

marily to tease credulous people like some of our friends opposite. Nobody in Quebec takes them seriously, let alone the recognized leaders or leaders of the so-called "nationalist" movement in that province, who declared publicly and in no uncertain terms that they were definitely opposed to separatism. I am sure that the supposedly "ultra-nationalist" members of this house would express the same opinion if they were asked to give their views on this much abused question.

I believe a false impression is sometimes created outside of Quebec over the fact that the people of that province have to complain at times about certain alleged grievances. This government has been accused by extremists of catering to Quebec, and in a recent Gallup poll some two per cent of the people interviewed stated that they adhered to the Progressive Conservative party because the Liberals were favouring Quebec too much. The conclusive answer to this ridiculous contention is to be found in the memorable speech of the Prime Minister in the course of the short session during the autumn of 1944.

In my opinion, people of French descent, who have made an immense contribution to the upbuilding of this country, have been forced to accept a great many concessions and unpleasant situations in order that this common venture of confederation may be made a real success. Despite the fact that dark clouds may accumulate on the horizon at times, I honestly believe that this confederation has been an outstanding success, and had it not taken place, this country could not have developed and progressed to a point where it commands the admiration of the whole world. I am very frank in stating that in this common venture, it is the minority which has been forced to take most of the bumps. I do not begrudge the situation too much, as I realize that our lot is not uncommon with that of other minorities. I do not suggest for one moment that it would be better if we had to deal with a majority of another race and culture. It is possibly far better. But because the Anglo-Saxon people are reputed to be fair, broad and tolerant, as I believe the vast majority of them are, the minority group may reasonably expect from them a more liberal treatment than that generally accorded to other minorities in other parts of the world.

In my opinion if the amendment proposed should be accepted it would go a long way towards promoting a better understanding between the different groups of this country. I take the view that there cannot be any serious reason for refusing to accept the amend-

[Mr. Michaud.]

ment. I know that objection has been raised by the Secretary of State, to the effect that it would necessitate the amendment of a great many federal and provincial laws. Well, I have a suggested amendment which would cover that if it were accepted. I have no experience of drafting legislation, but I suggest that section 26 should be amended by adding to it a subsection 2 as follows, or substantially as follows:

(2) Whenever, by virtue of any law now in force in Canada, or any regulation made thereunder, the rights and privileges of any person shall depend upon his status as a British subject, or whenever said law or regulation shall impose duties and obligations upon a British subject, then any Canadian citizen shall enjoy all such rights and privileges, and shall be bound by said duties and obligations in the same manner as if he were a British subject.

I humbly suggest that that amendment would cover the objection raised by the Secretary of State.

Mr. REID: Is the hon. member moving that as an amendment?

Mr. MICHAUD: No, I cannot move another amendment.

Mr. REID: Good.

Mr. MICHAUD: I appeal to my compatriots. They have themselves accepted many sacrifices for the common cause, and they will again—not with any great degree of enthusiasm—accept another measure which is before the house for the benefit of Great Britain. I honestly believe that they are being asked more often than their turn to forget their point of view in order to concur in the views of the majority.

As members of parliament we are in a position to wield considerable influence with our constituents, and we ought to assume that responsibility courageously. The vast majority of our electors have not the time to study the very complex problems which confront us. They depend on us to a great extent to give them the cue. The vast majority of our electors are intelligent people—otherwise we would not be here—and because they are intelligent they are likely to listen to us, provided we play the game with them and endeavour to enlighten them.

As far as the Quebec members are concerned, hon. members know that there is considerable opposition in their province concerning a certain bill presently before the house. What would they do about it? The Minister of Justice took the lead, gave the cue and most of the other members in their turn followed suit, with the result that the opposition has practically waned out. On this point I too did my share almost a month