

However, I beg the honourable senators on both sides of the house to bear with me if I voice my opinion extemporaneously; as a result my speech might not be couched in the language which I would like to have used.

In the first place, I will associate myself not with the final decision he said he was going to take on this bill, but with the spirit as well as the terms of the speech made by the honourable senator from Kennebec (Hon. Mr. Vaillancourt). With him, I first want to share the same deep, sincere and patriotic feelings, the same desire for unity and peace that he has expressed. Through him, I also want to associate myself with all the others who spoke along these lines, as well as with those who, it seems to me, have shown an implicit desire to share the same friendly feelings towards the minorities concerned. In doing so, I am satisfied that they were trying to help the cause of peace and the recognition of rights. I, therefore, associate myself with this motion to the effect that we take advantage of this debate and of the opportunity provided by the forthcoming Centennial—the Centennial of Confederation itself—so that we may recall the historic facts, the various people who lived here, chiefly the French who founded Canada, the Old Canada especially, and the British who came a few years later and in whose hands this country fell through the fortunes of war. In passing under the British rule, we had the opportunity to obtain from the British Parliament a charter of our liberties which is called "The Confederation Act". This charter recognized that the existence of French and Catholic people in Canada was a fact dating back to its foundation in 1608 as it had already been recognized by the Capitulation articles in 1760 following the battle of the Plains of Abraham and once again in the Quebec Act of 1774. This recognition was made by the British Parliament, it was an admission of our origin, of our right to preserve our language and our religion. Incidentally—and I wish to point this out at once—it is one of the reasons which has made it possible for our Catholic clergy in the province of Quebec as well as in other parts of the country, and for our highest authorities, notwithstanding the insurrections which took place in both Canadas, to remember that unforgettable and imperishable fact that England through her Parliament and in spite of her victory had not treated us as a defeated people but as citizens equal in all respects to those who were to come from the United Kingdom and join with us in the

development and completion of this huge undertaking, initially French, which had become the Canadian Confederation.

This accounts for the fact that during the 1837 insurrection, which took place in Upper Canada as well as in Lower Canada and which spread only to some particular areas, our Quebec clergy urged our people not to join in such rebellious movements. It is because of the fair treatment which was granted to us by the British Parliament after the 1760 defeat and ever since, that our clergy and the most prominent people of our province, and our people generally, have kept towards England an imperishable feeling of gratitude for having shown such a high respect for our traditions, religious as well as cultural.

I wish to mention it so as to pay due respect to the Parliament and the people of the United Kingdom. If I have deemed it necessary to give this preliminary explanation, it is to show that we are not motivated by any feeling of enmity against the English. I am one of those who, like the honourable senator from Kennebec (Honourable Mr. Vaillancourt) and the other honourable senators who have spoken on the subject, wish to see the maintenance and development throughout the country of a sense of tolerance and fairness regarding language and religion. As far as the French language is concerned—the French-speaking people of our country—England herself has established such a spirit of fairness. I cannot, in my opinion, make a better appeal than to say with the Senator from Kennebec: Let us unite and let us adopt the broadmindedness of the British Parliament; let us try to find the basis of an agreement which will not crumble on the "hustings", in the public squares, and which will not allow people who are certainly of good faith but who are ill-informed to stir up passions once again on matters of race and religion. Let us hope that we will be treated fairly in Manitoba; but where shall we turn to find justice, from what quarters can it be expected?

This brings me to the second point at issue. With whom, in our country, is the authority vested to correct the wrongs in question? What authority can give back to the Catholic minority, the French minority in Manitoba, a greater educational freedom and the necessary funds to have its children taught according to the basic laws of the province and also in conformity with its traditions, its principles, its language and its faith? The federal Government is not that authority. It is the