

in this interview which I might comment upon. It is quite evident from the explanation of His Excellency, and is indeed obvious to all, that this interview was not a public discussion, it was merely a friendly conversation between two gentlemen who had met together to discuss a question which they had previously discussed. Now, my hon. friend has hinted, or has attempted to create the impression, that the government of Canada was actuated by sinister motives with regard to the province of Manitoba, and that we refused to extend her boundaries because we wished to punish the province of Manitoba for having abolished separate schools. To establish his point he quotes a statement in a Quebec newspaper, the 'Soleil,' which is a newspaper friendly to myself and which claims to be my organ.

Sir, it is very strange that whenever a newspaper friendly to the government says something which the hon. gentleman thinks is favourable to themselves, he at once holds the government responsible for the statement. Well, does he hold me responsible, for instance, for the attitude of the 'Globe' upon this occasion, or of the other newspapers who do not support the government? And if I am not to be held responsible for the attitude taken by the 'Globe,' why in the name of common sense should I be held responsible for the opinion of the 'Soleil'? There would be just as much reason in one as in the other. 'Le Soleil' is a paper friendly to myself. But, because 'Le Soleil' is friendly to myself and wants to serve me, surely it does not follow that under any circumstances, I am bound to be responsible for everything appearing in 'Le Soleil,' or in any newspaper. It would be absurd to say that because men agree upon political matters, they will therefore see eye to eye in everything. There are other matters than politics on which men can differ in opinion. And it is, to my thinking, a position unworthy of my hon. friend (Mr. R. L. Borden) to say that the government should be supposed to have been actuated by belief in a certain line of policy because that policy was supported by a certain newspaper. The day has not yet come when the Canadian government must look for its policy or the ground for its opinions to newspapers, however respectable those newspapers may be. We decide these matters upon our own lines and according to our best judgment. But the hon. gentleman has endeavoured to convey the idea—he did not say it in so many words—that there had been a sort of understanding. He did not use the word 'conspiracy,' but he intended to convey the idea, if he meant anything at all, that there had been a conspiracy between the government of Canada,—and in particular myself and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Fitzpatrick)—and Monseigneur Sbarretti to do certain things,—that is to say, that the extension of the

boundaries of Manitoba should depend on the restoration of separate schools in that province. Why, we have only to take the facts in chronological order as they are known to have occurred to show how unfounded, how absolutely unfounded, how devoid even of the shadow of foundation, such an assertion as that made by my hon. friend is. What are the facts? As stated yesterday, we received in the month of January, towards the end of it, the request of the Manitoba government for a conference. We agreed to that conference, and it took place on the 17th of February. There were present a subcommittee of council and the question was discussed. We told the delegates that they should have an answer at an early day. That answer they had on the floor of this House four days later, on the 21st of February, when I introduced the Autonomy Bills, and in the course of my explanation stated our position with regard to the boundaries of Manitoba was clearly defined. It was two days afterwards, on the 23rd of February, that the conference took place between His Excellency Monseigneur Sbarretti and Mr. Campbell. When that conference took place, the decision of this government was already known. We had stated what we would do. We had stated that we would reserve the northern portion of Saskatchewan to be annexed to Manitoba or not as circumstances might suggest, and the extension of the boundaries should take place to Hudson bay if there was an opportunity to do so, after conference. The policy of the government was thus determined, and could not be affected by anything that might take place in the conference between His Excellency the apostolic delegate and Mr. Campbell. But, Sir, there is more. My hon. friend (Mr. R. L. Borden) wants to know whether or not there was any question between the government of Canada and Monseigneur Sbarretti as to the extension of the boundaries of Manitoba. As I said a moment ago, I have not seen the statement of His Excellency,—I have not read it critically—but the answer to my hon. friend's question he already has before him—he has only to read that statement. He has read it, and in it he finds that Monseigneur Sbarretti says explicitly that the government had nothing at all to do with his own action. That ought to suit the purpose of my hon. friend and ought to convince him that he cannot make any political capital on that line. I have only to refer to the words of Monseigneur Sbarretti when he says himself—and his words are in the memory of every member of this House—that he stated to Mr. Campbell that if they would restore the separate schools in Manitoba, it would be politically expedient. Why? In what manner? In respect of any action to be taken by this government? No; but because the people in the Territories would then have no objections to going into Man-