

ment. You have no right to amend, modify or change it. We are the masters." Do you realize how dependent we are? This unspeakable situation must be remedied without delay. Let us free our Canadian constitution from all parasitic influences. Let us abolish appeals to the British Privy Council. Let us hoist a Canadian flag. Then and then only shall we rightfully claim that Canada is a nation.

Mr. JOHN R. MacNICOL (Davenport) (Text): First, Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker) who this afternoon demonstrated that he is a big man. He could have easily taken the view that was taken by the hon. member for Chambly-Rouville (Mr. Pinard), who made me think of a small boy looking in the window of a candy store; if he could only get at the bullseyes and chocolates in there he would be thoroughly satisfied. The hon. member sees, as he imagines, eight more seats for the province of Quebec if redistribution goes through on the basis of the present resolution. But the hon. member for Lake Centre gave a studied, reasoned argument as to why the resolution should not be adopted. It would have been more to his advantage to have the resolution pass in its present form than to the advantage of the hon. member for Chambly-Rouville, because Saskatchewan is due to lose four seats if redistribution is carried out as proposed. I like a man who will stand up and argue a point of view. He realized that this form of redistribution would make it much easier for him, but he was fighting for a principle. So that I say the hon. member for Lake Centre is a big man. As I see it, the house has before it only two choices: (a) to pass the resolution and (b) to accept the amendment, and to consult the provinces as the government should do. If I can judge from what I read in the press I should think some of the provinces, particularly the province of Quebec, will not likely give much support to the resolution. I should expect that, if the premier of Quebec expresses the attitude of those he represents.

Then we would come back to the other position. I would presume we would have to pass through the house quickly a measure asking the British government to postpone redistribution until after the census in 1951. I am going to do my best this evening to set forth an argument as to why the resolution should not be passed, and why there should be no redistribution until after 1951, a matter of only five years more.

I said that the British North America Act could easily be amended to permit postponement of redistribution until after the next

census. What is behind this resolution? Why is the government not proceeding with redistribution in the regular way? This is the first time in seventy-nine years any government in Canada has attempted to violate the British North America Act, as this government proposes to do at this time. What is the reason for changing the basis upon which seats are now established?

That basis is set forth in section 51 of the British North America Act, a section which is the foundation and keystone of the whole British North America Act. If that can be violated, then, later on, a majority can violate any section in that act.

I say it is unfair to have a redistribution on the basis of the present census. I see the minister—

An hon. MEMBER: Of fisheries.

Mr. MacNICOL: No; I was not looking at the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Bridges). He has not been here long enough to know much about these matters. Rather, I was looking at the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Abbott) who was smiling.

Mr. ABBOTT: Oh, I always smile when my hon. friend speaks, because I enjoy his speeches so much.

Mr. MacNICOL: Thank you very much.

Mr. BRIDGES: I think we all do.

Mr. MacNICOL: I shall try to show that redistribution should not proceed on the basis of the 1941 census. In 1941 this country had been two years at war. We had fought during the remainder of 1939 and throughout the whole of 1940. When the census was taken in the middle of the summer we had been two years at war.

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Referring specially to the publication "Canada at War", for 1945, I shall place on record the number of enlisted men in 1941 in the armed forces. First, I shall take the total number for 1945, shown here as 992,103, of whom Ontario contributed 390,007, or 40 per cent. Then I go back to the number who were in the armed services in 1941 and, in the same issue I find that the number of enlistments stood at 364,000. Ontario's portion of that, at a rate of 40 per cent, stood at 145,000 men in the armed services in 1941.