

pointed by the people, but by the Executive branch of the local government, in precisely the same way as in Canada, and that they are in every respect as upright and as distinguished as our own judges. If our French-Canadian Ministers had not been in so powerless a minority in the Quebec Conference (four to thirty-two), they would certainly not have accepted a scheme of Confederation so fraught with danger to the French race as that which has been submitted to us. They would have obtained more favorable conditions than those which are imposed upon us, among which is the appointment for life of the legislative councillors, by the Executive branch of the General Legislature. For my part, Mr. SPEAKER, I am not in favor of the appointment for life of men taken from the crowd to be converted into the instruments of oppression, and too often to serve to cast impediments in the way of the most important liberties and rights of the people. The appointment for life of the legislative councillors by a majority which is hostile to our race is as dangerous to-day as it was in the most evil days of our history, and to accept it is to place our most precious liberties at the mercy of the enemies of our race. With such provisions in the Constitution which it is proposed to force upon us, it is impossible that the French element should be protected in the Legislative Council. It is equally impossible that the aggressive tendencies, of which I gave an historical sketch in the first part of my remarks, will not produce their effect in the Federal Executive, when the question of the appointment of those members is being settled. We have been told, "The French Canadian section will resign if the Federal Executive attempt to practice injustice to the detriment of their fellow countrymen." Well, Mr. SPEAKER, I would willingly believe that they would resign, and that no successors could be found for them, which is still more improbable, and I should like to know to what such a resignation would lead, and what sort of a remedy it would provide for our humiliating position. We shall have forty-eight members in the Federal Parliament against one hundred and forty of English origin; in other words, we shall be in the proportion of one to four. What could so weak a minority do to obtain justice? Evidently the resignation of the French section would make it still more powerless, and it would have to accept the tyrannical

dictates of its opponents. The French members of the present Government themselves give as the ground of the necessity of the proposed changes, the fact that the existing Constitution does not afford us sufficient guarantees. But then, what sort of guarantees shall we have under the Confederation which it is proposed to force upon us and under which we shall be in a minority twice as great? Let us suppose the very probable contingency of a collision between our Local Legislature and the Federal Government, in consequence of the rejection of a measure passed by the Province of Lower Canada and thrown out by the General Parliament; in what position shall we be? Let us remember that the Federal Executive appoints the Legislative Council, presides over the criminal legislation of the country, and appoints the judges who administer it; in a word, that in the Federal Government are vested all sovereign powers, to the exclusion of the local governments. Well, Mr. SPEAKER, I say without hesitation that in the case of a collision, we shall find ourselves completely at the mercy of the hostile Federal majority, and that it may oppress us, assimilate our laws, suspend our judges, arm the militia against us, and send us to the scaffold or into exile in any way they may think proper, notwithstanding our protestations and those of the French-Canadian minority in the Federal Parliament. Such has already been found to occur; the past is there to prove the fact, and everything leads us to believe that the same attempts at fanatical aggression will be renewed in our day, if the scheme of Confederation is adopted. (Hear, hear.) The hon. member for Brome, whose loyalty will certainly not be called in question, himself declared in this House that this scheme would give rise to difficulties and entail deplorable collisions. Supposing, Mr. SPEAKER, that those collisions and difficulties arise, what shall we do? Will not all power be in the hands of the Federal Government and of a hostile majority? Is it not because the people understand it that they reject this measure with threats on their lips and in their eyes; that every day they send us numerous petitions in which they prophesy the most serious dissatisfaction? How long will the eyes and the ears of the members of this House remain closed, that they may not be cognisant of this protest of their alarmed fellow-countrymen? The Hon. Atty. Gen. East himself refuses to communicate to us a single one of the details of the scheme of