

In view of the fact that grants were made to the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta for public buildings at the time they were taken into confederation, Manitoba asks that it should also be given a special grant for public buildings. I have only to say in answer that Manitoba has received more than once from the Dominion treasury grants for public buildings. But it seems to us that it is not unfair or unreasonable, since we are retaining the control of the Crown lands, that we should do for Manitoba what we have done for Saskatchewan and Alberta—indeed, what we have done for Manitoba herself, because on more than one occasion, as I can show, the Dominion has granted to Manitoba a special allowance in lieu of public lands, because it did not have them as a source of revenue. Therefore we are disposed to think—and we submit and commend it to the House—that Manitoba should receive compensation in lieu of the public lands, but what is to be the amount of this compensation, whether or not we should adopt the basis which was adopted for Saskatchewan and Alberta, is a question which at this time I do not think it would be fitting to discuss. The government simply ask that that matter should be left for negotiation between the Dominion government and the Manitoba government.

I have looked at the claims of Manitoba at the present time. I have my own opinion of them, but I do not think it would be advisable to-day to express this opinion. I think it is preferable to leave the matter at large, so that the negotiations which are to take place between Manitoba and the Dominion should not be prejudiced in any way by any opinion I might express at this moment. We simply declare that we are prepared to meet the province in a fair spirit.

Mr. W. F. MACLEAN. Will the right hon. gentleman say whether the Hudson Bay Company comes into the calculation in any case?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The Hudson Bay Company does not come into consideration in this matter; it has nothing whatever to do with it. With regard to the claims of the province of Ontario, they will be found in a sessional paper brought down last year, No. 64a, which gives a full account of the conference that took place here in November, 1906. The province of Ontario asked to have its territory extended to the Churchill river. To this extent we cannot recognize its claim, but we have suggested both to Ontario and Manitoba what seems to us a reasonable settlement for their respective claims. In proposing this resolution, it will be observed that we are not asking for any concrete legislation, we are not asking parliament to be bound fast and hard to any proposition.

We simply propose this as a reasonable settlement and basis upon which parliament ought to proceed in increasing the boundaries and territories of the provinces therein mentioned. If the boundary which we have suggested to Manitoba is not acceptable to that province, nothing can come out of it. We are confident, however, that on mature consideration it will be found difficult for either Ontario or Manitoba to suggest a fairer or more reasonable boundary than the one proposed in each case.

Barring this exception, we are prepared to grant the claim of Ontario. We think it is legitimate and perfectly reasonable to that extent, and that it will be conducive to the best administration of that part of the territory we are prepared to give to Ontario, that it should be included at once in that province. One has only to look at the geographical condition, one has only to take a glance at the map, to realize that the territory we are asking parliament to grant respectively to Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec, geographically forms part of each of these provinces.

With regard to the province of Quebec, the claim is a new one. It has not been brought to the attention of the House before. It has been brought to the attention of the government by a memorial from the executive council of that province, which I shall lay on the table. This is dated 9th November, 1907:

In submitting to the House of Commons the Act to establish the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, the Prime Minister of Canada declared as follows:

Manitoba has asked to have her territory extended to the shores of Hudson bay; and this is a prayer which seems to me to be entitled to a fair hearing. The province of Manitoba is not, however, the only one whose territory could be extended towards Hudson bay. The province of Ontario would have the same right; the province of Quebec would also have that right; and the new province of Saskatchewan also.

The governments of the provinces of Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan are pressing on the Dominion government their respective claims for a share of the territory of Keewatin and of the shore of Hudson bay, and the government of this province submits that it has no desire to share in such partition, and will agree to what may be decided on this matter by the government of Canada.

On the other hand the government of the province of Quebec is entitled to a portion of the shore of Hudson bay, and supports its claim thereto by the following facts:

The country lying beyond the northern boundary of Quebec forms geographically part of the territory of this province. The country in question is wholly isolated from all other parts of Canada, being separated from them by a wide expanse of sea, and offering to other provinces than Quebec neither advantage nor interest.

For the province of Quebec the annexation