

I wish to make the statement again that a conference was held several evenings before the 21st of February, several days before these Bills were introduced. The conference was called by Mr. Haultain and to that conference were invited, I understood, all the members of the House of Commons from the Northwest Territories, including the member for Qu'Appelle, all the senators from the Territories, and there were also present at the conference the members then in Ottawa of the Northwest government. I make the statement that Mr. Haultain told that conference that it had been suggested to him by the Prime Minister that he should endeavour to get an agreement from the representatives from the Northwest upon the boundary line between the two provinces, secondly, with regard to the number of local constituencies which should be given to each province, and, thirdly, with regard to the divisions of these local constituencies.

The hon. gentlemen from the Northwest Territories who sit on the opposite side of the House have taken the position that I was making an untrue statement when I stated what I have quoted. It was so interpreted by the reporter of the Ottawa 'Citizen,' which paper this morning had the heading 'Walter Scott's statement in regard to conference flatly contradicted.' Let us begin at the beginning. We had the statement at that conference from Mr. Haultain that he had been asked by the Prime Minister to get an agreement from all the members from the Northwest Territories with regard to these three points. Is there any hon. gentleman opposite who is prepared now to deny that statement? If so let him speak now. I make that statement now in the hearing of the Prime Minister.

Mr. LAKE. So far as I am concerned I was not present and so I am not able to contradict it.

Mr. SCOTT. We have the fact admitted then that the Prime Minister as head of this government did desire, not to perpetrate something in a hole and corner with regard to redistribution and force it upon the country, but that he did desire that the Northwest members, representing both political parties, should arrive at an amicable arrangement with regard to these points. My hon. friends opposite are not so fast in making denials now as they were last evening and the evening before. Let me tell them that when we get out into the Northwest Territories they will have some trouble in denying many of the statements they have made in this House and in certain districts in this country. My hon. friend from Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lake) will have some explanations to make when we get out into the Territories on these different matters.

Mr. LAKE. I have neither admitted nor denied the statements made by the hon. member for West Assiniboia. I could not possibly do so because I was not present at the conference and therefore cannot speak from personal knowledge.

Mr. SCOTT. Then we have the fact admitted that the head of the government did ask Mr. Haultain, who is not a member of the Liberal party, to get a conference. After these schedules were brought down we had the Conservative press throughout Canada crying out that an outrage was perpetrated; we have had three days' discussion in this House now, and the cry of outrage has pretty well petered out. Gentlemen opposite are not able to bring any just argument against these schedules; they are not able to get down to figures and make comparisons to show that there is any outrage; they are practically brought down to this contention: that because the government and the members supporting the government are entirely responsible for these plans of redistribution, that therefore an outrage has been perpetrated.

Mr. LANCASTER. Did not some of the newspapers supporting the Liberal party or the so-called Liberal party say so too?

Mr. SCOTT. I understand that one or two Liberal papers in southern Alberta have made such statements, and against these we place the statements made with equal force by Conservative newspapers; the Edmonton 'Journal,' for instance, one of the rankest of the Tory organs in the Territories made a statement to the very opposite effect. We come down to this point now, that our friends opposite are unable to support their contention that an outrage has been perpetrated by any other argument than that members on this side of the House are practically wholly responsible for these plans of distribution. I made the statement that the leader of the government suggested to Mr. Haultain—who is certainly not a Liberal and who is certainly not prejudiced against the gentlemen opposite—I made the statement that Mr. Haultain was asked by the leader of the government to take the responsibility of getting an agreement, and Mr. Haultain called that meeting to get such agreement. My hon. friend from Qu'Appelle says he never heard anything about any suggestion for an agreement with regard to the constituencies. Who is responsible for that? The leader of the government is not responsible; we are not responsible; I fancy that responsibility will have to fall upon his friend Mr. Haultain, who certainly received the suggestion from the leader of the government and called a meeting for that purpose. If my hon. friends from Alberta and Calgary never heard of the suggestion, as I understand they contend, it must be their friend Mr. Haultain who neglected to follow the suggestion that was made him by the leader of the government.

Mr. FOSTER. My hon. friend (Mr. Scott) has a good memory and will he say what questions were brought forward for discussion at what he calls 'that conference'?

Mr. SCOTT. Certainly. I will read a little more from the statement I made here