

*Newfoundland*

will have been one of the great historic developments of any year in the history of Canada. And what is more, its importance transcends even our own national interests and our own national hopes, because this is one of the few occasions in recent years on which it is possible to speak of union rather than disunion, of construction rather than destruction. And when we see, as we have seen around the world, disunion, revolution and disorder, it is a great forward step that we in Canada and our neighbour Newfoundland should be able to point to this as a constructive achievement in the completion of confederation. But further, too, it is significant that this union should be coming at a time when we are looking forward to the consummation of a pact—also a union—of north Atlantic nations in the proposed north Atlantic security pact.

It is something more than a coincidence that these two great events in the history of our country should be brought about at the same time and for reasons which contribute one to the other. We can point to this work of union, this work of good will, this work of construction. The only other kinds of unions that have been consummated in recent years are unions whereby country after country has been brought under the domination of the soviet union by coercion, by force and by revolution. Our union today is being brought about by co-operation of men of good will, of men who have the same traditions, the same historical background, the same racial origin, and who also, as long as there has been any knowledge of North America in Europe, have lived on this continent beside each other.

It is interesting, too, that we should consider this proposal against the background of the act of confederation itself; for union will be the final achievement of what was begun in 1867. Confederation was brought into being in consequence of the discussions between the representatives of the various colonies in British North America, begun at Charlottetown in 1864 and continued at Halifax, Saint John and Fredericton, and then carried on again at Quebec with representatives there from the colony of Newfoundland. It is greatly to be regretted that it was not possible at that time to consummate this union. But it was possible there to make the beginning of the great nation of Canada, and so we saw added to the original group under the provisions of section 146 of the British North America Act or other legislation Manitoba in 1870, British Columbia in 1871, Prince Edward Island in 1873 and Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1905. They

formed the original nine, and we are now completing this union of the colonies of British North America of 1867 to form the nation of Canada of 1949.

The Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) referred to some of the differences in the nature of the problem that faced the representatives of the governments of Canada and of Newfoundland when we sat down in 1947 and again in 1948 to discuss the terms together. Just imagine how conditions have changed since 1905. This brings into focus the new factors that have to be determined, the additional complexities and the new and greatly extended functions of government. In 1905 there was no social security, there were no old age pensions or pensions for the blind, there was no unemployment insurance, there were no family allowances and there was no veterans charter. On the material side there was no civil aviation and there was no broadcasting, nor was there any income tax.

These matters that I have mentioned represent the immense change that has taken place in the functions and in the scope of government, but they also show an immense increase in the complexity of the subjects that had to be dealt with in the discussions with representatives, first of the convention, and then of the government of Newfoundland. These discussions started, as has been said by the Prime Minister, in 1947 when representatives of the cabinet met for several months with a committee representing the convention. In consequence of that discussion a proposal was produced headed "Proposed arrangement for the entry of Newfoundland into confederation". The subheading is very important. It reads as follows: "Terms believed to constitute a fair and equitable basis for union of Newfoundland with Canada should the people of Newfoundland decide to enter into confederation." It is dated October 29, 1947. By a letter dated the same day it was forwarded to His Excellency, Sir Gordon Macdonald, K.C.M.G., governor of Newfoundland, by the then Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. W. L. Mackenzie King. These terms for proposed arrangements had been worked out by the committee representing the convention under the chairmanship of Mr. F. G. Bradley, K.C., and by the Canadian government under the then Prime Minister, Mr. Mackenzie King.

These terms were made available to the governor and the government of Newfoundland and then they were tabled in the house and released to the press. The terms were before the people of Newfoundland when on the second referendum they decided to enter confederation. I would submit that those who have some difficulty over the fact that the terms of union have been negotiated with