

torate should be distinctly heard on it? In the late elections, throughout the whole west, there was no announcement by the government that the new provinces would be deprived of their control of education. When the Minister of the Interior was asked to speak upon the question of education, he told the people, forsooth, that the matter could not be discussed except at a full cabinet meeting, and yet in his absence, and in the absence of the Minister of Finance, the question is dealt with and the people of the west kept in the dark. The people of the west were told that the ministers from the Northwest Territories would have the fullest opportunity to consult the Dominion cabinet assembled in force, but the fact is that the representatives of the Territories were not summoned to Ottawa until after the departure of the Minister of Finance and Interior had departed, and this session of parliament was in progress. That may have been a clever thing for the government to do, but it is not new. They did the same thing with regard to the Transcontinental Railway, which was not discussed until the House was in session, introduced in a hurried way into parliament, and with regard to which the announcement was made that powerful interests could not wait. I wonder what interests cannot wait now. The people of Canada are asking what these interests are, and the people are bound to find out. The Minister of the Interior told us that this matter would require the greatest consideration, and that for years he had pondered anxiously over the various clauses of the Bill, but not over the educational clauses. Is not that proof that the government intended the people to understand—and it may be possible that the Minister of the Interior also understood—that this question was settled by the people of the west in a way satisfactory to themselves, and that whatever rights were established under the British North America Act would be the rights which would govern the people of that free province, and not that the parliament of Canada would endeavour to gag the people of the Territories and make them vassals of the federal power. The ex-Minister of the Interior says that before his departure in January last, he made out a memorandum for his colleagues in the cabinet, but not with reference to the educational clause. He says that he was favoured with correspondence from the right hon. gentleman who leads the government, but not in reference to the educational clause. He says that there were conferences in which this measure was discussed with members of the government, but there was no discussion as to the educational clause. We come down then to the fact that when the Bill was prepared and submitted to the representatives of the west for their consideration, strange to say, every feature of the Bill was set out

in black and white except the educational clause, and there was not one word about that. I appeal to you, Mr. Speaker, if this does not show, in the most conclusive manner, that there was a deliberate intention to spring this measure and to take advantage of the people at the last moment. Is it not true that until the last moment the ex-minister of the Interior and the cabinet of which he was one of the most prominent members, understood or pretended that the measure was out of the arena of discussion, that it had been settled by the representatives of the west, and that the people of the west were to have their rights? But, in some way which we cannot fathom, but which we will get at in time, some silent pressure was brought to bear upon the First Minister three or four days before the Bill was introduced, and at the time when there was a question about extending the boundaries of Manitoba, this fatally dangerous question is revived, and the representatives of Manitoba are told: If you want your boundaries extended, you had better improve your school policy. And told by whom? By the members of the cabinet? By the representatives of the people of Canada? No, not by them, but by the representative of the Holy See, who, he tells us, invited these gentlemen to meet him. Of course, we are bound to accept his statement, that it was without any sinister motive, and only casually, that he discussed the matter, but still with the object of advancing what he believed and properly believed, to be the interests of his church. I am not going to ascribe motives, but it will be for the people to say just what all this means. I am going to call the attention of the people to what I believe it means. I believe it means that a deliberate plan was formed in 1897 to work silently and in the dark, and to throw the people down on this question when the proper hour would arrive. What evidence have I of this? I am glad to see the Minister of Justice in his place, and therefore I have no hesitation in referring to the eloquent way in which a few years ago he referred to a matter which is pertinent to the subject I am now dealing with. That hon. gentleman proclaimed the other night in this House that there could be no peace in this country until the minority had received their rights, and in 1896-97 this country was ringing with the same statement that there would be no peace until the minority had their rights. But in the interval, between 1897 and 1905, we had almost silence on that question; we had a lull in the storm. Now, the people are asking what it all means and what is the impelling cause, of the very peculiar and very striking conduct of the First Minister in introducing this Bill—introducing it at this particular time, immediately after an election, and after failing to submit the question during the election, which, according