

the Administration had no fears so long as they knew that a man by the name of Rutherford controlled affairs there. Then, when we looked at the adjoining province of Saskatchewan, every one knew there was there a man named Jim Calder. I do not know whether the House knows the man or not, but the Liberal administration of that day in Ottawa had every confidence that so long as Jim Calder had anything to do with the Government of Saskatchewan the people of Saskatchewan would have a fair and square deal in election matters. As regards Quebec, you could go down there by day or night and find a perfectly satisfactory situation prevailing; all through the silent watches of the night the word would come back: "All's Well." We knew that the people of Quebec would be assured of a fair and honest voters' list. Little difficulty arose in New Brunswick, because, although there was in that province an administration known as the Hazen Government, that government wisely did not tamper with the old Liberal voters' list, and we were assured by men in the House—well-known men they were—that the situation was satisfactory in New Brunswick. In Nova Scotia we were doubly assured. The grand old Prime Minister there, the veteran who still occupies the distinguished position he has so long held—God bless him, and may he long be there—was in power in those days, and we knew that his name was a guarantee of fair dealing in regard to the voters' list in that part of the country. It did not matter so much in Prince Edward Island, because they had no provision for voters' lists in that province. The awkward places were British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario, and the most awkward thing of the whole situation was what we considered to be an act of supreme impudence on the part of the Tory Prime Ministers of those three provinces, when they undertook to change the old standard voters' lists of the Liberal governments. That created a situation down here in Ottawa. It was bound to do so. We had to think the matter out and we began to think that the best way to meet it was by boldly declaring that we had the power to regulate the franchise in this country, that it was not a provincial matter at all, that it was a Dominion matter. I maintained that then and I maintain it now.

In June 1908 a Bill to amend the Election Act came before Parliament. I am not so familiar with what transpired in regard to British Columbia or Manitoba as I am in regard to Ontario. I know that it was

suggested that these Acts of the McBride Administration and of the Roblin Administration were most iniquitous. I fancy they were as bad as they could be made. That was the excuse we offered for interference with their provincial voters' lists. I think we had found cases of overlapping, and that the Dominion constituencies and the provincial constituencies did not exactly conform and for that reason that there was necessity for our interference. In Ontario a very marked situation arose. The Government of Sir James Whitney came into power in Ontario in the spring of 1905. It will be remembered that for thirty-five years before that we had had in Ontario a Liberal Administration, Liberal voters' lists, and Liberal election laws had prevailed. For some reason best known to Sir James Whitney and his Government, they undertook to change that system and in 1908 they passed an Act which made provision for voters' lists in the unorganized districts of Ontario—that is where there were no municipal organizations, that northern tier in Ontario that used to send six members to this House constituting what we called New Ontario. I have no doubt that the proposal of Sir James Whitney was a very bad one. It did not suit the Government in power in Canada at that time. It was a very deliberate thing, I admit, but the Government of that day, with my support, passed an Act to say that for certain portions of these three provinces we would set aside the provincial lists and make lists for ourselves. There are men in this House like myself who supported the Government on that Bill and I am prepared to justify that vote, which I gave on principle, on the same principle that obtains now, and that is, that the Parliament of Canada has the full right to make its own franchise.

It is true that the hon. the leader of the Opposition (Mr. King) did not have a seat in this House in the spring of 1908. It may be that he was not then fighting in the front ranks but I will guarantee that by reason of his intimate knowledge of political matters at that time he had a position for himself on the headquarters staff. He knew what was going on, his party knew what was going on and it ill becomes a man who knows the situation which existed in 1908 and the law which we passed, and passed on principle I maintain, to say now, on the first day of the assembling of this session that the House will expect the Government to carry out