

a copy of the solemn protest received from the government of Quebec against such a change before an election. The suggestion of the hon. member for Richelieu-Verchères is only fair and just. He did not offer an amendment, because he could not, on account of the Prime Minister's motion. But does it not appeal to every hon. member that it would be only fair that the next election should be conducted after the last census, and not the census before the last one. What is the purpose of a census? It is to establish a basis of representation in accordance with the provisions of the British North America Act. What is the use of spending a million dollars for a census, if it is of no use, and if it does not serve the purpose for which it is made?

There is no question of any intervention by Mr. Anthony Eden in respect of the matter of redistribution, except that if the matter is taken to Westminster he will be one who will have to help decide. The same applies to Lord Halifax. What has Lord Halifax to do with this matter? What has Mr. Anthony Eden to do with this matter? He may have something to do with it when the resolution is over there, but only at that time.

To this moment no one has explained satisfactorily to me the reason for the sudden change of the government in connection with this matter. I do not know the reason. I took some notes of what the Minister of Justice said, and he made one observation which astounded me. This is a proposal for a modification of the act of 1867. I do not know if my understanding of his statement was correct, but if it is not, he will no doubt correct me. When a change is to be made in the British North America Act those concerned must deal with a constitution formulated by the fathers of confederation to weld into one nation two groups of peoples of different origin and with different religions. That is not the question. It is admitted that different people have different religions. But I say that although they do not belong to the same race, or do not have the same religious beliefs, or are not of the same origin, still we are all in the same boat and we have to make the best of it. Therefore it is not by leaving an injustice, and permitting it to continue that we are going to bring about a greater degree of peace and unity in Canada.

I have said it before, and I now repeat that it is a great mistake to consider French Canadians of the same class and in the same walk of life as being different mentally from English, Scotch or Irish citizens performing the same work. That is a great mistake. All have the same interests. They are fellow citizens. They must work in unison, and they

will do so, provided no one raises the cry of prejudice or brings before their eyes matters which may be exploited by a few individuals unworthy of the name Canadian.

I was sorry that the Minister of Justice took the trouble to bring that matter before the house. Some of his statements were commendable, but they would have been just as good on another occasion. But this was not the time to say what he said because, as was pointed out by the leader of the opposition (Mr. Graydon)—and rightly so—what he said was irrelevant.

The matter before the house is one of representation of people within the boundaries of a certain unit known as a constituency. All those people have the right to be represented in the House of Commons, and it would be an injustice both to French Canadians of Ontario as well as to English-speaking citizens of Quebec not to proceed with redistribution according to the solemn promise which was made in the speech from the throne, and which was repeated not long ago by the Prime Minister. I see no reason for it.

What explanation have we been given? The hon. member who preceded me in the debate suggested that this was being done to have more seats for Quebec in the next election. No, sir; that will not work. Even English-speaking Canadians in Canada would not agree to any injustice to both English-speaking and French-speaking citizens, which would have the effect of greater support for the choice of the government in any constituency. I believe that the French-speaking people and the English-speaking people in this country are fair-minded. The only trouble is that they have not been told the things that they should have been told; they have not been spoken to in the language that should have been used. But when they read *Hansard* they will see the admission made by the Minister of Justice that there was something wrong, that there was, to use the expression of my hon. friend who spoke previously, a nigger in the wood-pile. They will want to know what the nigger in the wood-pile is. If they proceed farther, they will see that the Minister of Justice has admitted that there is something wrong somewhere, that we must wait until the end of the war to do something and not create a disturbance.

Our soldiers are fighting for freedom and liberty, and yet an injustice exists in our midst. Is it possible to conceive that while we are trying to cure the evils of the world, we allow them to exist in our midst? That is my last word. I make a special appeal to the Prime Minister; I make a special appeal