

person in one district the same power he gives to four in another. If he wants to be fair, he should either proceed on the basis of territorial division or of representation by population. I contend that representation by population is the only safe course we can possibly take, and that was established as one of the fundamental principles of Liberalism in days gone by. Representation by population is the fairest way for the voice of the country to be heard. If that be the case and if hon. gentleman opposite are prepared to legislate fairly, this House should not be held in session day after day debating this matter. Schedules could be easily prepared which would do justice to these various constituencies and give the honest, intelligent voter the same right and political power in one division that he has in another. That is what this side of the House is contending for.

That is all we on this side are contending for, but I think in all fairness we should protest against this distribution as made here. I understand that the voting white population of the Athabaska district is only about 200. I am not sure that this is the correct figure but it is about that. They have only one post office with a revenue of less than \$100 per annum, and still they are going to outweigh some of those districts with a large population, many of them from the older provinces, taking an intelligent view and knowing all about our political institutions, having the same aspirations as the people of the older provinces. I understand that the settlers from the older provinces are largely in the southern districts, whereas the European elements are largely in the north. Without drawing any 'Red Deer' line I wish to point out that in all fairness this should be decided upon the principle of representation by population, and that if there is to be one man one vote that vote should have one value, and having decided on that I think we could very easily draw a plan that would be suitable and agreeable to both sides of the House. I trust that hon. gentlemen will not persist in pushing this matter through in its present form. Let them get both sides together and draw up a schedule that would be fairly satisfactory to all the people concerned. The Minister of the Interior finally stated that he was ready to listen to the views of the west if Mr. Haultain would do his duty, but he was not ready to listen to Mr. Haultain. He would listen to the legislature if Mr. Haultain would call it together. That seems to me a very vain boast. We have these Bills before the House disbanding these legislatures on the 1st of July, not two weeks hence. There are seven vacant seats there now, but the minister claims that Mr. Haultain could get this legislature together, have the seven members elected and obtain their view before the Bill goes into effect

Mr. COCKSHUTT.

on the 1st of July. He knows it is impossible to call that legislature.

Mr. OLIVER. Why?

Mr. COCKSHUTT. I question much whether, if the views of the legislature are against that division he would take this course, but he makes an impossible suggestion knowing it is impossible for the legislature to meet before this comes into force. He is prepared to ignore Mr. Haultain's views as expressed, and to ignore the views of those concerned and push this matter through, without I think due consideration and without fairness to the political party and to those who are entitled to vote on this question in the great Northwest Territories.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I would ask the Prime Minister what real sources of information he has with regard to townships 24 and 25. Peace River contains 769 whites and half-breeds, and Athabaska 941, a total of 1,710, according to the census of 1901. That would probably give about 342 or 350 votes at the present time. The Prime Minister speaks as if this district were in some way distinct from the rest of the province. It has been distinct from the rest of the Territory in the past but it will not be in the future, the imaginary boundary line is obliterated and it is part of the province. The position is that you are giving two members to a portion of the province which in 1901 had only 350 votes. What are the sources of information on which you rely in giving that particular territory two representatives?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The only official information I have with regard to the census is the number of schools there are at present; I speak of the official information alone. The number of schools was 14. That is the last official information I have, but I understand there are more.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. What schools are these, are they around the missions?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. Probably they are around the missions. Since the commencement of the session the hon. member for Strathcona (Mr. Peter Talbot) has exercised special diligence in order to collect information and he has given information as to the character of the development of that country since 1901. The member for Strathcona stated yesterday evening that in Athabaska there were found to be 24 stores, 13 churches, 7 steamboats, 4 sawmills, 2 or 3 planing mills, 1 flour mill. On the Peace River he stated there was 18 stores, I think, 20 churches, 2 flour mills, 3 or 4 sawmills, and I think 2 planing mills; I forget the number of steamboats plying on the river. This goes to show that there is now a nucleus of population. You have there all the primary elements of civilization, churches, schools, stores, mills, and when