

perpetuate that system so long as we had any homesteads to grant? Such a course would have been much less objectionable than this restraint upon the liberties of the new provinces. They are already restricted in their powers in regard to education, and I say that such a restraint as that, especially as it would have to receive the consent of the people resident there, would have been far less objectionable; and you would have preserved this policy of free homesteads, quite as well as if the lands were administered in the city of Ottawa. And besides it would have done away with a whole host of officials who are on the payroll of this country and whose duties are merely of a nominal character, save during an election campaign.

Now, an argument has been used, that the fact of the other provinces of the Dominion being in the enjoyment of their public domain is not a parallel case; that while the lands of the other provinces were owned by those provinces prior to their entry into confederation, the lands of the Northwest Territories were purchased—'purchased' being the word used—by the Dominion government for the benefit of the Dominion at large. Now, Sir, I, as a westerner, object to that word 'purchased.' These lands were not 'purchased.' It is true that the sum of £300,000 was paid to the Hudson Bay Company, not for these lands, but for certain privileges they enjoyed and for the relinquishment of what was, at best, a doubtful title, on their part. But this money was borrowed on the credit of the Dominion, and interest is being paid upon it to-day just as much by the people of the Northwest, man for man, as by the residents in eastern Canada. But, if the Northwest Territories are to be denied the beneficial ownership of these lands by reason of this argument, how is it that a certain portion of this territory has been handed over to one province? How is it that 150,000 miles of territory in Ungava, a part of this 'purchased' land, paid for with money raised on the credit of the Dominion, was handed over, without a cent of compensation, to the province of Quebec?

Some more powerful logic, some better reasoning will have to be adduced in order to convince the residents of western Canada that they are not equally entitled to the ownership of these lands as are the people who reside in other portions of the Dominion. After the premier had laboured hard to prove the ownership of those lands belong to the Dominion, stating that on the ground of public policy they should be retained in the Dominion, he has practically admitted the justice of the claim of the people of the west to those lands by providing in this Bill for compensation for the same. If they purchased those lands and paid \$300,000, why purchase them the second time, paying \$1.50 an acre, and especially since he maintains that that is nothing like what

they are worth? It is impossible to tell exactly their financial value; but in setting aside some 25,000,000 acres of land at \$1.50 an acre, when the ex-Minister of the Interior has stated that the school lands alone, some 50,000,000 acres, would be worth at least \$3 an acre, you can easily see that the provinces do not get sufficient compensation for withholding their lands from them.

Now, the Prime Minister appeared to be very solicitous of public sentiment in the west saying that he could not grant the request of the people of Manitoba for an extension of its boundaries westward against the wishes of the people who reside in the territories. But he was not so careful of public opinion when he denied to them the ownership of their lands, nor did he consult their wishes when he decided to impose upon them a school system which may in years to come prove entirely unsatisfactory to them. He does not even allow them the option of saying how those schools shall be maintained; but under the provisions of this Bill he decides that the two systems shall receive an equitable share of public money in such a manner as not to discriminate between them. Now, as a layman, I can see practically no difference between the amended and the original clauses. It is true that the ex-Minister of the Interior, with fine sarcasm at the expense of the Minister of Justice, read into the original clause 16 a much different meaning to that which he attaches to the amended clause. Of course, he was having a drive at his late colleague, the Minister of Justice, through a draughtsman; though, as any person could see, it was not even necessary to read between the lines to know who the ex-Minister of the Interior meant by this particular draughtsman. Here are his words:

But I am bound to say, Mr. Speaker, that when my hon. friend the Minister of Justice employed a draughtsman to draw this clause, with instructions to maintain only the existing state of affairs in the Northwest Territories, the draughtsman either wholly misunderstood his instructions or he possessed the most remarkable faculty for covering things which were not covered by his instructions.

Well, every member from the Northwest Territories was going to agree with the Minister of Justice prior to the advent of the ex-Minister of the Interior upon the scene. They saw no objection to that original clause 16, every man of them was going to support it until their hands were forced by the return of the ex-Minister of the Interior. According to the ex-Minister of the Interior, the original clause, no matter how inefficiently those separate schools might be carried on, even if religious teaching was made the primary feature of the schools and secular education the secondary feature, no matter how inferior those schools might turn out to be, they were entitled to share and share alike with the public schools