

the Interior said this afternoon, there is a community of interest and a community of communication to-day between Alberta and that section of Athabaska north of it. Under such circumstances we thought it preferable to join this section of Athabaska to the new province, because there is to-day a community of interest and a community of communication. Now, Edmonton is a base of communication with the settlement north of it, and there is a great deal of settlement going northward to-day.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Is the same true of the eastern province?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Not exactly. The section of Athabaska which is north of Saskatchewan is only partially agricultural. My hon. friend, if he will look at the Bill which was prepared by the government of the Northwest Territories, will see that they proposed to make one province of the district of Saskatchewan and the district of Assiniboia, to be the province of Saskatchewan up to the 57th degree of latitude, whereas the district of Athabaska extends to the 60th degree of latitude. Up to the 57th degree there is a fair agricultural country north of Saskatchewan, beyond the 57th degree of latitude the country becomes barren until it reaches absolute barrenness in Mackenzie. These are the reasons why we include Athabaska in these two new provinces.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I would be doubtful as to whether that agricultural country stops precisely at the 60th degree of north latitude.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. It stops below it.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Then we ought to stop below it as well.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The map will show that in the north of Athabaska in the valley of the Peace river there is good land, all that section along the Peace river is good land, so far as we know.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. It would appear then that we are not exactly following the boundaries of the fertile lands, or lands suitable for agriculture, though it may not be absolutely necessary that we should follow them. One further suggestion. The district of Athabaska has been administered without representation. The ex-Minister of the Interior made that remark which I have already referred to, that it is better for the Dominion to rid itself of the local administration of this new territory as soon as possible. Why should we not attach Mackenzie to the new province just in the same way that Athabaska has been attached to the territories in the past?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The ideas of the ex-Minister of the Interior are that all these territories should be attached to existing provinces, to Saskatchewan, to Alberta,

to Manitoba and so on. There is a good deal to be said in favour of that view. But I think at present we had better confine ourselves to the proposal we have adopted. But if we are to have a conference, as I have indicated we should have, it would be perhaps good policy that we should also ask Alberta to join us and perhaps Ontario, and perhaps Quebec, and to ask all those provinces to take over the administration of all those lands so far as they extend in British territory.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I think that would be satisfactory.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. What would become of the Yukon?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. That would become part of British Columbia.

Mr. SPROULE. If I understand that correctly, it is not proposed then for the outlying territories to have any government whatever after these provinces are established?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Yes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. A Northwest Territories Act will be introduced providing for the government of these territories in the same way practically as Keewatin is now provided for.

Mr. SPROULE. All of the outlying territories?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Yes.

Mr. SPROULE. Is that modelled after the provision in the law which puts Keewatin under the administration of Manitoba, or modelled after the Northwest Territories Act?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. It is modelled after the Northwest Territories Act. It will provide for the executive government of the territories which were formerly administered under the Northwest Territories Act, and which will now remain outside the limits of the new provinces. It will not include the Yukon on the west or Keewatin on the east.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. Will they have a legislature?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. No; there is no need of a legislature, because there is no population. Keewatin has been administered for thirty years by the province of Manitoba. I do not think there are 200 people in Keewatin. There is no population in Mackenzie, Ungava or Franklin, and it would be useless to have a legislature. The government of Manitoba has administered the Keewatin district.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Do I understand that the hon. Minister of Justice proposes to place Mackenzie and some of these other territories in the same relation to the new provinces that Keewatin is to Manitoba?