

mix the two things together. Let us stick to what we have in hand; that is to say, to the principles and the schedules in regard to the province of Alberta. My hon. friend has suggested, that, according to the language of section 12, it was not contemplated that the schedules of this Bill should be settled at this table. I have no hesitation in saying to my hon. friend that in my own mind I thought that these schedules should not be settled at this table. My hon. friend from West Assiniboia (Mr. Scott), has stated my opinion in regard to that. I have taken that position all along in the debate. The discussions which took place between myself and my colleagues and the representatives of the Northwest legislature were confidential, and I shall not disclose them, but at all events the statement has been made by my hon. friend from West Assiniboia that it was my intention to have these schedules confirmed in the same manner as the schedules were confirmed at the time of the last Dominion redistribution; that is by a conference of members from both sides of the House. This view did not commend itself to the judgment of hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House and therefore we had to proceed as we are now proceeding.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. That is entire news to me. I never heard of any such suggestion.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I do not think my hon. friend heard of it.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I suppose I ought to have heard of it.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. My hon. friend from West Assiniboia stated that the matter was one which concerned more the members of the Northwest Territories, and he made the offer, I understand, that the schedules should be prepared by hon. members on both sides of the House from the Northwest. There was some misunderstanding with them. But, that was my intention.

Mr. LAKE. As I stated yesterday, that offer was never made to me.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I am not going to discuss what was done. My hon. friend from West Assiniboia has stated at all events what was my intention. If for one reason or the other it did not meet with approval that was my intention, but it has not been done and therefore we had to resort to the course of proceeding as we are now proceeding, or we had to resort to the course suggested by my hon. friend the leader of the opposition just now, or rather proposed in the motion of the hon. member for Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy), that we should refer the whole matter to a commission composed of judges.

Mr. FOSTER. Will my right hon. friend excuse me? He states to the committee that it was his intention that there should be a conference of members from both sides of the House to settle this matter. The com-

Sir WILFRID LAURIER.

mittee has been entirely in the dark as to whether that was the intention or not up to this moment.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. No.

Mr. FOSTER. What method did he take to apprise the opposition that in his mind the proper way to proceed was to have a conference of members from both sides of the House? The only thing that has occurred heretofore has been a statement by a member of the opposition side of the House that such a proposition was made by Northwest members supporting the government to Northwest members who were in opposition. Now we have a Northwest member rising in his place in the House and denying that any such proposition was made to him.

Mr. SCOTT. Will my hon. friend (Mr. Foster) permit me to say that we were told at the conference to which reference has been made by the premier of the Northwest Territories that he had been asked by the Prime Minister to get an agreement first about the boundary line between the provinces and next about the number of constituencies which should be apportioned to each province, and also to furnish the Prime Minister with the schedules for each province. The premier of the Territories, Mr. Haultain, came to the conference and suggested that we should help him in furnishing these schedules and help him to come to the conclusions that he might give to the government in regard to these matters.

Mr. FOSTER. That is now a new version. Now we come down to the point that the proposition was not made to the members from the Northwest on this side of the House, but that the proposition was made in some way to Mr. Haultain, but it was not in the mind of the right hon. Prime Minister, as he told us here, that there should be a conference between Mr. Haultain and somebody else to fix this up. There was to be no conference consonant with his idea between the members in this House on both sides. What had Mr. Haultain to do in so far as a conference between members representing the government and opposition in this House was concerned? Nothing at all. The statement made the other day by my hon. friend who has just spoken (Mr. Scott) and the statement he made to-day are not consistent with each other, and both of them flatly deny what the right hon. Prime Minister has said that he had in his mind, and what hon. gentlemen sitting on this side of the House declare is an absolute fact. The right hon. Prime Minister is the important man on that side of the House. If he had an idea of actually holding it, he placed himself in the position of taking no certain step to apprise the opposition of the fact that he had that idea and that he thought it would be right that it should prevail. Then, having done nothing and having brought the matter to this pass, he now gives as an excuse for the present basis and the present proceeding that