

Bellechasse to introduce a motion asking the House to declare that the award was illegal. It would then be for the Government to take action as the majority of the House should decide. He did not propose to speak of the justice of the award, but he could not agree with the view taken by the hon. member for Toronto that if the debt had been divided in proportion to the amount paid by each Province, Ontario would get two-thirds of the assets. If such a basis should be adopted, Quebec, being the older Province and having been contributing to the debt for a longer period than Ontario, would receive a larger proportion of the assets. The motion of the member for Châteauguay proposed the Dominion's assumption of the surplus debt, and the compensation of the Lower Provinces; several members approved of this principle, but condemned its form because expressing regret or want of confidence in the Government. The Government, however, first opposed the motion from the Opposition side of the House. The motion of the member for Châteauguay was but the complement of that of the member for Hochelaga. Ministers did not act, however, as if they really believed the former a motion of want of confidence.

The question was—was there a difficulty between Quebec and Ontario respecting the decision of the Arbitrators? He believed so, and that the member for Châteauguay proposed the proper remedy. The principle of the motion was practically approved by the Quebec Ministry, and other members on the Ottawa Government side of the House. Since the Solicitor General for Quebec said he would support it presented in another form, it was amazing to see how the motions of hon. members of the Opposition from Quebec were regarded by the hon. members from the same Province on the opposite side of the House. The motives of hon. members on his (Opposition) side of the House were impugned, and the hon. members themselves were charged with a desire to injure their Province.

It seemed to him that this cry was too old now to have any effect. It seemed to him that the only excuse for delaying the settlement of this question till after an appeal should be made to the Privy Council was to have it unsettled till after the elections. If he were as ready to impugn the motives of hon. members opposite as they (the Government) were to charge hon. members of the Opposition with bad motives, he would say that this was their object. It would, at any rate, be a more plausible accusation to make against them. He would, however, say nothing more on the subject but he would record his vote for the motion of the hon. member for Châteauguay, believing that it proposed the best mode of settling the difficulty. (*Cheers.*)

Mr. SCATCHERD said he had heard nothing to change his opinion that the award was fair and just, or that Ontario should appeal to the Privy Council. What had both parties to do but submit to the award of Arbitrators to whose appointment all parties consented. What surprised him was that not one of the Ontario Ministers or Dominion Ministers had hitherto spoken on this subject. He thought the Ottawa Government responsible for all the present difficulty. If they had stopped the arbitration proceedings on Judge Day's retirement, or acted upon the award when made, the

present trouble would not have resulted. The motion of the member for Hochelaga could not have been designed for any other purpose than political effect in Quebec. If the Dominion assumed the surplus debt, as before, Ontario would be unjustly dealt with, as she would have to pay for three-fourths of this liability.

He proceeded to reply to some of the remarks and arguments of Quebec members on this subject, and expressed himself incredulous as to any attempt of Quebec to secede in consequence of the adverse award but he did not think Ontario should take any action touching this award in the shape of an appeal from it. He would vote in a manner to express his disapproval of the conduct of the Government in this important matter. (*Hear, hear.*)

Hon. Mr. HOWE said that he would regret extremely that the two Provinces of Ontario and Quebec should disunite on this subject. He had been led to believe that a case once before a legal tribunal could not be dealt with by this House. How could the Government dare to control the decision of a Judge?

The representatives of the Maritime Provinces viewed this question in a different light, perhaps, from that of the interested parties. They considered that a great tribunal had been established for the settlement of this question, and it would be a grave breach of duty for the Government to step in and interfere with the decision of the arbitrators. He, as a member of the Administration, would oppose any such action on the part of the Cabinet but he contended that legal tribunals should deal with this question and all such sources should be exhausted before the House undertook to grapple with it. It was clear, therefore, that it was premature to discuss the question now in this House. All the interests of this great Dominion depended on a fair and impartial decision of this difficulty by a competent legal tribunal, and he hoped it would be settled in that way, rather than by a majority in this House.

The member for Verchères referred to what had taken place in the case of Nova Scotia. Here was a political question, not a legal one, and the result had proved the sagacious character of its settlement. All he could say was that when the present question came before the House properly, the members from the Maritime Provinces would do their best to deal with it considerately, generously and fairly, remembering their candid and liberal treatment by the majority of this House from Quebec and Ontario. Meantime it was only a waste of time to continue the discussion of this question.

Mr. MAGILL regretted that this question was again brought before the House. He had hoped that not only the wisdom of our own country, but that of Great Britain had decided how this debt was to be divided. He was satisfied that it had been adjusted on fair and equitable principles and that if it has been as favourable to Quebec as to Ontario, the people of the Upper Province would not murmur at it, but accept the award as final. The Provinces entered the Confederation as equals, and therefore that basis should be accepted. The accounts should be settled between them as between