

adopted as a Canadian act, that is, as a dominion statute, and we should then obtain from the imperial parliament their consent to repealing the British North America Act.

I believe, that such a suggestion was essentially progressive, and I would have supported it unhesitatingly. Our country now has the right to proclaim to the world its complete sovereignty. It owes to itself, by reason of the reputation it has acquired, alike at home and in international councils, to have that document which characterizes most the sovereignty and the independence of a nation, its own constitution. We have witnessed what is occurring at the present time in European countries that bore the yoke of foreign occupation during the war that has just ended. Their first impulse and their first action on recovering freedom were to bestow upon themselves a new constitution to reaffirm to the world their sovereignty and their greatness. Let us do likewise; for it is also our right and our duty to proclaim our faith in the future and in the greatness of our destinies. We have just enacted the bill that makes us Canadian citizens. I hope that we shall soon be given a really distinctive Canadian flag.

Let us ever march forward. Let us sanction our rights, our privileges and our national entity by giving ourselves this time a really Canadian constitution.

Mr. T. L. CHURCH (Broadview): I wish to register my protest against the cause and effect brought about by this resolution. We of this country have had a fixed policy on representation in the House of Commons brought about, first, by written law and, second, by unwritten law the unwritten law being, one, agreements, conventions, usages, customs, made by the two original provinces which came together on the Act of Union of 1841, and the other two, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, which joined at confederation.

There were certain definite principles laid down on representation in the written law, in the constitution and in the unwritten law consisting of customs, subventions, agreements and all these things that go to make up the written law at the time the common law was adopted in this country by the constitution.

I have great respect and admiration for the Minister of Justice (Mr. St. Laurent), and I am surprised that he has brought forward this resolution. Who is asking for it? What mandate has the government of the day to bring in a resolution such as this, upsetting all the electoral law we have had since confederation?

I have always been in favour of the principle of confederation, "Each for all and all for each", the old Cornish battle-cry, which I believe is good enough for all the provinces and was so written by the founders of the act of confederation. They were not all of one party fortunately in 1867.

The proposed resolution grows out of what? It grows out of a private member's resolution which was presented in this house last year, and which was not adopted. It never had a chance to be adopted. The government put up certain speakers and the motion was talked out at eleven o'clock. Fortunately it did not come up again.

The people of this country have been very much alarmed at what has been going on in this house ever since the session began. Like so many other matters, this resolution will cause widespread disunity in Canada.

The visit of Their Majesties to this country in 1939, when they were accorded such a tremendous reception by people all over the country, and nowhere more so than in the province of Quebec, showed the tremendous popularity of the monarchy. It also showed the decay of parliament and the decline of the House of Commons. That is a fact. We are talking about representation in the House of Commons, but what does it amount to? It does not amount to very much in the government of Canada. We have handed over our rights, franchises, privileges and customs to a whole crowd of people in various central boards, so much so that at the present time we need a John Hampden in this country. When King Charles walked into the House of Commons and said he was looking for certain birds, only to find that the birds had flown, the Speaker told him, "I have neither eyes to see nor ears to hear but as the house gives me utterance."

We have heard some strange doctrines preached in this house since parliament convened after the last election. I call your attention, Mr. Speaker, to a remarkable fact in connection with this motion. In 1927 I proposed in this house a resolution concerning parliamentary, constitutional, cabinet and law reforms, and those were the main questions in this country from that year on. The Liberal party calls itself the reform party. Well, all the reforms for the benefit of the people that have been brought down this session do not amount to the snap of the fingers as far as they go to help the working classes get any relief. What representation have we had in the last number of years? Shortly after my resolution came up in 1927 and before it after