

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, November 14, 1867

THE CABINET VACANCIES

Mr. Holton said in the absence of the honourable member for Hochelaga he would ask the Minister of Justice whether he was in position to make any statement in regard to the filling of vacancies in the cabinet caused by the resignation of Mr. Galt and Mr. Archibald. Reports had been seen in the public journals respecting offers of office to honourable gentlemen known in that House—one a member of that House and another a member of the other branch of the Legislature. The House should know at the earliest moment what appointments were made.

Sir John A. Macdonald replied that negotiations were in progress and had arrived at such a point that he hoped in a day or two to be able to announce the names of the gentlemen appointed to the vacant offices.

DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS

Mr. Jones (Leeds and Grenville) resumed the debate on the address. He was not one of those members who thought Confederation was going to accomplish all the good predicted by its admirers but some change was found to be necessary. He believed in party governments, but parties must have principles to divide them. Questions would likely soon arise in Parliament which would divide the House into two parties. He would not apologize for the acts of the late Coalition, but it was not fair to saddle the whole blame of the increase of the debt to them. He protested against increasing representation, and hoped measures would be taken to reduce it. Before the Confederation Act we had a larger representation in Parliament in proportion to population than any other country in the world. He thought the Intercolonial Railway would cost more than the estimated amount, \$15,000,000, and that a larger guarantee should have been obtained from the Imperial Parliament. The opening up of the Northwest Territory would not be considered to be so beneficial to Canada as was generally supposed, but he could not agree with the opinion of the member for

Hants that that country could not be defended. He concluded by hoping that the House would enter on the consideration of the matters coming before them, without any reference to old party feelings, and party cries.

Mr. Joly, in the absence of Mr. McGee, rose to defend that gentleman against some remarks of Mr. Mackenzie ridiculing his attempts to suppress Fenianism in Montreal. Referring to Confederation, he (Mr. Joly) said he could not speak of that scheme with the enthusiasm of some members. He saw many dark clouds ahead and thought it would have the effect of sweeping away French nationality in this country.

Mr. Mackenzie said that the honourable gentleman had misunderstood his remarks. He had not accused the member for Montreal West of encouraging Fenianism, but held that he had miserably failed to prove that it existed as an organization, as he promised he would.

Mr. McKeagnie complained of the influences used at the last election to carry the election—the antis were termed rebels and annexationists. In the name of the people he represented, he protested in strong terms against the mode in which Confederation was carried. Whether the Act was good or bad it mattered not; it was a radical charge and the people had the right to be consulted. If the Imperial Government had said that the measure was a necessity and they must accept it, he could understand it; but when they pretended to have acted in accordance with the wishes of the people of Nova Scotia it was an utter mockery. But the question now is, how shall we redress the grievance—shall we repeal it? Yes, he would say repeal it, but not immediately. In deference to the Imperial Parliament and a large number of people in Nova Scotia, he was willing to wait awhile and see what the fruits of Confederation would be. (Hear, hear.) But he was not for peace. He would only prolong the battle—if Confederation turned out to be an injury to his Province, he wanted the way left open for withdrawal from the Union.

Mr. Bodwell heartily sympathized with the congratulations addressed by his Excellency