

hon. friend's statement because I am satisfied that he is in total ignorance of the real facts, while these men are living on the ground and are suffering the awful consequences of the methods employed by his officials. I will quote here one or two declarations which I submitted last year to prove to this House that the hon. gentleman had this evidence before him when he rose in his place to speak and made the statement which he did regarding this transaction. I will quote from John Flett, one of the most intelligent Indians on St. Peter's reserve, and this is what he says about it:

Statutory Declaration.

Dominion of Canada, Province of Manitoba.

In the matter of the vote for surrender of the Indian lands in St. Peter's reserve, taken on September 24, 1907.

To Wit:

I, John Flett, of the parish of St. Peter's, in the province of Manitoba, Indian, do solemnly declare that I am a member of the St. Peter's Band of Indians; that the notices calling the meeting at which the vote surrendering the reserve was taken, were not posted up, nor did the Indians know anything about such a meeting until Sunday, the twenty-second day of September, A.D., 1907, just one day prior to the date of such meeting. The meeting was held on Monday, September 23, and duly adjourned until the next day, Tuesday, September 24, but at the time of such adjournment no notice was given that the vote would finally be taken on Tuesday. Many of the Indians did not see or hear about the notice, and in consequence were not present at the meeting, and did not have a chance of expressing their views or voting. I believe that had ample time been given and the matter properly explained to the band, that many who were at their homes would have turned out and voted against the surrender of their reserve; many of the young men of the band were away from home working at various occupations and did not know or hear anything about a vote going to be taken owing to the shortness of the time given. That I have been told and believe that some non-treaty men and some minors were counted amongst those voting for the surrender. That in my opinion the vote was most irregular and improper and was not taken according to the regular custom of our band.

And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously, believing it to be true and knowing that it is of the same force and effect as if made under oath and by virtue of the Canada Evidence Act, 1891.

Declared before me at the parish of St. Peter's, in the province of Manitoba, this 24th day of March, A.D., 1910.

(Sgd.) ROBERT G. McDONALD,
Commissioner in H. R., etc.
(Sgd.) JOHN FLETT.

I also wish to put on record a telegram I received at that time which was placed on 'Hansard' last year, and which was brought to the hon. gentleman's notice when he delivered that speech:

1092-12

Selkirk, Manitoba, January 26, 1910.

G. H. Bradbury,

House of Commons, Ottawa.

Band received one day's notice of meeting September 23. Notices, three or four posted on Sunday, September 22.

WM. ASHAM.

Then I have a letter from the same man inclosing this original notice which I have already presented to the House:

Dear Sir.—The inclosed is the original copy of the notice that was posted one day previous to the time of meeting for the surrender of St. Peter's reservation, effected September 24, 1907.

In face of these very clear and distinct sworn statements, which were before the hon. gentleman when he made his speech, I feel justified in saying that the minister could not expect this House and the country to take him seriously when he was speaking on this matter. Without any intention of being offensive, it was an insult to the intelligence of this House and the country to expect them to accept the hon. gentleman's explanation, and his flippancy reply to such a serious charge as that which had been preferred against his department by his wards, the Indians of St. Peter's. This is one of the charges that I preferred in my speech, and which the hon. gentleman characterized as a trade of unfounded assertion and gratuitous inaccuracies. If the rest of the hon. gentleman's speech was as incorrect and unfair as it was in connection with this charge, then I say that the hon. gentleman was unfair during the whole time of his reply to this very serious indictment. I desire to call the attention of the House to another of these charges. These are very serious charges; these are not charges to be dealt with lightly, to be passed over in the flippancy manner in which my hon. friend dealt with them last year. When the hon. gentleman was replying to the charge that the Indians had been induced to vote by an offer of money, the statement I made being that just as the Indians were about being divided one of the agents said: You who want \$50 go to that side, and the others go to the other side, my hon. friend from Victoria and Haliburton (Mr. Hughes) made the following interjection:

Mr. HUGHES. If I heard the hon. member for Selkirk right, he pointed out that the call was not to those who were for selling the lands and those who were against it, but the call was for those who wanted the \$50 to take one side, and those who did not want it to take the other side. I know the minister has overlooked that.

The hon. minister replying to that statement said:

Mr. OLIVER. No, I have not overlooked it. I can only say that I did not wish to be discourteous to the hon. gentleman, and ques-