

ing session he moved another resolution to the effect that the Constitutional Act should be so amended that the Maritime Provinces should not at any time have fewer representatives in the House of Commons than what was assigned each of them when they entered the union. If Mr. Hughes were some enemy of our province and desired to kill our case completely, he could not have made a more effectual move for accomplishing his purpose. Every one knows that there never was and never will be the slightest chance of such a resolution passing through Parliament, and if Mr. Hughes had any proper comprehension of the case and possessed that foresight which is expected of all representatives, he never would have thought of submitting such an absurd proposal.

If I may be permitted to use the name of the right hon. Prime Minister instead of my own in reading this opinion of Judge Stewart's, it would run this way:

Every one knows that there never was and never will be the slightest chance of such a resolution passing Parliament, and if Mr. Borden had any proper conception of our case and possessed that foresight which is expected of all representatives, he never would have thought of submitting such an absurd proposal.

Of course, I think Mr. Stewart is wrong, but I want to direct the attention of the committee and of the right hon. gentleman to Mr. Stewart's opinion. I am justified in believing that that opinion is entertained also by the premier of the province, who is also the attorney general. The date of Mr. Stewart's letter is March 26, 1914; it was published in the issue of the Charlottetown Guardian of March 27, 1914. The Guardian very strongly supports the present local and federal governments. This is the Guardian's editorial comment upon Mr. Stewart's letter. It says:

Mr. Hughes unearthed a resolution which he submitted to the House of Commons praying that a petition be presented to the Imperial Parliament asking for an amendment to the British North America Act to provide that the three Maritime Provinces "shall not at any time have fewer representatives in the House of Commons than the number that was assigned to each when it entered the Confederation—striking directly at the root of the principle of Confederation."

To charge the right hon. gentleman with striking at the root of the principle of Confederation is a very serious charge to bring against him. The article goes on:

As the Premier—

That is, the Premier of our province.

—pointed out in the Legislature, and as Mr. Stewart emphasizes in his letter, the Island's case requires very different handling from that, and it has received it at the hands of the local Government, Mr. McLean—

That is, the member who has just spoken.

—Mr. Nicholson, Senators Murphy, Prowse and Yeo.

These are the opinions of distinguished men and of an important newspaper, and I give them to the House for what they are worth. The Prime Minister himself has a very high opinion of these men, because, as I have already pointed out, when Premier Mathieson and Mr. Stewart came here as delegates from Prince Edward Island, the Prime Minister said that they had presented their case in clear, cogent and forcible argument, and later on he appointed Mr. Stewart to the bench in our province. The views of these gentlemen should therefore be worthy of consideration. We do not want any mistake made this time, and, if the present procedure is wrong, we want to know it in time, because we are very anxious that this resolution should pass and become law; so I commend to the House and in particular to the right hon. gentleman who leads the Government the well-considered and matured opinions of Judge Stewart, of Premier Mathieson, and of the editor of the Charlottetown Guardian.

Mr. O. TURGEON (Gloucester): May I be permitted to call the attention of the Prime Minister to the fact that in this clause, which is to give the various groups of the provinces an equal number of representatives in the Senate, we are merely asking that material form be given to the spirit of the resolution. In the last part we are asking that both the letter and the spirit of the Constitution be changed. My right hon. friend knows my long and strict adherence to the Constitution. I think this proposal the most moderate which has ever been offered, and perhaps the most acceptable to every member of this House, as well as to the different legislatures of the Dominion. My right hon. friend knows that each of the maritime provinces has made its own appeal about this representation to the Privy Council, but in every case the Privy Council denied their appeals; and these judgments of the Privy Council may have considerable weight, not only with the Imperial Government, but with the members of the Imperial Parliament as well. I am perfectly willing to accept this proposal as a very moderate one, but, in order to secure its acceptance by the Imperial Parliament, would it not be better first to submit it to an interprovincial conference; for it is scarcely two years ago that a con-