

Although that resolution was thrown out it proves that that was the opinion of a portion of the assembly at that time.

Mr. LAMONT. Did that resolution pass the legislature?

Mr. LAKE. No. I said it was thrown out, but it was moved by a gentleman who was a leading member of the opposition.

Mr. W. WRIGHT (Muskoka). Mr. Speaker, I ask the consideration of this House in rising as a new member to address it for the first time. I have been very much interested indeed in this debate, and I have been very much surprised at the different opinions that have been expressed by the legal gentlemen who have discussed this measure. There does not seem to be any uniformity of opinion amongst them—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Order.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. I rise to a question of order, Mr. Speaker. The hon. gentleman who last spoke (Mr. Lamont) made an excellent speech and he was most attentively listened to from this side of the House, but the moment he sits down hon. gentlemen seize the occasion to carry on a loud conversation. If they do not wish to hear the gentleman now addressing the House let them withdraw, but as long as they are in the chamber let them maintain the rules of the debate and keep silent.

Mr. SPEAKER. Order.

Mr. W. WRIGHT. I was proceeding to say that I was very much surprised indeed, not only at the difference of opinion amongst legal gentlemen, but the difference of opinion which prevails amongst the members of the ministry themselves as regards this measure. We found the then Minister of the Interior—I am referring to the time when the Bill was first introduced—taking exception to the educational clauses as they then existed, and stating that they did not at all meet with his approval. He so strongly objected to the original educational clauses that he found it necessary to place his resignation in the hands of the government, and now we find the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice stating that the substituted clauses, which we are now discussing, mean exactly the same thing as the clause in the Bill originally introduced. Now, if there is that much difference of opinion among the men who constitute the government, that much difference of opinion among the legal gentlemen on both sides of the House, what can the ordinary lay member think of the legislation? And how can he arrive at a decision? And I think that when there is so much difference of opinion, both with regard to the constitutional aspect of the question and our powers of dealing with it, it would be the part of wisdom for the government to withdraw this legislation for the time being and to get an expression of opinion from the highest court

in Canada as to what our powers really are and what we are really attempting to put on the statute-book. Now, I believe that we have certain powers by the Acts of confederation entitling us to pass legislation upon this matter. And I believe that we are assuming to do other things that we have not the power to do. I think that it is well within our powers to define the boundaries of a new province and to say whether in this case there shall be one province or two provinces or more. I believe we are authorized to exercise the creative powers necessary to bring these new provinces into full-fledged provincial autonomy. But when we attempt to do more than that, when we attempt to say that they shall not have the lands, or to say what kind of educational system they shall have, I think we are doing that which the Confederation Act never intended we should do. Looking at it from that standpoint, I shall have a few words to say with regard to the boundaries proposed under this Bill, because that, I think, is one of the things we are called upon to deal with. On looking up the geography of that country, and from some personal knowledge of it, I am unable to agree with the Bill now before the House. In my judgment, the proper course would have been to extend the boundaries of Manitoba westward and to create the balance of that territory into one province. It is pretty generally acknowledged, I think, all over this Dominion, that we have too many parliaments, too much legislative machinery and too great cost of administering the affairs of the country. I think it is the duty of this House to exercise their rights and privileges in the direction of lessening the cost to the people instead of increasing it. Now, what is the reason for creating two new provinces and leaving Manitoba a little garden patch alongside of them? We have to gather these opinions as best we may. One opinion expressed is that this has been punishment meted out to Manitoba on account of the school legislation she passed some years ago. I believe that has been denied by the hon. First Minister (Sir Wilfrid Laurier), who says he was never influenced by that consideration. I believe another reason which has been expressed is that our Roman Catholic friends in the territory bordering on Manitoba decline to come into that province on account of the school legislation. If there has been anything of that kind, there is no evidence of it before this House. We do not know the objections sent to or the representations made to the government with respect to that, so we cannot consider that a sufficient reason. Another reason advanced is that the people of the Northwest Territories adjacent to Manitoba object to coming in on account of the debt Manitoba has contracted. Looking at that in a reasonable and practical way, what is there in it? Manitoba has assumed some obliga-