

*Newfoundland*

Perhaps nowhere in the world was there a garret exactly like the Crow's Nest; fifty-nine steps from street level up the outside of an old store building—officially named the Seagoing Officers' Club and open to officers of the allied fighting ships and the merchant navy. Reminiscences went round the world, and doubtless are still on the wing, of that loud and smoky room where ships' crests and bells and trophies hung thick on every wall.

It is true to say that, in the hearts of the officers and men of our navy and our merchant marine, St. John's occupied as large a place as any Canadian port. It was regarded as the home port of a large part of the Canadian fleet. On this account, as well as the others that have been mentioned, we shall be especially glad to welcome Newfoundland into confederation.

But this story of working together in our common defence is not a recent one. It is reported that five companies of the Newfoundland regiment were sent to Upper Canada during the war of 1812; and I am glad indeed that, in the terms of union, reference is expressly made in paragraph 44 to defence establishments, as follows:

Canada will provide for the maintenance in the province of Newfoundland of appropriate reserve units of the Canadian defence forces, which will include the Newfoundland Regiment.

So if union is consummated it is our intention to see that this great regiment is perpetuated, with its name and its traditions, as one of the components of the Canadian armed forces. By joining the military traditions of Newfoundland and Canada, we will be enriching both.

**Mr. MacNicol:** Would the minister add just a word about the distinguished record of the Newfoundland Regiment in Upper Canada during the war of 1812? In Toronto we have a monument erected in its honour.

**Mr. Claxton:** I shall be glad to. I referred to the regiment a moment ago.

**Mr. MacNicol:** I heard what the minister said, but I did not hear any reference to the victories of this regiment in Upper Canada.

**Mr. Claxton:** That is what I was referring to. Mr. Speaker, Newfoundland forms part of the geographical pattern and formation of North America. This island with a population of 330,000 has an area of 42,000 square miles, larger than Ireland and amounting to 84 per cent of the combined area of the maritime provinces. But in addition Labrador, which since 1927 has been found to form part of Newfoundland, has an area of another 110,000 square miles. Newfoundland is situated at the mouth of the gulf of the St. Lawrence; and those of us who have come home from abroad, on coming within sight of Newfoundland going through the strait of Belle Isle, have felt that if we were not at home, at least we were getting close to it. It

[Mr. Claxton.]

will be a source of the greatest possible satisfaction to us in the future if, when we reach the island on the way home, we really can feel that this is part of our home, our native land.

Then, sir, the resources of Newfoundland have been referred to. They have great fisheries. They have two great pulp and paper plants, one of them, Bowater's, being the largest paper mill in the world. There are seventy-five firms constituting secondary industries, with some 3,500 employees; and in addition to the iron ore mines of Belle Isle there are various other mineral deposits. Our belief is that, properly explored and developed, these resources of Newfoundland will soon establish the soundest possible economic as well as historical, racial and geographic reasons for union.

Our conviction is that it is in the interests of both countries that we should join together. Common experience is that generally speaking a marriage between fairly mature adults is likely to be successful, because they have gained something in the way of tolerance and understanding. Our hope is that that understanding will help us over the difficult times, because there will be difficult times, in working out the terms of our union. On the basis of our separate experiences, we will be able to build a better common life than either of us can separately. There is every reason for our supporting this measure. I am sure it will be a matter for the utmost gratification to the people of Newfoundland, as well as to the people of Canada, that the debate on this subject should have been carried on in a way which recognizes to the full that this is an important occasion in the life of Canada.

At the time of confederation, Mr. Speaker, D'Arcy McGee, who then represented part of the constituency I have the honour to represent, said this:

I see, in the not remote future one great nationality bound, like the shield of Achilles, by the blue rim of the ocean. I see it quartered into many communities, each disposing of its internal affairs, but all bound together by free institutions, free intercourse and free commerce. I see a generation of industrious, contented, moral men, free in name and in fact—men capable of maintaining, in peace and in war, a constitution worthy of such a country.

I believe that that hope, Mr. Speaker, and that aspiration of D'Arcy McGee is now being realized in the union of Newfoundland with Canada, for the good of both our peoples and, we believe, to the benefit of the people in other countries as well.

**Mr. A. M. Nicholson (Mackenzie):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to endorse the opinions expressed by all the members who have preceded me in this debate in their references to the good will which has prevailed between the people of Newfoundland and the people