

ment. If the hon. member for North Toronto were here, I would put the question to him—perhaps the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Sproule) can answer it—what basis is there beyond their imagination for such an assertion as that?

Mr. SPROULE. What assertion?

Mr. SCOTT. That the Liberal candidates were asked as to what their action would be if returned to parliament on the matter of schools and that their answer was: You must trust to the government. I make this statement here, that beyond the question that was put by Mr. Haultain in Regina to the then Minister of the Interior, who was going to Regina a week later, I never heard the question mentioned in the whole of my campaign. The question was never put to me; I never gave an answer in regard to this question. Everybody knew that the Northwest Territories were to be granted autonomy very early in the new parliament and no Roman Catholic or Protestant ever came to me privately or ever put the question at a public meeting or asked me in any way, prior to the 3rd November, what my action would be in that regard. This is further proof of the most convincing nature, if any were needed beyond what I have already given to the House, that the Northwest Territories were not asking for any more freedom in regard to schools than that which they have enjoyed for the last 14 years. The hour is late—

Some hon. MEMBERS. Go on.

Mr. SCOTT. Some hon. gentlemen appear to be very much concerned about the meaning of the new section 16, about the meaning of the Bills as they at present stand. The hon. member for Calgary (Mr. McCarthy), the other evening, expressed what he considered a doubt about it and this doubt was repeated last night by the hon. member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lake). They are doubtful whether any change has been made in the Bills. I am not very much concerned with the meaning of the original section 16, because we are not dealing with that. But, of course, we are very much concerned with the meaning of the Bills in the shape in which they are going to be adopted, we hope. I would ask the House just for a moment to try and wipe away some of the technical and constitutional rubbish with which some hon. members seek to confuse our minds. The main question as presented by the original section 16 had reference to the provision for the distribution of the money to all classes of schools. In the first place the right was given to minorities to establish separate schools and in the next place it was provided that an equitable division of the funds should be granted to them. There was no connecting link, so it appeared to us, which would keep the separate schools under state control as

they are at the present time. The new section 16 simply validates and keeps in effect ordinances Nos. 29 and 30 of the Northwest Territories passed in 1901. My hon. friend from Calgary advanced the contention that these ordinances which, when they were of questionable validity, as some men think, yet did undoubtedly effect the total abolition of the church or religious school, will by the process of acquiring unquestioned validity effect the restoration of the ecclesiastical school. It seems to me that the proposition only needs to be stated clearly to constitute its own answer. The right to separate schools is very clearly laid down in section 41 of ordinance No. 29, as follows:

The minority of the ratepayers in any district, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, may establish a separate school therein, and in such case the ratepayers establishing such Protestant or Roman Catholic separate school shall be liable only to assessments of such rates as they impose upon themselves in respect thereof.

I believe this is the exact language imported from section 14 of the old Northwest Territories Act. But that is governed in the ordinance by section 4, which says:

The department shall have control and management of all kindergarten schools, public and separate schools, normal schools, teachers' institutes and the education of deaf, deaf mute and blind persons.

The department, subject to the legislature, in turn subject to the people, shall have the control and management of separate schools and if that were not sufficient we also have section 45 which states:

After the establishment of a separate school district under the provisions of this ordinance such separate school district and the board thereof shall possess and exercise all rights, powers, privileges and be subject to the same liabilities and method of government as is herein provided in respect of public school districts.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that if we just keep our minds free from being confused by technicalities, keep our minds on the point which is as to whether or not we are to have a separate school controlled by the church or a separate school controlled by the state, there is no liability of any conflict of opinion about the legislation which the government asks the House to adopt. I am not going to take the time to read the various regulations in these ordinances, they have already been placed in 'Hansard,' but I say that there is in them no limitation of power to control, vary, improve or do anything in relation to the management of schools, all the schools, the separate school and the public school, except that the province must by legislation provide for public schools and permit minorities to have separate schools, both of which, conducted in the same way and