

(Mr. Sifton) correctly, he stated that it was only for the time being that this was going to be retained, but that in time to come, after certain international difficulties had disappeared this jurisdiction would be handed back to the provinces. As the dividing line runs now the area of the two provinces will show a considerable difference. As I figure it the area of the eastern province will be 258,400 square miles and that of the western province 249,600, or a difference of 8,800 square miles. So, this line must have been crowded west for some purpose and perhaps I may be able to point out before I sit down what that was for. I desire also to call attention of the advisability of including in the new provinces the great northern country. I pointed out that no man in the west but would hope that their great expectations would be realized, yet to-day in view of what the Prime Minister has said we cannot consider that an agricultural country. I have already shown that the census of 1901 shows that the population of Athabaska was 242 white people, 2,395 half-breeds and 3,700 Indians, and 262 unspecified. Now, there may have been people who have gone in there since 1901, but there are also people who have come out. To my mind the very best evidence that there is not much permanent settlement in that country is seen in looking at the map published by the Department of the Interior only a year ago. We find that land does not appear to have been surveyed. There may have been preliminary surveys, but from the map as it stands, we do not find any township subdivisions. And a man cannot go very far wrong in saying that there will not be much permanent settlement where there is no assurance of title. Settlers do not squat to-day in advance of survey. And the conditions of the country are not such as will make the administration cheaply handled by the provincial government. It is not that the people of the new provinces are desirous of shirking the duties of administering it, but the district to the north of the provinces will be still under Dominion administration. It would cost practically very little to administer this through the Dominion government. The questions that will arise will be mainly interprovincial. Take the regulation and preservation of the fur trade, for instance. Suppose that one province establishes a certain close season for certain animals while the other does not; and the Dominion government may have a different law with regard to the same matter further north. If the inland fisheries are handed over to the new provinces, the same difficulty is likely to arise in regard to these—there will be the same conflict of jurisdiction. I have spoken of the boundaries not having been fixed with a view to economical and efficient administration. It seems to me that political

considerations have had a great deal to do with the making of the eastern boundary. If we look at the map and see the dividing line; it will be found, if you take the Rocky Mountains out of the western province, the western province is practically a triangle with the apex at the south. And, if you look at the election returns, you will find that the south elects two Conservatives and the north two Liberals. Now, I submit, in all fairness, that considerations of this kind should not interfere when you are creating limits to provinces for all time to come. It seems to me that the fathers of confederation sat down in a spirit of give and take and tried to make a compact free from political consideration; and I think that is an example that might well be followed. The result of making these boundaries for the western province is that the further north you go the greater the Liberal majority. And that is the reason why the line is fixed sixty miles west of where the hon. member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton) thinks it ought to be.

There is only one other question I wish to refer to for a moment, and it is the selection of the provisional capital. The First Minister when he introduced the Bill stated that this was a matter that gave them some trouble, but they looked at the map and selected the centre. Well, if that is the principle that governed and they are selecting the centre, why did they not select Athabaska Landing, for that is the centre and it would be more convenient for the population of Athabaska to whom I referred a few moments ago. If he wishes to consider the convenience of the people let him take a point half way between Edmonton and any point on the main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and he will find in the southern portion there are constructed 980 miles of railway, and in the northern only 150 miles. I introduced the deputation from Calgary who interviewed the members of the government and asked them to select a non-competitive point as the provisional capital. They suggested the selection of Medicine Hat, Banff, Lethbridge, Macleod, Red Deer or any other point that would be near the centre of trade and the centre of population, and that would meet the convenience of the people whose business called them to the capital and the convenience of the members of the first legislature. But, for some reason, I cannot say what, the government has seen fit to select the point at the end of railway construction and away from what I hope to be able to show when the clause comes up in committee is the centre of trade and the centre of population. If it is the convenience of the people that is being considered, I would ask the First Minister to look at the map again and to look at the distribution in the local House for Alberta. In the local House there are