

as the weather favors the possibility of doing so, a party will be sent to this territory, which will spend the available season there for the purpose of examining into its position and resources, and the condition of its people; of acquiring, in fact, all such information, in an authentic form, as will be needful to enable the Government to decide what steps are necessary for the protection of this Territory, and to determine what steps they will take for that purpose, and we confidently expect that next Session we shall be able to state formally what measures we shall take for the protection and development of this Territory. That is the course which the Government has decided upon, based upon the information which my hon. friend was one of the most active in procuring, for the benefit of the country, by means of the North-West Committee; and I hope that that step will be satisfactory to my hon. friend, and to those who, like himself, take a great interest in this Territory, and in the people who now reside there. I trust that my hon. friend will consider that, with this assurance, he has made sufficient progress for to-day, and that he will not press the motion which he has made, which would be like endeavoring to force the hands of the Government, to drive them faster upon the course which they have deliberately decided upon than they deem expedient, and the wisdom of which I think this House will appreciate—that is to say, to obtain in a proper way, and by a careful process, the best and most ample information possible with regard to this Territory, to act upon it by determining what steps may be necessary for its protection and development, and to take those steps. So that I trust my hon. friend will consider that he has done enough, and will withdraw this resolution.

HON. MR. GIRARD—I accept, with great pleasure, the declaration made by the hon. Minister. My intention was not to go any further with the question. I felt a responsibility which I wanted to relieve myself of by calling the attention of the Government to the position of that important part of the Dominion. I have done so, and I am glad to know that the Government is disposed to give serious consideration to the matter, and, either by legislation or some other way, to adopt

some of the views that I have expressed in my explanation to the House. Under the circumstances, I have no hesitation in withdrawing my motion, awaiting the action of the Government, and leaving with them the responsibility of dealing with that important matter.

HON. MR. POWER—Before the motion is withdrawn I wish to say a very few words. I am glad that the hon. gentleman has decided to withdraw his resolution, because, to adopt it, would, I think, be to commit this House to a very injudicious expression of opinion, and I was glad to see that the hon. leader of the Government realised that and asked the hon. gentleman to withdraw. At the same time, the hon. member who leads the Government here perhaps rather gave the impression that the Government do propose, at some not very distant day, to take the steps indicated in this resolution, to proceed to organize the country known as the Great Mackenzie Basin. Now, as an humble member of the House I beg to enter my protest against any such course. We have a population of about 5,000,000, not a very wealthy population, and we have at present, in the course of organization, in what are to be known now as Western Territories and Manitoba, a country capable, it is said, of maintaining without difficulty a population of 100,000,000. Under these circumstances, the absurdity of our going into the frozen regions of the Mackenzie River for the purpose of looking for more territory to organize must strike every one who looks at the matter from a business point of view. I think it is very desirable that the mines, fisheries and hunting grounds of that country should be protected as well as we can, and one of the best ways of protecting them is to keep the population out of that region. I cannot understand how the hon. gentleman from St. Boniface is alarmed about Americans getting into that country, inasmuch as from the American boundary across the Territories, which are now organized, is a distance of several hundred miles. I understand the hon. gentleman to intimate that it was possible the Americans might go around by water to the mouth of the Mackenzie River. Any one who has read the accounts of Arctic explorations must know that it is not at all probable that any fur-hunter will ever go