

terests of the Indians as well as in the interests of the white people it was proper that the reserve should be moved to a part of the country more remote from the white settlers. I have here a letter written by Mr. Pedley to the Indian agent instructing him in respect to the issue of the patent to the individual Indians, and it shows that the government took every means to prevent any possible fraud upon these Indians.

This is dated January 21, 1908, and is addressed to J. O. Lewis, Indian agent at Selkirk. It says:

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 12th instant, in connection with the location of Indians on the St. Peter's reserve, in accordance with surrender given by them a short time ago, and in reply beg to say that action is being taken with as much expedition as possible to locate the Indians on the land to which they may be found entitled, and you should notify them that there will be as little delay in arranging the matter as possible.

In connection with Indians disposing of or pledging their holdings, I beg to say that no transfer or pledge by any Indian will be in any way recognized by the department, and when it has been determined what land each Indian is entitled to receive, a patent for the same will be issued to such Indians, without regard to any claims by white men or others.

It is necessary to make this position of the department clear and as widely known as possible, as any recognition of rights by transfer would cause endless complications, and in order to prevent same it is incumbent on the department to issue grants only to the Indians found entitled to receive same.

The representatives of the Indians and the department will deal with all claims to land in accordance with the provisions of the surrender.

My contention is that the department could not protect the Indians in any other way than they did, by enacting in their regulations with regard to this surrender that they would not recognize any assignment, and that every patent must be delivered direct to the Indian to whom it belonged. As a matter of fact, I think the department insisted on getting receipts from the Indians for their patents. My hon. friend from Selkirk says that some of these are forgeries. I believe that some 400 receipts from Indians were received, and some 15 patents are still uncalled for. If my hon. friend from Selkirk has any evidence of any Indian's name on a receipt being a forgery—and he has produced no evidence yet on this point—I will join him in asking the Minister of the Interior to prosecute the forger, and I have no doubt the minister will agree with us in that.

Mr. BRADBURY. I read a declaration in which a man stated that his own son

was on Lake Winnipeg and that he went and asked for his patent, and he was told that it had not arrived yet. When his son arrived, he took his son to the Indian agent, and he told him he had not the patent. He went to a real estate agent, and found the patent in his possession with the receipt signed by another man for the son.

Mr. MARTIN (Regina). Whose declaration was that?

Mr. BRADBURY. It was signed by one of the Ashams, I think.

Mr. MARTIN (Regina). That had escaped my notice. I was under the impression that the hon. member had presented no evidence of any forgeries. However, if my hon. friend can produce any evidence which will satisfy any legal practitioner, I will join him in asking the department to prosecute any man who forged an Indian's name.

Mr. BRADBURY. My hon. friend knows that the declarations produced here show that at least 50 men swore that they never signed a receipt for the patents. Who did?

Mr. MARTIN (Regina). All I have to say is that I do not believe those declarations. The instructions to the Indian agent were that he was to get those receipts direct from the Indians, and the agent sent them in as coming direct from the Indians.

Mr. FOSTER. What is the date of Pedley's affidavit that my hon. friend read?

Mr. MARTIN (Regina). The 22nd of March, 1911. I may say, in justice to Mr. Pedley, that last year when this debate was before the House, he handed me an affidavit to be used in the debate; but owing to the fact that I did not address the House, the affidavit was not used, and I got this affidavit from Mr. Pedley to-day. With further reference to what the hon. member for Selkirk has said with respect to these alleged forgeries, I would like to ask him why these men who claim that their names were forged do not prosecute the forgers.

Mr. BRADBURY. That is very easily answered. Some of these men have applied to the government for assistance to prosecute these cases. One man applied to the minister for assistance to prosecute a man named Funk who, he said, had taken his land from him fraudulently, and the answer of the department was that they could not see their way clear to giving him any money for the prosecution. Consequently the prosecutions dropped, because the Indians could not afford to press them.

Mr. MARTIN (Regina). My hon. friend knows that these prosecutions could have been carried on by the local government, in whose hands is the administration of the