by conferences between the governments of the provinces and the government of Canada with the possibility of a previous preliminary interprovincial conference. In view of this fact it would appear to be unwise for the provinces to be giving their views before a committee of the House of Commons. With due deference, might I be permitted to suggest that the proper procedure is for your committee to pursue its present inquiry and to make a report to the House of Commons, which I presume will either be accepted or amended or merely received without binding the government to accept the proposals of the committee and with this report available the provinces could then give consideration as to what attitude they desired to take and perhaps discuss the matter amongst themselves, and thereafter join with the federal government in a general conference. The report of your committee would serve as a basis of discussion around which would take place the ultimate solution of this problem. We realize that the question is one of great national importance and should be decided in the welfare of Canada free of all political considerations, and we are certainly prepared to do our share towards the facilitating of a solution, but we feel that we must look after the interests of the province and think that the procedure I have outlined would be the proper course for us to adopt at this time. Signed by T. C. Davis, Attorney-General."

Alberta.—"Re amendment British North America Act. Alberta government appreciates desire of committee to have views of all provinces before it on this very vital question but considers approach to question should be through interchange of views at interprovincial conference. Signed by Mr. Lyburn."

British Columbia.—"Reference your wire twenty-seventh to Attorney-General requesting written submission from the government of this province to your committee it is the opinion of the government that amendment of the constitution is too important a matter to be dealt with in manner suggested. It is not thought that satisfactory conclusions can be reached either federally or provincially until a conference of the provinces and the dominion is held when full discussion may be had and matters properly debated. Other than stating that the right should be secured to amend our constitution in Canada this province respectfully declines to make submission to your committee, neither will it feel bound by any report which may be made by your committee. Signed by T. D. Pattullo."

And there you have testimonies from the various provinces of the country, given after they had been requested to express their opinion on the proposed amendments to the British North America Act.

After having proven that this question is of paramount importance, to use an expression often found in resolutions of this nature, let me point out that the only reason brought

forward and alluded to in this house this afternoon, for the postponement of the redistribution, is one that is mentioned in the resolution itself, that is the movement of the population brought about by enlistment in the armed forces of Canada and the employment of large numbers of our citizens in war industries. For how long is it proposed to postpone this readjustment? Until the coming of the session following the signing of peace with Germany, Italy and Japan. Mr. Speaker, the following question comes to our minds: Is the government of our country convinced that the present state of war is going to last until 1952 or 1953?

As we all know, the last census was taken in 1941. This resolution does not request that the constitution be amended so as to allow the taking of a new census after the war; no, it requests that the readjustment be postponed under the pretext that a displacement of the population of the country has taken place. However, if the readjustment takes effect in two or three years from now, I would ask the Hon. Minister of Justice (Mr. St. Laurent) on what census it will be based if not on that of 1941? The reason put forward is worthless. I repeat it, to be logical, the resolution should request that the taking of a new census be authorized immediately after the war. However, if the readjustment should take place in two or three years from now, if the war should end this year or next year, as we all hope, if the readjustment is proceeded with in 1944 or 1945, of necessity the 1941 census will be used for the purpose. And what difference would there be during the session that will follow the end of the war?

Mr. Speaker, another proof that this reason is worthless lies in the fact that in 1941, as every one ought to admit, we were merely remedying unemployment, which had been extensive in our country for over ten years. New industries were then in course of development but not to the extent of causing a displacement of population. In fact, the increase in industrial production did not become apparent much before 1942. Here is a publication from the department of Munitions and Supply which illustrates the state of our industrial production in the years 1941 and 1942. If it be advanced that, at that time, there was a displacement of population, due to war industries, I say that this statement is unwarranted. From this report