

Respect also federal autonomy which was enacted by section 93 of the British North America Act which provides for the imposition of a restriction upon provincial rights in matters of education. Let that be clearly understood and clearly laid down. It is said that if we adopt the amendment there will be so little to claim for Catholics that there will be very little occasion for litigation, but to say that because there will be lots of litigation we must go back on our own pledges, that we must go back on the principle laid down by the Prime Minister as the only basis of legislation, it is to take a position which I do not think will ever result in the creation of a broad spirit in those provinces.

Now, I may say that the opinion I have of this amendment is that it was framed in a moment of panic and scare and that the very wording of it is proof of that fact. Here is a sovereign parliament that has received, in the very words of the Minister of Justice, under the Imperial Act of 1871, full power to deal with this question. The Minister of Justice did not admit any restriction on the powers of this parliament. Here is a sovereign parliament which has the jurisdiction to pass legislation. We borrow on the one hand an imperial document, we take on the other hand a territorial document which is *ultra vires*, we join them together and say: We have nothing to do with this law. We renounce our sovereignty and because of our respect for provincial rights we adopt as the basic law of the new provinces the Northwest ordinance which we acknowledge to be against our own legislation. It is *ultra vires*, we make it *intra vires*; it is against all the moral pledges which are binding on us, and in the execution of these pledges we enact this legislation which breaks these pledges. I confess that the position taken by the government is completely incomprehensible to me from a constitutional point of view and from a political point of view. I do not see what can be gained either for the future of this country or for the advantage of the Liberal party, or for the advantage of the country at large. Sir, to my mind, we had only one thing to do, we had only to stand, as the Prime Minister said the first time, upon the basis that had been made for us in the first place, on the constitution as it was laid down by those who opened up the Northwest Territories to civilization. The law of 1875 was the only safe basis of legislation. Now, it has been said that the law of 1875 did not provide for the granting of state aid to separate schools, but, as I stated this afternoon, this parliament accepted that principle when it passed the law of 1879 forming a school fund for the support of schools in the Northwest. Therefore, the clause, as it was first prepared by the Minister of Justice, contained all those essential principles; it contained the reference to the British

North America Act, it wiped out all the doubts possible as to the date of the union, and it re-enacted the law of 1875, which guaranteed separate schools. That was the only thing that we were bound to do. The government said when they framed that legislation: We stand upon the rock of the constitution. How is it to-day when they are putting that aside that they are still claiming to stand upon the rock of the constitution? Is it the rock of the constitution that is moving, or is it the government? I prefer to think that the interpretation which was given by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice before they were colleagues, a buccaneering politician,—if I may be allowed to use the language of the member for Pictou (Mr. Macdonald)—who tried to shelter himself behind a pretense of concern for a national principle in order that his private and public deeds might be forgotten, was the correct one. If the government had remained upon the solid ground which they took when this question was free from all these appeals and when it was upon a common sense basis they would have remained upon the rock of the constitution, and they would have stood by their legislation.

I have been denounced by government organs in the province of Quebec as a demagogue, as the Quebec Maclean. I have been threatened with excommunication from the Liberal party because I am still saying in June what the Prime Minister said in February. If I am the Maclean of Quebec now, the Prime Minister was the Maclean of Quebec in February. Sir, I have not gone one inch outside the position that he took, or said anything upon this question different from that which he has said. I am still on the rock of the constitution. I do not say so from the legal point of view. I am no lawyer, but I say that I remain upon the rock of the constitution as I find the constitution erected by the great men who laid the foundations of this country, by the men who laid down as the basis of the education of the youth of this country the sound principle of religious freedom of education. I remain still upon that ground and I say that whatever may be the will of other provinces before they came into confederation the will of this parliament as regards the Northwest Territories were clearly enacted in the law of 1875. Let us respect the will of parliament as then expressed. Let us preserve for these future provinces the safeguards that were adopted by the authors of their constitution and which were alluded to by the Prime Minister himself as the great safeguards of the youth of our country. As far as our English-speaking friends are concerned am I to be denounced as an anti-English and anti-Protestant demagogue because I ask them to make clear the policy under which we are giving to the Catholics of the Northwest Territories about one-tenth of what we are giving to the Prot-

Mr. BOURASSA.