

which the resolution can be made unanimous, and in that way meet the views of all sections of the country.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Mr. Speaker, the amendment to the amendment in its present form does not seem to be very relevant, as it is not prefaced by the necessary words to make it an amendment to the original resolution. However, that is a matter for the hon. gentleman who has moved it and His Honour, the Speaker. Might I ask if the government propose to accept the last amendment?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Yes.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I would like to say, in the first place, that I do not see the difference in meaning between the amendment proposed by my hon. friend from Colchester and the one proposed just now. The right hon. leader of the government told us distinctly in the course of his remarks that he could not accept the amendment of the hon. member for Colchester, because the resolution as it stands leaves the terms and conditions for future consideration and that it was not necessary or desirable to confine the terms of that resolution in any way.

Now when a similar resolution of exactly the same purport and meaning—so similar that it will be a question for the speaker whether it can be put as an amendment to the amendment—when the same thing, having exactly the same effect is proposed, my right hon. friend forgets his declaration and is quite ready to accept it. No doubt the only real reason is that the first amendment was moved by my hon. friend from Colchester (Mr. Stanfield) and the second has been moved by the hon. member for Pictou (Mr. Macdonald). If there is any other reason I would like to hear what it is. Let us look for a moment at the two amendments. The first is as follows:

That the proposed resolution be amended by adding thereto the following paragraph: Be it further resolved that the extension of the boundaries provided for by this resolution be accompanied by such conditions as will prevent such extension prejudicially affecting the representation of any province in parliament.

That amendment is harmful and cannot be accepted by the government. It confines the terms of the resolution, and the terms of the resolution should be left wide open for the future expression of parliament at any other session. Let us look at the other amendment which is acceptable:

That all the words in the said amendment be struck out and the following substituted: And under any legislation to be introduced to give effect to the foregoing, nothing shall be done or provided to impair the representation of any province in this House.

The difference between those two amendments is exactly the difference between tweedledum and tweedledee. The right hon. gentleman cannot accept tweedledum but he is perfectly willing to accept tweedledee.

As regards the observations of my hon. friend from Pictou (Mr. Macdonald) touching the reduction of the representation of the province upon ascertaining the population in each province by a decennial census, it does not seem to me that he expresses the situation with absolute accuracy. What happens is this. In the first place the unit of population is ascertained by dividing the population of the province of Quebec by the number of its representatives, 65. In that way you obtain the unit of population. Then you proceed as follows. You apply that unit of representation to the population of every other province as ascertained by the same census. You may find that the representation of some province will be reduced by the application of the unit of representation. You do something more, not by way of reduction but by way of preventing the reduction of the representation of any such province. You take subsection 4:

On any such readjustment, the number of members for a province shall not be reduced unless the proportion which the number of the population of the province bore to the number of the aggregate population of Canada at the then last preceding readjustment of the number of members for the province is ascertained at the then latest census to be diminished by one-twentieth part or upwards.

So that subsection 4 is not a provision for the reduction of the representation of any province but a safeguard against such reduction. If it were not for that purpose, you would apply simply subsection 1 and there would be no need for subsection 4. But the proviso I have pointed out is a safeguard in certain cases against the reduction which would be brought about by the application of the unit of representation. It is idle to say that the reduction of representation in any province of Canada is brought about in the way that has been suggested. It must be brought about by the application of the unit of representation as ascertained in the province of Quebec; and this subsection 4 does not operate to further reduce but operates in certain cases to prevent any such reduction. That is my appreciation of its meaning and I think it is the correct one.

My right hon. friend the First Minister, in replying to some very brief observation which fell from me this morning, said that to leave unsettled the boundary question between Newfoundland and the province of Quebec or any part of Canada might lead to bad blood. I quite agree that it is proper to have that boundary line ascertained