

He then made with Premier McBride an agreement which, while in its dealing with the matter of reserves a step in advance, ignores the larger matter of the aboriginal claims of the Indians. Upon the subject of that Agreement, in course of an interview had on 5th November of same year with Dr. Roche (who meantime had succeeded Mr. Rogers), Dr. Tucker addressed the Minister as follows:—

“It is understood that Mr. McKenna's report is in the hands of the Government and various rumors are afloat, apparently not without some foundation, that an arrangement has been arrived at with the Government of British Columbia and that that arrangement entirely ignores the claims of the Indians. It is difficult to credit such rumors, though they are stated with confidence and with much appearance of truth. We can only venture to represent that such a course of action would be in direct conflict with the action deliberately taken and consistently pursued by the British Government for a century, arising out of a Royal Proclamation which the Indians have always claimed as the Magna Charta of their rights; such a course of action would be in direct conflict with the action consistently followed by the Canadian Government for half a century, under which the Indians have hoped and trusted and remained at peace; such a course of action, instead of settling this long-standing question, would throw it into hopeless confusion and run the risk of fanning into a flame elements of danger that now lie in a smouldering state.”

Notwithstanding the warning then given, the course of action spoken of was entered upon, the McKenna-McBride Agreement was adopted and the struggle already rendered necessary by the persistent refusal of the Government of British Columbia to recognize the claims of the natives was rendered doubly necessary by the action taken by the Government of Canada in ratifying an agreement ignoring those claims.

3. But by way of further criticizing the policy of the Social Service Council and justifying a political settlement of the land question, it has been suggested that all the lands of British Columbia belong absolutely to the Crown and that therefore the two Governments must decide what should be done for the benefit of the Indians.

This is the view upon which, from the year 1870 until the present time, the policy of British Columbia has been based. This is the view upon which have been based the proposals of the Deputy Superintendent-General embodied in the Order-in-Council of June, 1914. This view is in direct and unmistakable conflict not only with the Proclamation of King George Third upon which the Indians of British Columbia so strongly rely, but also with British principle and Canadian practice firmly established by the whole course of past dealing with native races.

This suggestion is most conclusively answered by the emphatic way in which the view under discussion was, in the year 1875, repudiated by Canada. In a report presented in January of that year and adopted by the Governor-General-in-Council, the then Minister of Justice declared that the claim of these Indians was well founded and that they were entitled to an interest in the lands of British Columbia. In that report the Minister expressed the opinion that to treat these lands as the absolute property of the Province is “an assumption which completely ignores, as applicable to the Indians of British Columbia, the honor and good faith with which the Crown has in all other cases since its sovereignty of the territories in North America dealt with their various Indian tribes.”

#### THE POWER UPON WHICH WE RELY.

Before concluding this attempt to place the policy of the Social Service Council in its true light before members of the Council and others taking active part, let me add one remark. Our undertaking is a serious one, and for its