

Newfoundland

their daily efforts, chiefly from their ships at sea.

I was imbued in my early youth with the feeling of justifiable pride which those born in Newfoundland have in their great traditions and the great background of that island. Knowing even by that indirect contact, as well as by more direct contacts in later years, something of the feeling of the greatness of their own island's history and all it stands for, I hope that everything possible will be done to avoid the discontent and misunderstanding which does exist, and which is reflected in the press and in public speeches being made in Newfoundland and elsewhere today. For we want to see the splendid people of Newfoundland joining Canada in a spirit of real satisfaction and friendship and with a certainty that it is to the interests and advantage of all of them.

This is an historic occasion. The proceedings which carry into effect the purpose of this resolution will of necessity be debated in detail, and there will be discussions in relation to those details. But in regard to the principle of carrying into effect the vision of those great men who met at Charlottetown in 1864, I find it difficult to believe that there can be any difference of view anywhere in the house as to the hope that this will be carried out to the complete satisfaction of the people both of Newfoundland and of Canada.

For the reasons I have indicated, we will support the resolution before the house.

Mr. M. J. Coldwell (Rosetown-Biggart): Mr. Speaker, this is not the stage at which to discuss any of the details of the agreement and therefore I do not propose to do so. May I say at once that members of the C.C.F. throughout Canada join with other people in welcoming into confederation the island of Newfoundland.

When in 1867 the fathers of confederation succeeded in uniting this great land which we call Canada, Newfoundland remained aloof. Now, after eighty years, what we may term the oldest British colony in North America joins this great undertaking, the nation of which we are a part. I say therefore there can be no wonder when, in discussing the resolution, we are filled with a sense of its historic importance.

Newfoundland, by reason of her strategic position, to which reference has been made this afternoon, her wealth and, Mr. Speaker, most of all, the sterling qualities of her people, is indeed a welcome addition to the country in which we live. She, may I add, has resources which have never been adequately and thoroughly surveyed, and about which in many instances very little is known.

Her people are descended principally from

those hardy seafaring folk who crossed the stormy Atlantic in little cockleshells of boats from places like Bristol, Bideford, Plymouth, fishing villages along the Devon and Cornish coasts, and from places on the shores of Brittany, Normandy and Scotland.

If I might interject a personal note: In the district where I was born, in the county of Devonshire, our parish registers record how in the late seventeenth and eighteenth century fisherfolk who crossed the Atlantic paid their church tithes after having returned from fishing expeditions on the grand banks. When they came back, this great reservoir of new food for a hungry continent of Europe was more valuable to the people of Europe than all the treasures Sir Walter Raleigh hoped to find farther south. It was his brother adventurer, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who concentrated upon Newfoundland. I believe it was Francis Bacon who said that the fisheries of Newfoundland were more valuable to posterity than all the mines of Peru. I believe that is true.

So the beginnings of Newfoundland were laid by hardy fisherfolk who, perhaps, had no thought of settling so far across the stormy ocean. But it was the wealth of fish which laid the foundation of Newfoundland, just as it may be said that the fur trade laid the foundation of New France. And just as in the seventeenth century Canada was typically French in its origins, characteristics and customs, so it may be said that Newfoundland is typically British in its origins, in its customs, and in its general outlook upon life.

So that once again, within this North American confederation we call Canada, the two great races who have laid the foundations of this country, together with the many hundreds of thousands who have come to us from many lands and who, too, have made their contribution, are engaged today in laying the foundations of a Canada greater than we have known, making it a nation stretching at last in every sense from sea to sea.

But just as the gentlemen adventurers into Hudson bay tried to keep the settlers out of what was then known as Rupert's Land and is now the Northwest Territories, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, so the fish-dealing merchants of the west of England tried to keep settlers from landing and taking root in Newfoundland. They wanted to keep the harbours and coves for the curing of fish, and to add to their own profits thereby. But settlers came, and in spite of the gentlemen adventurers they remained and they fought their way through. I mention this because I think it tells us something of the type of people and their background, and indicates