House what purported to be a brief history, from official sources, of the legislation with respect to separate schools since 1863. At the end of that pamphlet they went beyond the bounds of history, and made a distinct appeal on the subject. They said that 'it would be a breach of faith and a violation of the British North America Act to disturb now rights and privileges granted thirty years ago'—a violation of the British North America Act; and I would like, by the way, to ask who it is that now proposes to violate the British North America Act? But the pamphlet did not rest at this. The rights and privileges granted thirty years ago were defined in another part of this pamphlet as 'the same system as prevailed in Ontario and Quebec.' After issuing this pamphlet, in which this strong appeal is made for separate schools, they proceeded to draw up a set of clauses. To provide for what? According to the Prime Minister in his speech on the introduction of the Bill, it was to enable the minority to establish their own schools and to share in the public moneys as the law is to-day. A similar statement was made a few days later by the Minister of Justice, that they drew up these clauses to give effect to the provisions of the Act of 1875 and the conditions that are now in force in the Northwest Territories. Now, we are told by the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Customs, the member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton) and many others that the ordinances now in force in the Northwest Territories, for all practical purposes, simply provide for a national school system, and not for a separate school system in its recognized sense—that is, in the sense in which it prevails in Ontario and Quebec.

So we have this position, that, after issuing a pamphlet in favour of separate schools, they drew up a clause which did not provide for separate schools as they understood them, but simply provided for what was in practice a national school system. These four legal gentlemen drew up this clause which the Minister of Justice said was drawn up designedly to be 'so clear and simple that any man might understand it;' those were his very words. But a revelation came a few days later. The hon. member for Brandon (Mr. Sifton) returns and tells us that those clear and simple words have a deeper meaning, that they actually do provide for the same system as prevails in Ontario and Quebec, and in addition give, for the support of separate schools, a share of a $50,000,000 endowment which had been specially held in trust for public schools.

And these four legal gentlemen apparently never saw what they were embodying in this clause! They believed all the time they were simply perpetuating the law as it exists at present. For the last three or four weeks there have been anxious negotiations on the other side of the House, and they have finally agreed to lay the blame on the poor draughtsman. These four gentlemen then took back the clauses they had drafted originally, and provided a substitute which in the opinion of the member for Brandon really does provide for the schools now in existence and nothing more. The Prime Minister in introducing the amended clauses explained that the objections to the original clauses were that they were 'too broad and too vague, and if adopted would create confusion instead of certainty.' Remember these were the very clauses which we were told were to be so clear and simple that any man could understand them. The Prime Minister told us that the amended clauses simply embody the law of the country which has been in force for thirteen or fourteen years; but I would remind the House that the right hon. gentleman said the same thing in reference to the original clauses. The Minister of Finance says that the present clauses continue for ever the school system which now exists, and the Minister of Customs explained how simple it all was, and he told us which of the different clauses of the territorial ordinances were affected by this Bill. If the Minister of Customs were a lawyer he would have been a little more careful, but having had experience of the difficulties of four of the leading legal gentlemen of the cabinet, some of us began to think a layman's opinion might throw some light upon the question. However that may be, the member for Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy) showed us pretty conclusively the other day that there is more behind this matter than we have been led to believe, and that the separate school clause of 1875 is re-enacted in its entirety by the present legislation, and that for all practical purposes the substituted clauses are just the same as the original. Is it any wonder that parliament and the country are extremely suspicious as to what there is underlying all this, and that we want to know distinctly and definitely what this proposal really does mean? We find the very peculiar circumstance that the most violent advocates of separate schools as well as the most violent opponents of separate schools on the other side of the House, are, one and all of them urging us to accept these educational clauses. We are told by one set of these gentlemen that they strongly approved of these clauses because they would tend to disminish the number of separate schools and I suppose, finally do away with them altogether. By another set we are urged in impassioned language to vote for the clauses and give the Roman Catholic minority their rights; we are told that there is a religious principle at stake and that no country can be great and can endure without separate schoole. Why all this flood of eloqu-