

*The Northwest Angle Treaty, Number Three*

Report of the proceedings of the conference between the honourable Alexander Morris, Lieutenant Governor of the North-West Territories, the commissioners appointed by order in council to treat with the Indians inhabiting the country described in the said order in council, the first conference having been held at Northwest Angle, on October first, 1873. Chief—I hope you will not drop the question; we have understood you to say that you came here as a friend, and represented your charitableness, and we depend upon your kindness. You must remember that our hearts and our brains are like paper; we never forget. There is one thing that we want to know. If you should get into trouble with the nations, I do not wish to walk out and expose my young men to aid you in any of your wars.

Governor—The English never call the Indians out of their country to fight their battles. You are living here and the Queen expects you to live at peace with the white men and your red brothers, and with other nations.

Then, when the war came on, numbers of those treaty Indians—

The CHAIRMAN: To which war are you now referring?

Mr. CASTLEDEN: Any war; this last one. The Indians were conscripted off those reserves.

Mr. MACLEAN: I sent a petition to the National Defence Department twice about it.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: That is the very type of thing—

The CHAIRMAN: Now, just a moment; I think there is an answer for that; could we have the answer, Mr. MacInnes?

The WITNESS: I think, perhaps, it would be desirable, Mr. Chairman, to correct what appears to be a misunderstanding on that subject because, in the great war of 1914-1918, by special order in council, all Indians were exempted from compulsory service. In the present war, that was not done; but special cognizance was taken of the conversation that preceded the particular treaty number three to which Mr. Castleden refers and also to treaties 6, 8 and 11. These were the only treaties in which any such assurance was given. Special instructions were given that no Indians belonging to any bands that adhered to those treaties should be required to perform compulsory military service outside of Canada. That action was initiated by our own department and was followed out.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: I do not want to argue the matter, but what I want to emphasize is: that it seems to me only right that when we discuss these treaty rights and obligations the people concerned should be here to hear the discussions. That was my purpose in moving my resolution that there should be some representatives at our conferences here of the Indians themselves. They should come in and hear the deliberations and be called upon to give their views.

The CHAIRMAN: Well, that matter is still in the hands of the subcommittee, and is being considered now.

Mr. CASE: I think it has some merit; but I think we would be getting into great difficulty if we had too many Indians encamping in Ottawa.

Mr. BLACKMORE: We are driving past one o'clock.

Mr. RAYMOND: Do I understand that we were to refrain from asking questions of Mr. MacInnes?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, for just now we are trying to get the general story without interruption, if possible. Later on we will go back over the whole ground. The meeting is now adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1.03 p.m. to meet again on Tuesday, June 11, at 11 o'clock a.m., and again at 4 o'clock p.m. the same day.