

It is easy, when certain political groups are not concerned with the province of Quebec, seeing that none of them have any representatives from that province to praise this resolution as something beneficial to us. It is also quite easy for such hon. gentlemen to display generosity in appealing to others to remain calm and to refrain from discussing these matters, on the ground that we are at war. Like the Prime Minister himself and the Minister of Justice, these hon. gentlemen fail to realize that, by the very fact that, in so doing, they bring the evidence that, should the matter of redistribution have been brought before the house, they would themselves have been the cause of a discussion they want to prevent. They do not seem to realize that it implies the admission that, should the matter be brought before the house, there would be some discussion about it. They are simply asking others who do suffer the injustice involved in this resolution to remain quiet, and they are trying to be as agreeable as possible in doing this.

It is difficult to make me believe and to make the rest of the province of Quebec believe that it would be a crime to proceed with the redistribution. If unity, peace and harmony are to reign in this country, they will reign in the exact measure that contracts and pledged words are honoured. The faith of the people in the constitution and in the grandeur of the ideal which it embodies will be but equal to the respect, the worth and the dignity of our constitutional system; and if we do not want to have any trouble; if we do not want to expose ourselves to the danger which already threatens in Quebec, in the movement which is called separatism; if we do not want that movement to spread to such an extent as to jeopardize the constitution, as breaches of the principle of the constitution such as this would bring about; if we do not want to jeopardize the confederation, then we should not support any resolution or move of this kind.

It is really curious to listen to everyone making eloquent speeches, trying to give proof of good intentions, and a friendly spirit toward Quebec. It is curious to see that in different localities, when it has been desired to make some changes in the constitution, the province of Quebec has always been sacrificed. We can understand why Quebec, with sixty-five constituencies, as was explained this afternoon by the Minister of Justice, from the British North America Act, has had to suffer many times in the past. This agreement has been detrimental to that province as far as influence in the house and in Canada is concerned. But that is the constitution to-day. As it stands, there are no fewer than twenty-one seats in

Canada in excess of the number there should be, in consequence of this provision of the constitution. In other words, Quebec actually has proportionately six members fewer to exercise some influence with the rest of Canada. That is one of the reasons why we oppose this resolution.

There is another reason more important than one, namely, a breach of principle. In the eyes of some it may be difficult to understand why we adhere so strictly to the principle of the contract and the constitution itself. Well, there are many reasons for that. I shall give some of those reasons which may serve to explain to hon. members why we have reason to oppose the resolution. For this I must go back a piece into history.

First, we feel that we must maintain provincial autonomy as it is, and that we must safeguard all the rights extended to us by treaties and by the constitution itself, in order that we may achieve the maintenance of French culture and French traditions in Canada. Canada was first discovered by Jacques Cartier, and afterwards was settled to some extent by Champlain. Following that, our missionaries and explorers had walked over and watered with their sweat, tears and blood every foot of land between Louisiana in the south to the Mackenzie river in the north; afterwards the territory was all surveyed and mapped and all civilized; thus we have been conquered by force. Force was the only way to make conquest, of course; and that is still true to-day.

At the conclusion of that war we were given by the highest authority in England what in those times was considered fair treatment. Despite the fact that in 1787 and 1812 our forefathers fought side by side with the forefathers of the majority in this country to keep the country under the control of the British crown, there has always been a small group in Canada inspired by bigotry which has caused trouble through the years. So much so that in 1837 we saw a revolution in Lower Canada. Matters went from bad to worse until 1840, the time of the Act of Union, a measure which imposed on Lower Canada the obligation to pay \$100,000,000. Might I point out that in those times a sum of that magnitude, having in mind the small population in Quebec, would have compared with a sum of not less than ten billions of dollars to-day. Imagine the burden an amount of that size imposed on the colony of Lower Canada!

Since confederation there have been many breaches made to the confederation pact. If these breaches continue, it is our fear that step by step we shall have lost all the rights granted to us by the British authorities and by confederation. That is why we protest against