

new province of Alberta is concerned, as far north as the southern boundary of Athabaska, a fair, reasonable and equitable division had been made. If I did not gather that from his remarks, then I certainly missed the point.

Mr. FOSTER. Then you missed the point.

Mr. OLIVER. Certainly the hon. gentleman entertained the House for a considerable time, and I will go so far as to say that I do not think there is a member in the House besides himself who saw the point if that was not it. He has not challenged the division of the constituencies in that part of the new province of Alberta. If my memory does not fail me, he acknowledged that it was a fair division, an approximately fair division.

Mr. FOSTER. I suppose the hon. gentleman is bound to assert that over and over, and I shall have to rise in self-defence. He will have to take my assertion that I did not intend to, and, in my humble judgment, I did not; but if I did, I take it all back, as far as that is concerned. I did not intend to, and I tried to make my words explicit enough to convey my meaning.

Mr. OLIVER. We must admit that the hon. gentleman is certainly able to make out a case if he has one, and he certainly did not spare his time in dealing with this question; and I say again that if he had any evidence of unfairness to give the House, he certainly did not show it.

Mr. FOSTER. If it be any help to my hon. friend, I will tell him one other thing. It is a secret between himself and myself. I am going to take the liberty of making another short address on this before very long. I dealt to-day entirely with the principles of the thing. I do intend to deal later on with the details. But that is a secret between my hon. friend and myself.

Mr. OLIVER. I think my statement has been unchallenged that the hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster) has not indicated the point in which this division has been radically unfair. As my right hon. friend the leader of the government says, if we accept the position taken by the hon. member for Calgary (Mr. McCarthy) that there is a question between the north and the south and that this Red Deer district should be the dividing line, it has been shown that on that same argument by the census figures, which are now the only absolutely reliable figures we have, that the north is at a disadvantage of something like 5,000 people, that on the votes cast the south is at a disadvantage of something like 1,000 votes and that on the number of votes on the list the south is at a disadvantage of something like 2,000 votes. We submit that the difference in favour of the north, as indicated by the census, equalizes beyond question the dif-

Mr. OLIVER.

ference in favour of the south in regard to the number of registered votes and votes cast. If there is any balance either way it must be admitted to be so small that it never before was taken into consideration in a redistribution Bill where 20,000 votes were at issue. The hon. gentlemen have come down to absolute hair splitting on this question in order to make out a grievance, and they will have to split hairs still finer before they can succeed in making out a grievance as far as Alberta is concerned up to the southern boundary of Athabaska. We will be glad to hear the argument of the hon. member for North Toronto when he comes to deal with this question in detail. So far he admits that he has not made an argument on that subject, but he says and says eloquently that there is unfairness and injustice and he threatens revenge just as some time ago he threatened disruption of the constitution in regard to another question. He is very strong in threats, but we have to get used to these things. He is going to avoid all difficulty by referring this question to a commission of judges. I will admit that if it were a question of dividing the constituencies so that no harm should be done to this or to that political party a commission of judges, or an impartial outside commission, might very well be appointed. But so far as this argument has gone that question has not arisen. Nothing has been placed before the House to show that any question has to be decided that can be decided by people outside of this House better than by people inside of this House. When we come to the actual division of the constituencies, then, I will admit, it will be time for such an argument to be made if ever. The question that is before the House at the present time is not a question of law. It is a question of policy. The question to be decided has no more right to be relegated to an outside commission than any of the responsibilities which have been placed upon us by the people of the country have a right to be relegated to an outside commission. The question is: Shall the district of Athabaska be represented or not? I submit that this is not a question of law. It is a question of policy. It is not a question for judges to decide. It is a question for this House to decide. The time for the hon. gentleman and his friends to have dealt with that question was when it was faced squarely by the hon. member for South York (Mr. Maclean). He moved a resolution in the House, or proposed to move a resolution, that the district of Athabaska should not be included in the new province of Alberta, but when it came to the time to vote on that resolution, to make a declaration of policy on the part of the party of the opposition in regard to that dis-