

*The Address—Mr. Greenaway*

—the reserve shall, with the consent of the Indians, as required by the Indian Act, be reduced to such acreage as the commissioners think reasonably sufficient for the purposes of such Indians.

What had happened was that when certain reservations had been set up at the very beginning, the Indian population had been decimated by smallpox. The white population then saw Indian people as a handful living on various reserves, and this commission was set up ostensibly to reduce the size of the reserves and sell the land to the white population.

What sane person would voluntarily agree to reduce the size of his holdings? As hon. members can imagine, the Indians did not agree to the reduction of the size of their reserves. In most cases they did not even realize that they were losing their land. By the time the report of the commission became law in 1916, 35 cutoffs amounting to 36,000 acres had been taken from the reserves. These cutoffs were, of course, completely illegal because of the lack of consent of the Indian people. There was no consultation.

I would like to emphasize at this time that what we are talking about here is not the settlement of new claims but, rather, the return of land to the legal owners. There is no question that this land belongs to the Indian people because it was outside the mandate of the commission to cut off lands without the consent of the Indians.

The situation which developed was that British Columbia acquired legal title to the cutoff lands with the requirement that the province turn over 50 per cent of the proceeds from the sale or other disposition of these lands. This amounted to only \$90,000 for the Indian people. Much of the land was sold for \$1 an acre, and it was prime agricultural land.

The Government of Canada acquired title to all British Columbia Indian reserves as a result of this commission. It is true that Indian reserves were increased in size by 85,000 acres, but I would like to emphasize that these 85,000 acres were far below the quality of the cut-off lands, and in most cases it was a matter of trading acreages in valleys for barren mountain tops.

Ever since the lands were lost in 1916, these affected bands have been trying to get their land back. The Squamish band has been a leader in pressing the case with the federal and provincial governments. One half of the Squamish band is in my riding and the other half is in the riding of the hon. member for Capilano (Mr. Huntington). The Squamish band lost between 130 and 132 acres on the north shore of Burrard Inlet near the mouth of the Capilano River. The northernmost footings of the Lions Gate Bridge sit on Squamish band cut-off land. The bands' lawyer estimated in 1976 that this 132 acres of land would be earning \$786,590 a year in rent, and this is a very conservative estimate. This is the rent which would accrue to this band if it owned the land at present.

The province has agreed to return about 30,000 acres of cut-off land, which it retained control of, to the reserves, to compensate the bands for assessable damage and compensate for certain lands it wishes to retain for public purposes, mainly for parks. The federal government would compensate the

bands for the 3,200 acres sold to third parties; in other words, for the encumbered land.

It is with the federal government that the Indian committee which represents the affected bands is at odds. The federal government offered the bands the market value at the time of taking, 1916, for the principal portion plus a very low rate of interest on this amount. This is about 10 per cent of what this land is actually worth at present. On March 9, 1979, the federal cash offer was increased to \$14.4 million for all claims. It is estimated that the real estate value of the Squamish land near the First Narrows Bridge alone is worth \$30 million.

In closing, because of over 60 years of procrastination the situation is now very difficult. We cannot expect these people, who have waited patiently these many years, to settle for 1916 values for encumbered land. On January 3 of this year the Squamish band decided it could wait no longer and submitted its case to the federal courts. It will be an interesting case, and I sincerely hope justice will finally prevail.

**Mr. Beatty:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I have had the usual discussions with representatives of each of the parties in the House, and I believe there would be unanimous consent to revert to the presentation of reports from standing and special committees for a minute.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker):** The hon. member seeks unanimous consent to revert to presenting reports from standing and special committees. Is there unanimous consent?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

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#### REGULATIONS AND OTHER STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

Fourth and fifth reports of Standing Joint Committee on Regulations and Other Statutory Instruments—Mr. Beatty.

[*Editor's Note: For text of the above Reports see today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

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[*Translation*]

#### SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mrs. Côté for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the session.

**Mr. Jean-Guy Dubois (Lotbinière):** Mr. Speaker, first of all I am grateful to have this opportunity to address the House for the first and, I hope, not the last time. I am also happy to say that I am proud to speak in the name of the people of Lotbinière who did me a great honour by electing me as their representative here in Ottawa. Lotbinière is a riding which has