

cially considered in the formation of these constituencies.

Mr. OLIVER. Will you explain how Edmonton is going to control these 7 constituencies?

Mr. LAKE. I think we may take it for granted that the members who are going to represent these constituencies will be living near Edmonton, in most cases at any rate. The population will be pretty close into Edmonton, and it certainly seems to me that was the idea under which that distribution of seats was made.

Mr. OLIVER. Are the people there?

Mr. LAKE. I think that the probability is that they are. I simply say that on the face of it it looks like an attempt at gerrymander.

Mr. OLIVER. Perhaps it would relieve the hon. gentleman's mind to know that the boundary of St. Albert where it comes close to Edmonton, is the boundary fixed in the distribution of 1902 by the Northwest Assembly. There is no alteration of that boundary.

Mr. LAKE. I understand that; I am coming to that presently. First of all, however, I wish to call attention to statements made both by the Minister of the Interior and the member for West Assiniboia (Mr. Scott) yesterday, when they made the assertion that the Conservative members were invited to conferences a considerable time ago in regard to delimiting these constituencies. Both the member for Calgary and the member for Alberta and myself denied that this was the case. I again take this occasion to positively deny that I was ever asked to a conference for that purpose of delimiting these constituencies.

Mr. SCOTT. Last evening when I mentioned this, I did it upon the spur of the moment. Since then, I have had time to furnish up my memory, so to speak, and my own memory has been assisted by those of other gentlemen who were present. I wish to make the statement again that a conference was held several evenings before the 21st of February, several days before these Bills were introduced. The conference was called by Mr. Haultain and to that conference were invited, I understood, all the members of the House of Commons from the Northwest Territories, including the member for Qu'Appelle, all the senators from the Territories and there were also present at the conference the members then in Ottawa of the Northwest government. I make the statement that Mr. Haultain told that conference that it had been suggested to him by the Prime Minister that he should endeavour to get an agreement from the representatives from the Northwest upon the boundary line between the two provinces, secondly, with regard to the number of local constituencies which should be given to each province, and,

Mr. LAKE.

thirdly, with regard to the divisions of these local constituencies. I repeat the statement that we were told that by Mr. Haultain. The matter of the boundary between the two provinces was discussed at great length. The matter of the number of constituencies was also discussed and the method of division of the constituencies within each province was debated at considerable length. I make the statement now deliberately that I discussed with the member for Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy) that evening the matter of a bi-party committee for each province to make these divisions, and he gave me to understand he was not willing to go into the work with the other members for Alberta. He put it in this way: It will be two against two, myself and the member for Alberta (Mr. Herron) as against the member for Strathcona (Mr. Peter Talbot) and the member for Edmonton (Mr. Oliver) two against two, there will be certainly a deadlock as the interests of Edmonton and Calgary are so diverse and distinct that we could not hope to reach an agreement.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. I have already denied in this House that I was ever asked to discuss that question of deciding the boundaries of these constituencies. I do not see why the same insinuation should be repeated, but if anything were needed to show the absurdity of the insinuation, of the member for West Assiniboia—

Mr. SCOTT. I made no insinuation. I make a direct and absolute statement.

Mr. M. S. McCARTHY. I deny it. I deny that I was ever asked and I say that if any thing were needed to show the absurdity of the statement it is the fact that it would be impossible for us to settle the boundaries of the constituencies when the dividing line between the two provinces was not settled.

Mr. LAKE. I made my denial a few moments ago. I will go on to say that no Liberal, to the best of my recollection, ever mentioned the question of local constituencies to me before the schedule containing these constituencies was brought down and then it was mentioned by a member of the government.

Mr. SCOTT. I understand that the member for Qu'Appelle was not present at that conference; I understood him to say that last night.

Mr. LAKE. Yes.

Mr. SCOTT. I made a formal motion at that meeting that a bi-party committee representing each province should take up this matter of the division of the provinces. I think my motion was not seconded; at all events it was not carried. We took it for granted, from the treatment given to the motion by the conference, and I took it for granted from the statement that was made to me personally by my hon. friend from Calgary (Mr. M. S. McCarthy), that it