

tering and care, and therefore we will not give you the control of your lands. The government thus set up a condition of things to palliate their desire to withhold from the provinces the reasonable control of their own lands. I have not heard from any hon. gentleman opposite one word of explanation why these new provinces should be obliged to take in undeveloped Athabaska, a territory of over 200,000 square miles in which we are told there are only 242 white people. Why should that territory be added to this developed territory which is itself entitled to provincial status, unless it be to enable the government to say: Oh, you cannot have your lands, we must develop these undeveloped portions. If there had been no such desire on the part of the government I doubt if we should have heard a word as to withholding from the three older districts the administration of their own lands. What other excuse has been given? We heard from the Prime Minister that in the interests of immigration it was essential that the Dominion should retain control of the lands because the new provinces might act adversely to the interests of the Dominion as a whole in that regard. That was an extraordinary reason to come from the Prime Minister. Section 95 of the British North America Act provides for such a case and in a way which leaves no room whatever for any question on the part of the Dominion. That section provides:

In each province the legislature may make laws in relation to agriculture in the province, and to immigration into the province; and it is hereby declared that the parliament of Canada may, from time to time, make laws in relation to agriculture in all or any of the provinces and to immigration into all or any of the provinces—

So, stopping there for a moment, you will see that even if we gave all this territory to these new provinces, it would not deprive this parliament of its power to legislate as regards agriculture and immigration. The province could legislate and we could legislate. So that we could take care of the Dominion interest. But the clause goes further:

—and any law of the legislature of a province relative to agriculture or to immigration shall have effect in and for the province, as long and as far only as it is not repugnant to any Act of the parliament of Canada.

So that the very reason that was given by the First Minister for removing from the control of the province the administration of its lands is provided for in the British North America Act. That was the one reason given in all this debate that seemed to have anything in it to justify the withdrawal from the province of the control of its lands; and section 95 seems to have been most thoughtfully provided for the purpose of meeting such a case. If there is any other reason why this new province should

Mr. BARKER.

not have the control of its lands we would like to hear it, because the reason that has been given is absolutely without foundation. The Minister of the Interior, who is familiar with this clause, could perhaps tell us some other reason than that given by the First Minister; for it seems to me, after reading section 95 of the British North America Act, that there is no reason whatever in what the First Minister has told us. Until the Minister of the Interior gives us some other reason it seems to be our duty, in constituting this new province, to give the province full control over its lands.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. I think the hon. member for Hamilton is very innocent if he does not see what the real reason of this legislation in regard to the public lands is. The real object of this Bill is to carry out a contract by which the government seeks to impose an unpopular school system on the two provinces of the west. To do that, in the first place, they interfere with the boundaries of the provinces. Athabaska is taken in in order that the two legislatures may be constituted with a certain political complexion; in the next place, the schedule of constituencies, as outlined, has a very distinct object, and that is to secure two legislatures, if at all possible, that will endorse this obnoxious school legislation; and, in the third place, the government are keeping control of the lands for the political power which it gives them in the elections which are to come off in those provinces. That is the object of this legislation, especially with regard to the lands. The government, with their agents, will be masters of the situation. They will have land agents administering the land laws, and these agents can intimidate the settlers just as they wish. These land agents will be political agents and nothing else; they will be there in the interest of the government. Their whole energies in the forthcoming provincial elections, if they are ever held, of which I have some doubt, will be devoted to the object of electing two legislatures that will pass such school legislation which, once passed, will be fastened on those provinces for all time. Any one can realize what the power of the government will be in those provinces, with the full control of these lands. They will have the granting of patents to the settlers; and especially the large foreign element which is in a portion of the constituency of the Minister of the Interior, can be handled by the land agents, as they are called, but the political agents, as I would call them, of the government. In that way there will be two legislatures elected that will try to fasten this obnoxious school system on these two provinces. That, to my mind, is the main object of this Bill, and that is the reason the government propose to retain control of the lands. Why are not the men of the Northwest making the fight they did in the old