

Mr. OLIVER. If that is the view taken by the hon. member for Calgary, I am very glad to hear it, but he is able to speak for himself and he did not see fit to speak in the way the hon. member for Haliburton (Mr. Hughes) has spoken. That matter will however, come up later on. We are speaking now on the general question of the boundary, and I am stating the case on behalf of the inclusion of the district of Athabaska. That part which includes the Peace and Athabaska rivers is in the new province of Alberta, and there are good reasons for its inclusion, and no reason has been shown why the 69th parallel is not a reasonable and proper boundary on the north. The Grand Trunk Pacific is surveyed to pass through a portion of the district of Athabaska in the Peace river region; and by reason of the location of the surveyed line within reasonable distance of the navigable waters of Peace river, we have every reason to believe that the construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific connecting, as it will ultimately, with the waters of the Peace river, will open up to settlement 500 miles of agricultural country lying along the unbroken navigation of Peace river. I agree with the hon. member for South York when he magnifies the importance of that country, but I cannot agree with the hon. member for Calgary when he minimizes it as he does.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. The Minister of the Interior is not making quite a fair statement when he says Athabaska is entitled to representation in the local House. It would still have representation in the new territorial government, just as these provinces now have. And when he speaks of the Grand Trunk Pacific running through a portion of Athabaska, he must remember that the Canadian Pacific Railway has been running through these present Territories for twenty years during which they still have been Territories. As regards representation in the Dominion, provision can still be made for representation here, Athabaska can be given a seat in this House just as well as the Yukon, so that there is every provision for its representation. But there may be other reasons why Athabaska is brought in now and they may develop later. They may have a political aspect. He has not made good his plea for the inclusion of this country at present. It cannot be on the ground of representation, because there cannot be provision made for representation both from the local and the Dominion point of view without bringing it into the new province. Athabaska should be kept as it is as the basis of a new province to the north rather than be included in the two new provinces. If, at a future day, we saw fit to bring them in, they could be brought in on the present line. But, to my mind, the future of the Peace River country, Athabaska, the Yukon and Mackenzie could be better controlled by keeping one territorial government

and having them under the jurisdiction of that government, and by pursuing a policy on the part of the Dominion, of exploring that country, taking an interest in its development, and maintaining law and order within its borders.

Mr. OLIVER. If I have not made myself clear as to the reason for including Athabaska, I wish to do so. The reason for including it is that, at the present time and as a matter of fact, there is an absolute community of interest between the district of Athabaska and the portion of the district of Alberta which it adjoins on the north. That community of interest will be emphasized and increased, as I have pointed out, by the construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway through—

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. What portion of this country does it traverse?

Mr. OLIVER. If hon. members will notice, it passes sufficiently near the navigable waters of the Peace river that a comparatively short railroad connection will give the railway the advantage of 500 miles of first-class steamboat navigation, extending through a country which is understood to be of unbroken fertility, and surely that is a question worthy of consideration. I want to point out that there is to-day an absolute community of interest between the northern part of the district of Alberta and the Peace river and Athabaska river part of the district of Athabaska, and that a provincial organization in the district of Alberta which does not include those districts of Athabaska, and does not provide for their being brought under the same administration, will tend to the disadvantage of the people both of Alberta and of Athabaska. There is every reason why there should be a community of administration between these two parts of the same country. The trade of the whole district of Athabaska is done with Edmonton and is connected directly with that of northern Alberta. There is no reason at the present time for an arbitrary division such as the northern boundary of the present district of Alberta. There is every reason why that line should be obliterated, and the settlement and development of the Peace river and Athabaska river country placed under the jurisdiction of the new provincial government.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. Is there any reason why the northern boundary of Athabaska should be placed where it is—any natural division?

Mr. OLIVER. I cannot say that there is any natural division. It seemed good to the government of years ago that set apart the postal or provisional districts of the Territories, to provide that the northern boundary of Athabaska should be the 60th parallel, which as hon. gentlemen will notice, is also the northern boundary of British Columbia. Yet, the 60th parallel may be no