

other solution was to rearrange the financial terms of the union.

The Dominion Government recognized the substantial justice of the claim and decided to grant some relief. Parliament was asked to pass an Act providing that Nova Scotia should be considered to have entered the Union with a debt of \$9,188,756 (that is, at \$27.77 a head, as in the case of New Brunswick) and should receive (again as in the case of New Brunswick) an exceptional subsidy for ten years until her local sources of revenue could be developed. The debates upon this measure in the Dominion Parliament in 1869 and 1870 show that the importance of the question was mainly constitutional. If Confederation was a compact between the provinces confirmed by Imperial Act, could the Dominion Parliament alter the terms of that agreement? Was a "strict construction" or a liberal one to be placed upon the B.N.A. Act, 1867? Upon this question political parties divided.

Mr. Blake declared that the Government was "asking this Parliament to claim the right of amending the Imperial Act and saying that such and such figures should stand for certain other figures in that Act"; that "the conditions of the Union effected by this Act were not amendable, repealable or alterable by this Parliament except in so far as by the Union Act power was given so to do. Was it to be supposed that any of the provinces would have consented to surrender their rights as independent provinces