

MR. BOWELL: Is the Government still furnishing any money to carry on this contest?

MR. MILLS: I do not think we have ever furnished any money. Since I have been in office, we have never furnished a cent.

MR. BOWELL: Mr. Laird, in a letter to the Imperial Government, stated that a certain amount of money was furnished to contest the rights of the Indians in that locality.

MR. MILLS: That has not been proceeded with.

MR. BOWELL: It was proceeded with, and judgment was given against the Indians, in consequence of their lawyer failing to file a proceeding. Then there was a re-hearing.

MR. MACKENZIE: The re-hearing is the part that has not been proceeded with.

MR. BOWELL: Why not?

MR. MACKENZIE said the Indians were governed entirely by some self-constituted committee in Montreal, and their movements were, apparently, altogether guided by them. He had informed the Chiefs themselves that the expenses of the appeal would be paid by the Government, but it was impossible to take the matter out of their own hands, when they, themselves, placed it in the hands of this committee in Montreal.

MR. BOWELL: Was this original amount paid at all?

MR. MACKENZIE: Some small sum.

MR. MILLS: About \$100.

MR. BOWELL said a stop should be put to the political purposes to which this case was being directed, and the sooner the Government did this the better.

MR. MACKENZIE said if the matter were left with the Government entirely, it would soon be settled.

MR. BOWELL said he understood, from the explanations of the Minister of the Interior, that the Indians had no rights in the land either of a spiritual or educational character.

MR. MILLS: I did not say that.

MR. BOWELL: They had rights in the past. Why have they not now?

MR. MILLS: The hon. gentleman is referring to the question of abstract justice, which may be entirely different from the right of property. The Government could not control the action of private persons in the matter.

MR. LANGEVIN said he was at the head of the Department of State when this matter came up for the first time; and he was sorry to say that the whole trouble between the Indians and the Seminary had arisen from a conversation between some of the Indians and the late Mr. Spragge, the head of the Indian Department at that time. Mr. Spragge thought, no doubt conscientiously, that the Indians had some right to the Seignior, and he mentioned that to some of them. The claim came before the Department, and he (Mr. Langevin) was called upon to report upon it to the Governor in Council. That case had given him more trouble than any 20 cases in the Department. After going into the whole subject he reported, and his report was referred to the Minister of Justice, and was sanctioned by the Law Officer of the Crown, and afterwards assented to by the Governor in Council. He had not changed his opinion since, and he had no doubt that if the Indians had not been ill-advised, he could have made a settlement between them and the Seminary of Montreal. But when the gentlemen of the Seminary found their title attacked, and law suits threatened, they said: "Don't let our title be attacked, and we will hear any proposals made to us;" and he (Mr. Langevin) knew that they were disposed to give the Indians a liberal settlement. It was true the Indians were under the care of the Government, but the Government could not give them lands which did not belong to them. Certain parties in Montreal had thought the decision against the Indians was not a proper one, and asked that the question might be decided before a court of justice. Two or three years ago money was voted for that purpose, and the question came before the court when it went by default against the Indians. If the Minister of Justice was satisfied