

will not. They will pass no divorce law for Newfoundland, and they will set up no divorce court in Newfoundland, unless — and here I ask you to pay special attention — unless we ask them to do it. And that, sir, we are not very likely to do, I am sure you will agree. The Parliament of Canada has power to set up a divorce court in Newfoundland if we go into confederation. Yes, that is a fact, they have the right and the power. But they will not use that right unless we ask them to do so. Never in all Canada's history has the Parliament of Canada used its power to set up a divorce court in a province unless and until that province asked for it. Ontario asked for it, and Prince Edward Island asked for it, and the Parliament of Canada did as they asked. If Newfoundland should ever ask to have a divorce court set up, then the Parliament of Canada would do it, but not otherwise. Mr. Higgins, sir, is absolutely well aware of that fact, no one is better aware. It was Mr. Higgins himself, amongst others, who personally had some very special interviews on that very question in Ottawa. He was not the only one who had interviews, for Mr. Bradley also interviewed the very high personage whom Mr. Higgins interviewed — and I am not now referring to anybody connected with the Government or Parliament of Canada, but someone much higher in a matter like this. There were various interviews, sir, and what did they all boil down to? They boiled down to this: that the Government of Canada would be willing to put it in the very terms of union that never, for all time, would the Parliament, or could the Parliament of Canada, pass any law for divorce in Newfoundland or set up any divorce court in Newfoundland, unless and until we ask for it ourselves, unless we ask them to do it. Let me make this very clear.... To make the matter absolutely sure, and sure for all time, the Government of Canada would be willing to put into the terms a special clause stripping from the Parliament of Canada any future right or power forever to do such a thing, unless and until we, as a country, should ask them to do it — and that is the thing that is extremely unlikely, that we would ask them. I say that the Government of Canada would include such a clause in the terms and that clause would become part of the British North America Act, if they were asked to place it there.... There is only one condition. That con-

dition is this, that the heads of our Newfoundland churches, our Newfoundland denominations, ask to have it done and it will be done. That is all that is needed, sir, for the heads of the churches to signify their wish that such a clause be put in the terms. I am very sorry that this matter has been raised at all in this public fashion — it was not my doing. The matter had not been overlooked or neglected or ignored. Far from it. Steps have been taken to inform those most directly concerned with the facts as they stand. This was done even before we left Ottawa at all. And when I say steps, I mean eminently proper and dignified steps.

Mr. Higgins says that our Catholic fellow-citizens would not favour confederation unless some such clause was put in the terms, and in the BNA Act itself, making sure that divorce and divorce courts will not come to Newfoundland. I partly agree with him, and I add this further piece of information; that our Catholic citizens are not alone in that feeling. Others feel the same way about it, and have been informed fully of the situation. But I want it to be understood perfectly, that it only needs for the right people to say the word and that very clause will go into the terms. Why sir, the Prime Minister of Canada himself gave us a very broad hint in his letter to His Excellency. He said that in matters such as education — such as education — they would want to satisfy us. Sir, a clause was actually drafted and a copy of it was here in St. John's — *is* here in St. John's at this moment. It is wrong to drag this matter into this debate. Our people need not worry about this question of divorce. It is in good hands, far better, far abler, far more conscientious hands than either those of Mr. Higgins or me.

Another point on Mr. Higgins, he wanted to know why so many Canadians were leaving Canada for the USA. The answer is simple. They are returning now at the rate of 11,000 a year; they cannot stand the high taxes in the United States. In addition to that 12,000 Americans settled in Canada in 1947.

There is only one point in Mr. Butt's speech to which I would refer. He said, "Let somebody better than we are decide this question." Exactly. The people of Newfoundland are better than we are. Let them decide.

Somebody referred to the Quebec provincial flag. Why sir, old loyal Nova Scotia has had her own provincial flag for over 200 years and they