

self, his own advisers; and under our own well known practice in these modern days, the only restriction put upon the executive, the Crown, or the sovereign, is that he must select advisers who have the support of a majority of the elected body. This new departure introduced in the statute of 1894 did not last long, and at this I am not surprised. In 1897 another and a final change took place. In 1897 an Act was passed in this House whereby it was provided that there should be an executive council to be chosen by the Lieutenant Governor from the members of the House, and practically having the support of a majority of the elected members of the legislature. This was in fact the last and final concession and it was the application of the principle of ministerial responsibility. This has been the law ever since; it is the law to-day. So that, Sir, it is manifest that at this moment the people of the Northwest Territories are in the enjoyment and have been for several years, not only of full ministerial responsibility, not only of full constitutional government, but also of a large measure of local autonomy. A great deal has been done, in fact, more has been done than we have to do to-day. We have to take the last step but it is easy and comparatively unimportant in view of and in comparison with what has already been accomplished. The metal has been in the crucible and all we have to do now, is to put the stamp of Canadian nationality upon it.

The House is aware that some two years ago or thereabouts there came to us a very general desire from the Northwest Territories for immediate admission into the confederation as provinces. I did not believe at the time for my part, that this request, respectable as it was, proceeded so much from an actual need as from a sentiment. It was to me the expression of a sentiment, a sentiment most honourable, a sentiment most worthy because it was an expression of the self-reliance of young and ambitious communities. The House is also aware of the answer which we gave to the Territories at that time. We represented to them that in our judgment, the time was inopportune for taking this question into parliament, that as we were on the eve of a general election, the time and occasion would be more propitious and more fitting after that event when the Territories would have the benefit on this floor of a larger representation. These views were generally accepted. The elections have taken place and immediately after the elections, or as soon as was practicable thereafter, we invited the executive of the Northwest Territories to send delegates here to confer with us upon the measure which was to be introduced so as to admit them into the confederation. We have had the benefit of the presence of Mr. Haultain, the Premier of the Northwest Territories and of Mr. Bulyea, one of his

colleagues, and we have had the advantage of several conferences with them. We have had the advantage also of the presence and advice of several of the members from the Territories, and now, Sir, it is my privilege and my honour—I deem it indeed a privilege and an honour—to offer this Bill to the House.

When we came to consider the problem before us it became very soon apparent to me, at all events, that there were four subjects which dominated all the others; that the others were of comparatively minor importance, but that there were four which I was sure the parliament of Canada and the Canadian people at large might be expected to take a deep interest in. The first was: How many provinces should be admitted into the confederation coming from the Northwest Territories—one, or two or more? The next question was: in whom should be vested the ownership of the public lands? The third question was: What should be the financial terms to be granted to these new provinces? And the fourth and not the least important by any means was the question of the school system which would be introduced—not introduced because it was introduced long ago, but should be continued in the Territories.

Now, Sir, I will proceed to examine one after the other, all these questions. The first, as I have just said is: How many provinces should be admitted into the confederation? There is considerable variety, as everybody knows, in the area of the different provinces of the confederation. Prince Edward Island has an area of 2,184 miles, Nova Scotia 21,428 miles, New Brunswick 27,985 miles, Quebec 351,873, Ontario 260,862, Manitoba 73,732, and British Columbia 372,630, or a total area for the seven provinces of confederation of 1,110,694 miles. Now, the Territories which are to-day under the control and jurisdiction of the local legislature have exactly the same area as that of the seven provinces of the Dominion. The total area of the seven provinces, as I said a moment ago is 1,110,694 miles and the area of the different territories is as follows:

	Miles.
Assiniboia.. . . .	88,879
Saskatchewan.. . . .	107,618
Alberta.. . . .	101,883
Athabaska.. . . .	251,965
Mackenzie.. . . .	562,182
Total.. . . .	1,112,527

Or, an area a little greater than the total area of the seven provinces of the Dominion. Now, as I have said there is a great variety in the sizes of our provinces; in fact, it is very much with the Canadian Confederation as with the American Union. There are in the Canadian Confederation provinces of unequal sizes as