

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): I shall be pleased to look into the matter. My information does not entirely coincide with what the hon. member has said.

Mr. BENNETT: I know something of this as well, and thinking of the two very fine men who fell victims to the assaults of some Indians in British Columbia I made up my mind that we should have to maintain some assistance in Indian reserves to prevent the possibility of repetition of such an event as that which happened in the interior of British Columbia where two mounted police were murdered under terrible circumstances. Wherever there is the possibility of liquor among the Indian population there is need for those who will guard them as our wards.

Mr. NEILL: But may I ask the leader of the opposition: Is it not a fact that the dominion made a bargain with the province to enforce the statutes, which bargain the provincial authorities are willing to carry out? Until they show evidence of failing—

Mr. BENNETT: No; there is no such agreement.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): The Indian Act is a dominion statute and the province has nothing to do with the enforcement of that.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Carried.

Mr. NEILL: No; the item is not going to carry on an assertion of that sort. Is not the criminal code a dominion statute?

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): Yes.

Mr. NEILL: Do not the provincial police enforce that?

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): Yes, because the administration of criminal justice is under the jurisdiction of the provinces; but the enforcement of dominion statutes, our own acts, is under our own control.

Mr. NEILL: Then, why is it that you do not have a station of the mounted police at every Indian village all over the country?

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): Because it is not necessary and is not requested.

Mr. NEILL: Who does enforce the provisions of the Indian Act in nine out of ten places in British Columbia? It is the provincial police, by request of the dominion government. If I am wrong, the department ought to have a policeman stationed at every village, because wherever there is an Indian there is danger of his getting liquor. It is not correct to say that the enforcement of the Indian Act in British Columbia is confined

[Mr. Neill.]

to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. I was an Indian agent for ten years, and whenever I wanted a policeman I applied to the provincial authorities who supplied one or more as needed. All this talk about the Indians getting out of hand in that district is nonsense.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): I assure my hon. friend that there is a detachment of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in every large Indian community in British Columbia.

Mr. BENNETT: Mr. Chairman, while you passed item No. 492 without my having an opportunity to notice it, I had intended to make an observation or two in respect to it. We listened this afternoon to a very long and bitter attack in connection with these Regina riots, so-called. I think the minister should make a statement on that item.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): I might make a statement without reverting to the item. All I want to say in answer to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth) who referred to the matter this afternoon, is that it is always easy to be wise after the event. There is no doubt that long after an event has taken place one can see where something might have been done differently in the light of what has happened. This affair occurred more than a year ago. Fortunately the same troubles do not exist at the present time, and I do not think it would serve any good purpose to try to find that those who were at that time faced with a very grave and serious responsibility might perhaps have taken another course than the one they did take. All I wish to say with regard to the many statements made this afternoon is that I was especially interested in what the judges, who were appointed not by this government but by the Saskatchewan government to inquire into that serious matter—which was very regrettable because one man was killed and many were injured—found in regard to what the police did in those circumstances. On page 288 of the judges' report I find this:

In our report we have dealt with as many of the cases as we believed merited it and have reached the conclusion that although the police used force on a number of occasions it was so used either to repel attack or to overcome resistance to arrest, and that in no case was there reliable evidence of an unprovoked assault by a member of either force.

Then I want to call attention more particularly to this part of the report, at page 303:

An effort was made by some of the witnesses to create the impression that the Royal Cana-