

*By Mr. Gibson:*

Q. Major MacKay, you indicated this morning that you probably had the feeling that these Indian lands should not be sold. Generally speaking, that is your policy. Mr. Stirling mentioned the fact that there were some lands that were not being used and that the suggestion had been made that they should be sold. That, generally speaking, probably is a good idea. I was thinking of the Indian reserve in North Vancouver. I know it is not the intention of the department to keep the Indians segregated. Are you trying to get them to assimilate and to marry with the whites. I have been wondering about that reserve in North Vancouver. It is a reasonably valuable piece of property, but it is in terrible condition. When one passes through there, he feels that it is an eyesore in the community. It has occurred to me that it would be better if it were sold. I believe an advantageous sale could be made of that property for residential or industrial purposes; and it would seem to me that the Indians would be much better off if those moneys were used to buy land throughout the town, so that they could be mixed with the white people.

Hon. Mr. STIRLING: After purchase of the reserve?

Mr. GIBSON: Yes. I know that, from the commissioner's experience, when Indians are transferred to our large cities, it does not work out very satisfactorily as far as their moral standards are concerned. I would say that is definitely true in British Columbia. Would you not say so?

The WITNESS: Well, I think that perhaps the Indians who are removed from the large centres of civilization are more law-abiding. With respect to the reserve you mentioned in North Vancouver, that reserve belongs to the Squamish tribe. The Squamish tribe has trust funds, and before that matter could be dealt with a surrender by a majority of the male members of the band would be necessary. Of course, it is not only the North Vancouver reserve but a number of reservations near the larger centres that come up for discussion from time to time in the matter of purchases by adjoining municipalities or municipal interests. This amounts, as far as I can see, to extinguishing the Indians' titles to their lands without their consent. At least, that is the position under the Act as it stands today.

Mr. GIBSON: Even if it were in their best interests?

The WITNESS: Well, of course where a municipality has a population in excess of 8,000, they can, under the Act, expropriate. But they would have to compensate the Indians and I believe the matter has been referred to the Exchequer Court and suitable and proper provision must be made for the Indians concerned; and in my opinion, that is rightly so.

*By Mr. Blackmore:*

Q. That provision should take the form of more land, should it not, where the Indians can live?—A. Well, of course, I am not so much concerned about city lands as I am about agricultural lands now, because the Indians will be required more and more, as the years go by, to depend on the land for a livelihood.

Q. That is what I had in mind.—A. And the more these lands are taken from them, the greater dependence will devolve on the Crown in the matter of their support. There is no question at all about that.

*By Mr. Gibson:*

Q. Of course, adjacent to Vancouver, for instance, there is no agricultural land.—A. No. The reserve you mention is not agricultural land.

Q. They are going to be absorbed into industry there?—Oh, yes.