

be put in the possession of the public resources, lands, timber and minerals in the same way as the other provinces were put in possession of those resources. I believe that that portion of the confederation arrangement by which the original provinces retained control over their public resources was looked upon by the fathers of confederation as the keystone of the whole scheme.

The hon. member then went on to quote from speeches made by Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir A. T. Galt in connection with confederation, in which they explained the reasons for placing the public lands at the disposal of the different provinces. My hon. friend went on to say :

When Prince Edward Island was taken into confederation a grant was voted her for the very reason that she did not have any public land.

Further on he said :

The people of the Territories contend that the public lands of that territory are now simply held in trust by parliament until such time as provinces may be created in that area. They firmly believe that their contention is good. But even if a strict legal or moral right cannot be established by the people of the Territories to be given possession of their local resources, I appeal to this House whether it would not be unwise and impolitic to create provinces out there on any different basis from that on which other provinces stand. Entire equality is the only sure guarantee of the permanency of the confederation structure. Is it not a fair proposition that the citizens of the Northwest Territories should be looked upon in all respects as equal to the citizen of any other province of Canada. The subjects that come under the purview of the local government affect the people more closely than those dealt with by this parliament, and the best way to promote the progress of that country will be to give as much financial ability as possible to the local legislature to deal with their local affairs, so that education, public works and all local services may be dealt with efficiently and adequately. My opinion is that by no other means can parliament do as much at one stroke to promote progress and the true welfare, not of the Territories alone but of Canada as a whole, as by placing the main portion of western Canada in a strong, efficient, capable position as concerns its local government.

My hon. friend concluded as follows :

I trust that when the time comes, whether it comes next year, or the succeeding year, and I feel assured that it will come before the end of the term of this parliament, that parliament may deal with the question on broad principles and endeavour to place the citizens of the Northwest Territories in a position entirely equal, in no way inferior to the position which is occupied by the citizens of any other province of Canada.

I have not heard that my hon. friend has since receded from the views he there expressed. He did not, at any rate, in the fall of 1903, and I think we are entitled to believe that those are his opinions still ; and

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if he has any mandate from the Northwest Territories, it can only be to give effect to the terms of his speech which he distributed throughout that country far and wide.

Let me now make a comparison between the value of the lands when Manitoba entered confederation and their value to-day. In 1883 Sir Charles Tupper read a statement to this House, which showed that the sales of land from 1872 to 1880 had been less than two million acres, and that the average price received was 31½ cents per acre. Further on he declared that only 13 cents per acre out of this sum had been paid to date. Compare the value of the lands in these days with their value in the Territories to-day. We find that the Canadian Pacific Railway lands were selling in January at an average price of \$4.10 per acre and the school lands at an average of nearly \$10 per acre. We also have the statement of the First Minister that \$3 an acre is a very moderate rate for land in that country. Therefore, I contend there is no comparison whatever between the conditions of Manitoba in 1870 and those of the Territories in 1901.

Coming to the question of the compensation offered to the new provinces for the loss of their public lands, I would like to ask the First Minister what is the basis of that calculation? Why have the government selected 25,000,000 acres out of the 175,000,000 which, roughly speaking, will be comprised in each of these new provinces, and why have they placed a value of only \$1.50 per acre on these 25,000,000 acres? Again why do they only pay 1 per cent interest at first on those lands, and how do they arrive at the gradual increase in the rate of interest as population increases in that country? I can only suppose that they began to argue the question backwards. I would presume that their first thought was : How much money is the least we can give to the people of these provinces? And having decided upon the figure, they began to hunt for some method of making it up. The whole arrangement seems to me an extraordinary one. I could not find a word to describe it until the Prime Minister supplied it the other day, when he used the word 'ramshackle.' That well characterizes the arrangements made in this Bill for compensation to the provinces for the loss of their public lands. It will be noticed that compensation is only offered for one-seventh of the whole area or one-fifth of the whole area still undisposed of according to a return brought down the other day. Who will say that 113,000,000 acres out of these 138,000,000 still undisposed of in each of these provinces are of no value whatever, that only 25,000,000 are of any value, and that the value of those shall be fixed at \$1.50 per acre? Further than that, no consideration whatever is given for the mines, minerals and timber which are being withheld from us. As to the fisheries, I do not